

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 26 OCTOBER 1982

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr Speaker:—

- City of Brisbane Town Planning Act Amendment Bill;
- District and Magistrates Courts Acts and Property Law Act Amendment Bill;
- Construction Safety Regulations Interpretation Bill;
- Supreme Court Acts Amendment Bill.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT**Brisbane City Council Accounts**

Mr SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Auditor-General of his report on the books and accounts of the Brisbane City Council for the year ended 30 June 1982.

Ordered to be printed.

PAPERS

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

- Report of the Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement for the year ended 30 June 1982.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

Supreme Court Act 1921–1979

Water Act 1926–1981 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982

Harbours Act 1955–1982

Electricity Act 1976–1982 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982

Mines Regulation Act 1964–1979

Ordinance under the City of Brisbane Act 1924–1980

Reports—

Legal Aid Commission of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1982

Timber Research and Development Advisory Council of North Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1982

Timber Research and Development Advisory Council of South and Central Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1982.

FEES PAID BY CROWN TO BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS**Return to Order**

The following paper was laid on the table:—

- Return to an Order made by the House on 5 August last, on the motion of Mr Gygar, showing all payments made by the Government to barristers and solicitors during the 1981-82 financial year, stating the names of the recipients and the amounts received separately.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Directors of Donnelly Benefits Pty Ltd**

Hon. S. S. DOUMANY (Kurilpa—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.6 a.m.): On Thursday last the Honourable the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations replied on my behalf to a question asked by the honourable member for Mackay concerning Queensland-registered companies named in the McCabe-Lafranchi Report and the names and addresses of their directors.

Included in the 18 Queensland-registered companies named in the answer was Donnelly Benefits Pty Ltd and the names and addresses of the current directors of the company as shown in the records held in the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs were given as—

John Patrick Donnelly, 283 Monaco Street, Rialto

Barbara Anne Donnelly, 283 Monaco Street, Rialto

Peter James Sanders, 9 Manor Street, Brighton, Vic.

The Commissioner for Corporate Affairs has now advised that although Peter James Sanders was shown as a director of this company in the McCabe-Lafranchi Report, he in fact resigned from that position on 7 March 1980.

Peter John Cornish of 1/23 Grove Street, Toowong was appointed alternate director to Barbara Anne Donnelly on 4 November 1980. Therefore, John Patrick Donnelly and Barbara Anne Donnelly with Peter John Cornish as alternate director for Barbara Anne Donnelly are the current directors of the company as shown in the records of the Corporate Affairs Office.

Attempted Derailments near Woodridge

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (11.8 a.m.): I wish to report to the House that I have ordered a full-scale investigation into attempts to derail passenger trains near Woodridge last week-end. In addition to railway police, the trail bike squad and the police dog unit will participate.

Last year the maximum penalty under the Railway Act for placing an obstruction on a railway line was increased from \$100 to \$500. I will press for higher penalties if necessary. However, I would point out that the Criminal Code still applies hard labour for life, with or without whipping, for any person who unlawfully obstructs the use of a railway or "injures" property on it. Although this penalty would not be imposed nowadays, it demonstrates how seriously the law has always viewed the crime.

Vandalism has been a problem in the Woodridge/Kuraby area for a long time, but with the introduction of fast electric trains on 18 September the risk of tragedy has obviously escalated. I do not know if children have been responsible, but the fact that more than one derailment attempt has been made certainly indicates warped minds. The very young must realise the tragedy which could occur if large barks of bridge timber, railway sleepers and concrete are placed in front of a speeding train. Adults have a responsibility to instruct their children to this effect. If the would-be saboteurs were adults, they were sadists.

Last week-end damage to the under-floor machinery of the empty Beenleigh-bound locomotive, which struck the debris while travelling between 70 and 80 km/h, will cost about \$4,000 to repair. Had the train been full of commuters and a piece of timber had penetrated the driver's cabin, the possible loss of life is too horrible to contemplate.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Proposed Closure of Road near Rasmussen State School

From Mr Glasson (184 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will prevent closure of the road adjoining Rasmussen State School, Allambie Lane and Ross River Road.

Appointment of Therapists to Narbethong School

From Sir William Knox (24 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will appoint a physiotherapist, an occupational therapist and a speech therapist, each on a full-time basis, to the Narbethong school.

Petitions received.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

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

1. Road-works, Aspley Hypermarket Site

Mrs Nelson asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

What action is being taken by his department to provide adequate road-works to ensure smooth traffic flow and proper access in the vicinity of the recently approved hypermarket site at Aspley?

Answer:—

Extensive investigations have been undertaken by officers of the Main Roads Department into a number of planning layouts for road improvements in the vicinity of the Aspley shopping centre. The major retail developments in the area, coupled with further proposed development, including the hypermarket, have made the task a complex one. The stage has now been reached where an acceptable layout has been devised as a basis for discussion with other authorities and other interested parties.

It has been tentatively programmed that funds be made available for the work in the 1983-84 and 1984-85 financial years, subject, of course, to the necessary funds being available. In the meantime, necessary consultation with other parties and detailed design of the proposal will be undertaken.

2. Statutory Authorities

Mr Prentice asked the Premier—

With reference to an answer he gave in response to a question from the member for Stafford on 21 March 1979 in relation to statutory authorities—

(1) What further statutory authorities or Government-sponsored bodies have been formed or found since that date, what are their names, do they report to Parliament and are their accounts audited by the Auditor-General?

(2) How many of those authorities shown in the answer of 21 March 1979 as (a) not reporting to Parliament or (b) not having accounts audited by the Auditor-General or (c) both of the above, do now so report or have accounts audited, or both, and what are those bodies?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) The matter of the number of statutory bodies and committees in Queensland and their reporting requirements and procedures is under investigation. No decision has yet been made as to any new requirements for reporting to Parliament due to the complexity of the issue, but I can assure honourable members that accountability is being maintained through established procedures and a considered decision will be made in due course.

3. Deductions from Wages of Hospital Employees for Payment to Toowoomba Savings Credit Union

Mr FitzGerald asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Is it possible to make deductions from the wages of hospital employees in Toowoomba who wish to pay regularly into the Toowoomba Savings Credit Union?

(2) As many hospital employees now wish to invest their savings in Toowoomba, will he investigate the matter?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) From the honourable member's question it is not clear whether he is referring to employees of the Toowoomba General Hospital or of the Baillie Henderson Hospital.

However, with regard to employees of the Toowoomba General Hospital it is advised that the Toowoomba Hospitals Board is responsible for wages and any deductions made from wages for the employees engaged by it. Advice has been received from the Toowoomba Hospitals Board that the Toowoomba Credit Savings Union has not approached the board for consideration to enable its contributors to have deductions made from their wages. To enable such consideration, the credit union should approach the board direct.

Before deductions can be made from the wages of employees at the Baillie Henderson Hospital, the approval of either the Treasury Department or my department would be required, dependent upon the category of staff concerned: e.g., administrative staff—Treasury Department; other categories—Department of Health. Therefore, the Toowoomba Credit Savings Union should approach the appropriate instrumentality for consideration.

4. Importation of Video Films

Mrs Nelson asked the Premier—

(1) Is he aware of a series of video films called "snuff" films or "nasties" which are allegedly being made in the USA and South East Asia and in which young women and children are tortured, raped and murdered and that they are being distributed extensively throughout Australia?

(2) Is he also aware of copies of a similar type of video, allegedly a filming of the autopsy of Elvis Presley, which are also being widely distributed in Australia?

(3) Will he have urgent discussions with the Minister for Police to try to confiscate any copies of such films presently in Australia and with the Federal Customs Department and Federal Police to prevent any further such macabre and appalling films, purporting to be entertainment, from being imported into and distributed throughout Australia?

Answer:—

(1 to 3), I am aware of the recent newspaper articles alleging the distribution of these video films in Australia, and I have discussed the matter with the Minister for Police.

Members of the Licensing Branch are ever vigilant in this area and neither they nor their counterparts in the Federal Police and Customs Departments have knowledge of the distribution of these particular video films in Queensland. However, I understand the Federal Police have seized a number of other "pirated" and "obscene" video films.

The Licensing Branch will continue to give this matter attention and take appropriate action when offences are detected. In the interim, if the honourable member has any specific information to offer, the matter will be investigated.

5. Disabled Children in Taxis

Mrs Nelson asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Is he aware of the present situation concerning an anomaly in the Traffic Act which allows taxis to carry more than five disabled children at a time and without the protection of seat belts?

(2) What action is he taking to correct this appalling situation?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) First let me say that the matter has now been satisfactorily resolved thanks to the timely intervention and perseverance by the honourable member.

Regulation 42(9) of the State Transport Regulations provides that the driver of any licensed cab upon any road shall, when requested by the hirer, carry in such cab any number of passengers not exceeding the number which such cab is licensed to carry. For the purposes of this clause, any child apparently under five years of

age shall not be taken into account and where the passengers include children apparently under 12 years (not being children apparently under five years), two such children shall count as one passenger.

Following representations by the honourable member, I was able to approach my colleague the Honourable W. A. M. Gunn, M.L.A., Minister for Education, with a request to amend the condition of contract for the carriage of disabled children in clause 2.1 (iii) to provide that all disabled children transported in taxis are required to be individually restrained unless they are medically exempted. This will become a condition of the contract for the carriage of handicapped children to State and non-State special education facilities from the beginning of the 1983 school year.

The inclusion of this condition obviates the necessity to amend Regulation 42(9) of the State Transport Regulations and overcomes any hardship to parents of large families as it had been concluded that some difficulties may arise in private taxi transport by parents of more than three children if the regulation had been so amended.

Once again, I wish to take this opportunity to thank the honourable member for her interest in the welfare of handicapped children.

6. Disposal of Twelfth Night Theatre Building

Mr Warburton asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

With reference to the recent assurance by the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts in this House on 12 October that the Twelfth Night Theatre premises at 4 Cintra Road, Bowen Hills, would be retained for mainly cultural purposes and to the fact that only four days later a public notice appeared in "The Courier-Mail" titled "Invitation to tender for purchase of Twelfth Night Theatre Building", and that on 18 October "The Courier-Mail" ran a very misleading article on this matter with statements being attributed to him—

In view of the written opinion of the Solicitor-General, Mr D. V. Galligan, in response to questions put to him by the Under-Treasurer that "All in all, there appears to be no effective way of getting rid of the burden of the premises whilst at the same time ensuring the protection of the various interests", does not this mean that he and the Government are in fact involved in a king-size confidence trick, or is he saying that the Solicitor-General is wrong in his opinion?

Answer:—

There is no disagreement with the opinion of the Solicitor-General and there is no intent to deceive the public as alluded to by the honourable member.

As the honourable member seems to have secured a copy of the Solicitor-General's opinion, he will also be aware that the Solicitor-General suggested a number of possible options for the Government, including a conditional sale although this may be fraught with difficulty. In all the circumstances, the advice of the Solicitor-General was accepted that the best way to achieve the Government's objectives in respect of the building was outright sale.

The public invitation to tender for purchase quite clearly states that the proposals must contain assurances regarding continued use of the building for theatre purposes and the honouring of existing commitments to tenants and hirers. In evaluating tenders, the Government will be giving very heavy weighting to the quality and worth of such assurances.

The Government is committed to maintaining the building as theatre premises if at all possible.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Land Sale Practices, Russell Island; Activities of Crane & Co., Cleveland

Mr WRIGHT: I ask the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General: In line with his public undertaking given on the week-end to take immediate action to combat white-collar crime in Queensland, will he initiate a thorough investigation into certain real estate

sales on Russell Island, especially those associated with a firm known as Crane & Co, Cleveland, or Russell & McLeay Land Sales, where this iniquitous and unscrupulous practice is used: knowing that a prospective purchaser is available, the land-owner is approached by the real estate firm with the advice that a buyer is interested at a certain price? However, the price offered to the owner is lower than that agreed to by the purchaser. Instead of proceeding with that sale, the land is bought by the firm or its nominee from the owner at the lower price and then resold to the original interested buyer at a higher price—in one instance, at an additional \$4,500. What action can the Minister take, and what can he do immediately to put an end to these practices?

Mr DOUMANY: If the Leader of the Opposition will make available to me whatever data and documentation he has, I will have the matter thoroughly investigated.

Staffing, Corporate Affairs Office

Mr WRIGHT: In asking the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General this question, I refer to the Government's announcement that it intends to appoint 26 additional staff to the Corporate Affairs Office. Will he advise whether these positions have been advertised in the Government Gazette, and is it a fact that, despite that public promise, Cabinet rejected a Corporate Affairs submission for 33 further positions to accommodate increased work-load as revealed in the internal Justice Department memo dated 16 June 1982? In view of the revelations contained in the Costigan and the McCabe-Lafranchi reports, and in view of his own personal undertaking to combat corporate crime in this State, will he now explain why the additional positions were rejected? Will he also explain how much faith this Parliament can now place in his undertaking to make Queensland tough for white-collar criminals when his desire to eradicate corporate crooks is not being endorsed by his Cabinet colleagues?

Mr DOUMANY: The Leader of the Opposition has been somewhat misinformed. Approval was given for 26 additional positions to be created prior to the end of the last fiscal year. That establishment was created. I cannot tell the honourable member precisely the stage at which the appointments are, because it takes time to find suitable people. I assure the Leader of the Opposition that further submissions to the Public Service Board are under consideration. They will ultimately flow to Cabinet. They take into account the very urgent need for increasing levels of enforcement and follow-up in areas of irregularity in companies in corporate law in Queensland.

There has been no weakening of resolve in the Government to tackle irregularities, crime and cheating in the corporate sector. If anything, the honourable member will see a greater intensification in that area in the coming months. In fact, a taskforce is currently working on the non-lodgment and late-lodgment of returns. I trust that some prosecutions will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

As to the honourable member's question about further positions for enforcement work, in particular for inspectorial work—that is under consideration. I hope to have some more information about that in the very near future.

Proposed National Crimes Commission

Mr WRIGHT: With reference to the announcement by the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police that the Queensland Government will boycott the proposed national crimes commission—is it correct that the Federal Government introduced crimes commission legislation last Thursday while police representatives from all States were meeting in Adelaide to discuss its contents? How does the Minister react to the contempt shown by the Fraser Government to the States? What action does the Minister intend to take to upgrade the Queensland Police Fraud Squad to strengthen its fight against organised crime in Queensland, including white-collar and computer crime? Will the Minister re-form the special squad of police and corporate affairs investigators that was disbanded approximately two years ago for what was said to be political reasons?

Mr HINZE: It is true that, unfortunately, officers from all States were meeting in Adelaide last week when we received news that the Commonwealth had proceeded to introduce legislation to set up its own crimes commission, which would be entirely under its own jurisdiction.

That cuts completely across the work by the State Ministers that has been going on for virtually two years. In the two years that I have been Minister in charge of the Police Force, I have attended five meetings of Ministers from the various States. We were really making some headway. I have made Queensland's position clear. There is no point in our attending the meeting on 5 November under these circumstances. I do not know whether that will have any effect on the Commonwealth's decision or whether it will continue to steam-roller its decision irrespective of the attitudes of the States. I am in receipt of a telex from my counterpart in Western Australia, who feels very strongly about the matter. I have read Press reports of Mr Cain's comments. This morning I received a telegram from the Northern Territory. The States are really concerned about the matter.

In relation to the other matters, which are purely financial support for the Queensland Police Force—I am at all times making representations to the Federal Government for funds for the purposes set out by the Leader of the Opposition in his question.

In reply to the earlier part of his question—all States are concerned and it would be preferable to get together and introduce a commission acceptable to the States. Everyone in Queensland and throughout Australia realises that there are times when we need assistance from the Commonwealth through Interpol. Queensland cannot tackle its drug problem alone. There are reasons why the States must get together rather than have something unacceptable given to them at this time.

Recreational Camps

Mr GYGAR: I refer the Minister for Welfare Services to the scheme under which he made accommodation facilities available to country children during the Commonwealth Games so that they would have the opportunity of seeing that historic event, and I ask: How did that scheme operate, and does he intend to expand the use of camp facilities to provide opportunities for children to develop skills in music, arts and crafts, bush-walking, camping, etc?

Mr WHITE: I thank the honourable member for his question. It is certainly true that, during the Commonwealth Games, we provided accommodation at our recreational camps, particularly the one at Tallebudgera, for over 600 young children so that they could have the opportunity of seeing the Commonwealth Games. I advise the member that, for young children, the Government has a system of recreational camps that is second to none in this country. In fact, the system is the envy of every other State.

Mr Davis: Not true.

Mr WHITE: It is true, and many people from interstate are recognising the tremendous infrastructure that has been built by this Government in the development of recreational camps throughout the State. The capital value of those camps is of the order of \$15m.

At present, eight recreational camps throughout the State provide accommodation on a daily basis for approximately 1 700 children. Last year, accommodation was provided for young children for 200 000 camper days. Special provision is being made for young children, particularly those who belong to low-income families and who do not have an opportunity to have a really worthwhile holiday.

An advertising campaign will soon be initiated to advise the public that three such camps will be conducted during the Christmas vacation period. I know that the member for Stafford has a particular interest in that program. One camp will be conducted in December and two camps will be conducted in January. The cost of providing those camps will be of the order of \$67 a week. Free transport will be provided from Brisbane for the children in the honourable member's electorate.

Murarrrie Engineering Services; Contract for Refrigerated Rail Containers

Mr GYGAR: I ask the Minister for Transport: Has his attention been drawn to an item on the Channel 7 program "State Affair" last night in which the honourable member for Lytton and a firm called Murarrrie Engineering Services alleged that they had been badly done by in the letting of contracts for refrigerated rail containers? What is the true situation regarding the letting of that contract, and why did the Minister not appear on "State Affair" last night to give the people of Queensland a balanced presentation of the circumstances surrounding the contract?

Mr LANE: I thank the honourable member for the opportunity to report to the House on what transpired with respect to the contract.

The contract was let to the New Zealand firm of George & Ashton (New Zealand) Limited on the recommendation that I made to Cabinet. I made that recommendation because of the great differential between the tender price offered by that company and that offered by the second tenderer, Murarrie Engineering Services.

When one considers the lobbying that took place with respect to the contract and the activity by the honourable member for Lytton on the issue, one is not surprised to discover that Murarrie Engineering Services is a company that is owned by Brisbane Wharves and Wool Dumping Pty Ltd. A long-time director of that company, of course, is Mr Brian Baillie, who is well known for his activities and for using members such as the honourable member for Lytton as political pawns in trying to further the business activities of his enterprises. I refer specifically to what happened at Fisherman Islands and a number of other activities with respect to leases of islands off the Queensland coast. His job is made much easier by some of the entertainment media outlets, such as "State Affair" and "Today Tonight", which, in providing entertainment to the people of Queensland, choose to ignore the facts provided by me in writing prior to their programs going to air.

Had the contract been awarded to the local firm, the taxpayers of Queensland would have been required to find an additional \$349,250 to subsidise the local manufacturer, despite the application of the various preference provisions that are built into the tendering arrangements. They are set out quite clearly in the Government's tender documents. The words contained in those documents are—

"In the consideration of tenders, preference . . . shall be given to goods of Queensland manufacture by adding to the manufactured values of goods (or component parts thereof) allowed for in the tenders, the percentages appropriate to their places of manufacture as set out in the following Table of Preference:—

Table of Preference

Place of Manufacture	Preference Percentage
Queensland outside Brisbane Statistical Division	Nil
Brisbane Statistical Division	5% except as stated below
Any place in Australia outside Queensland	10%
Any place outside Australia	15% "

In short, the local manufacturer had, in the first place, a State advantage of 15 per cent with respect to preference and still fell a long way behind the New Zealand tender.

In addition, I am advised by Australian Customs that customs duty of 10 per cent is payable on top of that. That will probably make a difference of 25 per cent between the tenders.

However, because of the Government's concern about employment in Queensland and of its desire to encourage local business, and despite the clumsiness of the lobbyists and the provoked initiatives of the honourable member for Lytton on this issue, the Government is considering its preference provisions. It is currently seeking advice from the Minister for Commerce and Industry and the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations on whether or not it should continue with the 15 per cent preference that is applied under circumstances such as this.

Report on Physical Exercise and Heart Disease

Dr SCOTT-YOUNG: I direct a question to the Minister for Welfare Services. In relation to the recent report on physical exercise and heart disease released by the conference of Recreation Ministers, I ask: What action is the Government planning to take to encourage physical exercise?

Mr WHITE: I thank the honourable member for the question. It is true that a report commissioned recently by the conference of Recreation Ministers stated that since 1968 the incidence of heart disease in Australia has taken a fall but that it is still costing the nation something of the order of \$5m a day. The report also stated that, if current trends are projected into the future, the cost will rise to approximately \$6.8m a day.

The report highlighted the relationship between cardio-vascular disease and physical exercise. Honourable members may be interested to learn that the report suggests that if a person engages even in only a very limited amount of exercise, something of the order of half an hour a day, the likelihood of his contracting cardio-vascular disease can be dramatically reduced.

The Recreation Ministers have now commissioned another report on strategies and on ways and means of ascertaining why some people exercise and others do not. The Ministers' intention is to put the result of the study before the nation in the hope that the incidence of cardio-vascular disease in Australia can be reduced even further.

Radioactive Mineral Sands

Mr UNDERWOOD: In directing a question to the Minister for Health, I refer to his statement that, following the location of traces of radioactivity in sand-mining tailings at Byron Bay, he had investigations made immediately in areas in Queensland that possibly were affected. I now ask: As that was in January, why was it not until June of this year that he was able to tell the honourable member for Maryborough, "Officers have carried out investigations and site inspections. The reports are still being considered.?" At what stage of the considerations will reports indicate either a clearance or a danger, and when might Parliament as a whole as well as members whose electorates are affected be informed?

Mr AUSTIN: I felt that I had perhaps adequately dealt with this subject in the ministerial statement that I made to the House only last week. For the honourable member's education, I point out that the matter was brought to my attention by the Minister for Health in New South Wales in a statement he made in about January of this year. I also point out to the honourable member that some two or three weeks ago the same Minister made a statement about further discoveries of radioactive mineral sands in the Byron Bay area.

It is not an easy task to determine which areas are radioactive, and perhaps it would help the honourable member if I explained some of the operations that need to be carried out when investigating a particular site. For example, if the Health Department was advised that a particular site may be suspect—perhaps a dump site or an old tailings site—an officer would visit the site to take first readings with a Geiger counter or a gamma-radiation meter.

If the levels of radioactivity were higher than the normal background radioactivity, it would be impossible to locate the hot spots on the site by simply going onto the site with one piece of equipment. Physical samples would have to be taken all over the site in an attempt to pinpoint the hot spots in the area. It could be done very roughly with the machine, but samples would have to be taken. It is not an easy thing to do, and it takes time. After samples were taken, and then measured in a virtual radioactive-free area, officers would have to visit the site again.

Departmental officers visited all sites that were brought to their attention by the mining companies and others, and I believe that they have carried out their task in a very professional and workmanlike manner.

The honourable member seems to be creating some sort of an impression in the community that, if all the tests are not done today or tomorrow, something dramatic will happen in the community. I point out to the honourable member that with the highest levels of radioactivity that we have found in residential areas to this stage, it would take between 10 and 20 years of continual exposure to that radioactivity before there was any adverse effect on health. It was very clearly pointed out in one statement that was used on television that, on the advice given to me, a child would have to physically live in a sand-pit for between 10 and 20 years for the radioactivity to have any possible effect on its health. There is no certainty that it would have any effect.

I am not quite sure what the honourable member is driving at. If he is seeking to undermine the credibility of my officers, then he ought to be castigated. They are loyal and honest officers who have carried out their duties to the best of their ability.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I direct a supplementary question on the same subject to the same Minister. Does he acknowledge that fear of incurring removal costs could prevent residents from advising authorities of suspected radioactive sand on their properties? If the Government will not offer any financial assistance to overcome that problem, how does he intend to ensure that all contaminated sand is located?

Mr AUSTIN: I simply do not believe that there are people in the community who, if they consider that the health of their families, particularly children, is at risk, will make a calculated decision and say, "We are not going to contact the Health Department if it will cost us some money to remove the material." Quite frankly, that is a ludicrous statement. It is like suggesting that someone might not go into a private or intermediate hospital if he is sick because it might cost him some money.

The question of costs will need to be considered when the size of the problem is known, and at this stage that is not known. On the evidence that is available to us at present, I believe that the number of houses affected by this problem will be extremely small. I feel sure that if there are people in the community who are suffering great financial hardship and need to have radioactive materials removed, the Government will give them favourable consideration.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I direct a further supplementary question on the same subject to the same Minister. If householders decide to have radioactive sand removed from their properties, what supervision and control will be exercised by the Government to ensure that the sand is properly disposed of in such a way that it can have no effect on other people who are unaware of the dangers?

Mr AUSTIN: The honourable member seems to be going over old ground. He was conspicuous by his absence during the debate on mineral sands; he preferred to leave the sensationalism to his colleague the honourable member for Wynnum, who spoke a great deal of nonsense about a person who he alleged was one of his constituents—I understand that that is not so, that he lives in the electorate of the honourable member for Woodridge.

Most of the points raised in the honourable member's question have already been covered. Perhaps once again he is trying to sensationalise the subject. That will not do the community any good. The Government is trying to solve a problem that has been around for perhaps 30 years.

Mr Underwood: We are asking different questions but you are giving the same answers.

Mr AUSTIN: It is interesting that the honourable member for Ipswich West did not raise the subject initially, especially as he appears to be vitally concerned. If the honourable member is so very interested in this matter, why didn't he get in touch with his colleague the New South Wales Minister in January this year and then raise it as a matter of public interest? One can only suspect that the honourable member's arguments have no substance at all.

Funding of Women's Refuges

Mr POWELL: I ask the Minister for Welfare Services: Now that the Budget has been brought down, is there any change in the funding of women's shelters in Queensland?

Mr WHITE: As the Treasurer indicated in his Financial Statement, this year the Government will maintain its commitment to women's refuges through the auspices of the Women's Services Program. As I have made clear on a number of occasions, the funding arrangements are of the order of 87½ per cent of running costs and 75 per cent of capital costs.

Mr Fouras: It is still the same old story.

Mr WHITE: The member for South Brisbane continues to harp about this subject. He seems to believe that the only way to go about these things is to continually provide more and more funding.

In Queensland, women's refuges are being very well run with the involvement of the community. I take this opportunity to congratulate the people involved with the women's refuge in the electorate of Isis. When I was recently there I had the pleasure of meeting two ladies, Gail Baldwin and Betty Gulley, who are doing an excellent job in running the refuge.

Honourable members should be reminded of the fact that not so long ago the Federal Government pulled out of funding in this area of social need in our community. To the great credit of this Government, through the Treasurer, funds were made available, and the State will maintain its commitment and continue to provide services to women and children in the State.

Pialba Railway Crossing

Mr POWELL: I ask the Minister for Transport: In view of the danger of the rail crossing across the main street of Pialba, and in view of his answer to me on 19 October wherein it was indicated that that crossing has a low priority for the provision of warning devices, will the Minister approve a flagman to precede each train using that main street crossing?

Mr LANE: The issue raised by the honourable member draws attention to the financial difficulty that the Railway Department faces in upgrading all such crossings throughout a State that is developing faster than any other in Australia. The department has a continual struggle to come up with sufficient money to carry out capital works in the State to keep pace with the great progress and development that is taking place.

The proposal that a flagman be appointed to precede trains across the crossing is a very interesting one, and I will be very happy to have it examined in the light of the staff available in that vicinity. From the point of view of tourism, it might be regarded as quaint and traditional; it might also be attractive to the local population. One member of the crew of the train that traverses the crossing each day might have a few minutes available to precede it, ringing a bell and waving a flag. I thank the honourable member for what is a very interesting proposal, and I will certainly have it examined as a matter of haste.

Disposal of Radioactive Sand

Mr SHAW: I ask the Minister for Health: As sand-mining companies must have been aware of the radioactivity in the residue of their mining process, has he or his department approached the companies and sought their assistance to collect and safely dispose of the contaminated sand? Alternatively, has the Minister sought the assistance of the Mines Department in order to obtain the co-operation of the mining companies to collect and/or dispose of the radioactive sand?

Mr AUSTIN: I did not quite hear the honourable member's question. If I understood him correctly, he was asking whether the Government had sought the assistance of the mining companies to collect the sand.

Mr Shaw: Or to adequately dispose of the sand after it has been collected, at the owner's expense or whatever.

Mr AUSTIN: My department has had no negotiations with the mining companies in relation to the collection or disposal of sand. We consider—and we will continue to do so unless there are cases of hardship—that that is a matter between the mining companies and the companies that purchased the sand. My department has a responsibility for the administration of the public health of the community, and that is a responsibility it intends to carry out.

As the honourable member would be aware, Cabinet set up a joint committee comprising representatives of the Mines Department, the Local Government Department and the Health Department to examine this question. In the Gold Coast area, for example, we have had co-operation from the Gold Coast City Council. Its aldermen and health inspectors co-operated with Health Department inspectors in relation to the disposal of radioactive materials that were found in a car park in the Currumbin area. So there is co-operation between local authorities, the Government, and the Mines Department, and I hope that that co-ordinating committee will ensure that that co-operation continues.

Mr SHAW: I have a further question for the Minister for Health on the same subject. The Minister says that his department has a responsibility for the protection of public health; but if he will not accept the responsibility for protecting that health by ensuring that all contaminated sand is properly removed and disposed of, what action will be taken to monitor the effect on members of the public of any unnecessary level of radiation to which they may be exposed, however harmless the Minister may believe it to be?

Mr AUSTIN: I am genuinely not sure of the meaning of the honourable member's question. If the honourable member could enlarge on the question a little and tell me what he is driving at, perhaps I could answer it.

Mr SHAW: The Minister admits that his department has a responsibility to protect the public health, but he then says that he has no responsibility to ensure the removal of a contaminated product that does have a harmful effect, not matter how small, on public health. That being the case, will the Minister set up a system to monitor affected properties over the 20-year period to which he has previously referred to see exactly what effect there is?

Mr AUSTIN: Members of the community have some responsibility to look after their own health. Governments, be they large or small and no matter what their political persuasion, simply cannot make people do what they do not want to do in relation to their health.

I am not sure what the honourable member is driving at, but I think he is asking what happens if people elect not to remove sand. That is a hypothetical question. I think I said that it would be monitored, and I have said publicly that people will be given advice on how to dispose of the sand. The committee to which I referred earlier will get the co-operation of local authorities, the Mines Department and the Health Department.

I seem to be going over old ground. It is likely that the honourable member is trying to get me to say something, but I cannot fathom what it is. Apparently he thinks there is something sinister about the whole operation, or he thinks that the Government should make the decision for the individual in relation to protecting his health. The Government is determined to protect people's health and to assist them to protect their health; but if people make a conscious decision that they do not want assistance, I am not sure how one can assist them.

Sand-mining Companies; Licences under the Radioactive Substances Act

Mr SHAW: I ask the Minister for Health: Do the sand-mining companies that have been selling contaminated sand as fill to householders and authorities in the Brisbane area have current licences, as required by section 10 of the Radioactive Substances Act 1958-78? If so, will any action be taken under section 11 of the Act to cancel such licences? If not, will any action be taken under section 13 of the Act, which prohibits a person from having in his possession, using, selling or transporting any radioactive substance otherwise than in accordance with the terms of the licence issued to him under that Act?

Mr AUSTIN: I am not sure of the intent of the honourable member's question. It is quite ridiculous. Radioactivity is present, basically, in everything we eat. It is present in beach sand and in soil in backyards. If the honourable member is seriously considering that steps should be taken under that Act he obviously does not understand the intent of the Radioactive Substances Act. That is a frivolous, ridiculous question for an honourable member to ask.

Labor Party's Policies

Mr SIMPSON: I ask the Premier: Does he think that the small business world in Queensland will be hoodwinked by the academic socialist Labor Party led by Mr Wright, the real aim of which, as a Government, is to nationalise industry, push up wages, spend beyond its means and impose death duties and a capital gains tax?

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: I am sure that the newly elected Leader of the Opposition surprised most people recently when he said that he became angry when he spoke of the profit motive and then, on the other hand, said that he would create many new jobs. I do not know how he will mix the two when he says that he becomes angry when he speaks about the profit motive. How does he intend to create more jobs? I am sure that

he will not create any confidence in the business community with policies of such a contradictory nature. That is typical of the ALP's socialistic policies, and how the ALP runs hot one day and cold the next, as it did with uranium mining. I repeat that the business community will not gain any confidence from his statement.

National Crimes Commission

Mr SIMPSON: I ask the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police: Does he consider the establishment of a national crimes commission to be an unnecessary duplication of services provided by the States, a wastage of taxpayer's money and a concept that smacks of centralism that usurps State's rights?

Mr HINZE: I reply to the honourable member by saying that the argument being used by all States is that there is concern about duplication. All States, in common with Queensland, believe that they have a very good Police Force. All we want from our Commonwealth counterparts is co-operation and consultation. We want to be able to assist one another. We do not want duplication. We do not want an overriding, FBI-type of operation in Queensland so that matters unknown to the Queensland Police Force can be going on. If the Commonwealth Government wishes to do some good, it can provide States with more money. They are all short of money. I could do with a substantial increase in funding for police activities. If the Commonwealth Government wishes to be kind, it could make more funds available for police activities and channel the funds to the right quarter where they could be used effectively.

Pressure for Increased Wages

Mr SIMPSON: I ask the Premier: Did he read the article in "The Courier-Mail" in which Mr Harry Schultz criticised Australian union leaders? Does the Premier agree that a push for unreasonably high wage increases will lead to the loss of jobs, will put export industries at risk and will hold back this lucky country?

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: It is quite clear that the continual push for higher wages and better conditions is producing very disastrous results. That is quite clear in the metal industry, because 40 000 people have lost their jobs already and many more will lose their jobs. We as a community must put our shoulders to the wheel and endeavour to achieve greater production at the lowest possible cost. That is borne out by a New Zealand firm's winning the contract for a ship. Queensland cannot compete.

Mr Burns: That has nothing to do with wages, and you know it.

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: That question can be argued at great length.

If there is to be a continual push for higher wages, which can only result in higher costs, there can be no stability, security or increase in job opportunities.

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—First and Second Allotted Days

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

Estimates-in-Chief, 1982-83

Commerce and Industry

Chief Office, Department of Commercial and Industrial Development

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Commerce and Industry) (12.1 p.m.): I move—

"That \$14,058,900 be granted for 'Department of Commercial and Industrial Development—Chief Office'."

In presenting the Estimates for my department for the current financial year, I would first of all like to stress the great importance the Government has placed on the expansion and development of our secondary industries.

In a State that is renowned for the wealth of its mineral resources and primary produce, we have seen a remarkable growth in manufacturing industries during the past two decades. It is heartening to realise that at a time when industries in other parts of Australia are crying recession and depression, Queensland manufacturers have maintained a growth pattern well above the national average. However, Australia and Queensland cannot insulate themselves from the world-wide downturn in production and trade. Here in Queensland there have been a number of factory closures and receiverships during the past 12 months. That is regrettable.

I have mentioned the wealth of our mineral resources and primary produce, and not surprisingly a significant sector of our manufacturing industries is tied to their prosperity. At the present time Queensland's sugar and beef industries have major problems; the wheat crop will be severely reduced by drought and there are depressed overseas markets for our major mineral and processed mineral exports. So until those industries recover, the major engineering industries in the State are unlikely to fill their order books.

Later I will refer to the sugar industry and its relationship to manufacturing industries. The sugar industry has a marketing problem. The beef industry has a marketing problem and is also suffering from the effects of the drought in many parts of the State. The wheat industry in Australia has a seasonal problem inasmuch as drought conditions have more than halved the Australian crop. The same pattern applies to Queensland. That has an effect on manufacturing industries. To instance one example in my own electorate—the production of Napiers is based entirely on the manufacture of agricultural machinery. In the main, its clients are grain growers. Because of drought conditions, it has had to retrench staff. That is regrettable. However, that happened in 1969-70-71. However, with the existence of the good markets for wheat the firm was quick to recover once seasonal conditions improved.

What does concern me greatly is the declining international competitiveness of many of our industries. International competitiveness is important because it demonstrates a capacity not only to export but also to compete with imports on the domestic market. If Australia is to maintain a manufacturing industry sector, then owners, managers and unions have to realise that all, in their own way, contribute to costs by their demands. Obviously if the cost of a product becomes too high, buyers turn to other suppliers and jobs are lost.

As honourable members will be aware, the Government has strongly opposed any moves for a reduction of working hours in the work-force. If we had given in to the demands of Government workers for a 38-hour week, it would have given the lead for all other sections of industry to follow.

Already our overall costs are very high and every effort must be made to keep a curb on them. For example, the costs of construction for new major projects in Queensland are very high by world standards and I understand that these costs are increasing at a faster rate than those of our major competitors. That is something of which all of us, particularly the unions that make demands for higher wages, must take cognisance. As well, the salaries and wages which contribute to operating costs are high and increasing. So with the combined effect of high construction costs and operating costs, the danger signals are there.

What will happen if the trend continues is that companies will not be able to justify economically their involvement in large new projects in this State when the upturn in the world economy occurs. The answer is that management and unions should engage in discussions to try to find some way to contain costs in future projects. Many of these costs can be reduced by better management, whereas costs related to wages can only be reduced by agreement with the unions. I am sure that every member in this Chamber will agree with me when I say that we all want to see new jobs created for Queenslanders, and I believe the time is now ripe for management and unions to engage in frank discussions about proposed future projects.

Looking at some of the major achievements during the past 12 months—a significant milestone in Queensland's industrial history was reached in February this year when the first aluminium metal was produced at the Boyne Smelter Ltd plant near Gladstone. This achievement marked the full integration of the aluminium industry in this State, making Queensland unique in Australia. It is the Government's expressed aim to encourage and

promote further the processing of our minerals in this State and we will certainly aim to obtain a uranium enrichment plant here which will bring in hundreds of millions of dollars to Queensland as well as provide many job opportunities.

The continued expansion of population and industry has led to a marked increase in the number of firms wishing to locate their enterprises in Queensland. This in turn has contributed to an unprecedented demand for services provided by the department in fostering the Government's policy of promoting local industry and employment, particularly in decentralised areas of the State. Indications are that this trend will continue and even accelerate.

As honourable members will be aware, only a month or so ago the Premier led a promotional campaign called "Enterprise Queensland" to Melbourne, which is recognised as the business centre of Australia. He was accompanied by five senior Ministers and a number of top public servants. On that occasion, more than 500 business people in Victoria assembled to listen to what Queensland has to sell in relation to their transferring at least half of their operations from Victoria. I believe that we will have an excellent response.

The wide publicity this campaign received and the subsequent reaction have been most encouraging, and the department is planning to expand its Melbourne office operations to deal with the increased demand for our services.

We now have departmental officers stationed in Melbourne, Sydney and London, plus a former departmental officer who is now stationed in Tokyo and is able to deal with any industrial inquiries there.

In Queensland the demand for my department's services has increased considerably, to such an extent that this year we have opened regional offices in Cairns and Maryborough. We intend opening further offices in Toowoomba and Mackay during the current financial year, adding to those already existing in Townsville and Rockhampton. This will mean that in the space of two years we will have trebled the number of regional offices operated by the department, which indicates very clearly the Government's commitment in pressing ahead with its policy of decentralisation of industry.

Historically, a significant proportion of the State's manufacturing industry has serviced the sugar, meat-processing and other food industries. Subsequently, the mineral industry and, more recently, other resource-based industries which have been attracted to the State have provided the basis of growth in Queensland's manufacturing sector. The tourist industry is a very important customer of manufacturing industry. The development that has taken place in the furniture industry to keep pace with the expansion in the tourist industry is amazing. One has to see it to believe it.

However, sugar-milling is still the largest single secondary industry in the State and there are few cities and towns along our coast that do not depend heavily on the sugar industry to maintain their economy. The sugar industry is the biggest customer of manufacturing industry. The current economic situation in the sugar industry is a matter of considerable concern. I am sure that we all want to see a return of a much higher price for sugar on the world market, which at the present time would hardly cover production costs.

The Queensland Government will certainly continue to make its voice heard in pressing the EEC, which is now one of the largest suppliers to the world sugar market, to co-operate with the International Sugar Agreement in bringing about more orderly marketing and hold back stocks as we are doing at the present time. On two occasions in 1977 I was involved in the negotiations which were held to formulate a new International Sugar Agreement. I believe that the EEC and the countries that it represents acted irresponsibly at that time, and have done so ever since. Other countries have been prepared to cut back sugar production by, I think, three per cent to protect the world-market price, but the EEC has gone merrily on its way and has a surplus of 5.5 million tonnes. As a result of that surplus, the world market price for sugar has plummeted. As I say, the EEC has acted irresponsibly and something has to be done to make that body see some common sense.

Queensland has been the leading State in capital investment in recent years and, despite a downturn in the second half of the year, due to the decline in prices for some of our commodities on world markets, the level of capital expenditure in Queensland grew strongly for the year as a whole. That enabled the State to show a growth in employment at a time when national employment was declining.

The indications last week that we could see a reduction in the current high interest rates will certainly be welcome news to many industries in Queensland, particularly the housing industry. Again Queensland recorded very high levels of building activity during the year, one of the main factors being the number of people coming here from other States, which boosted home construction. Houses and schools have to be provided. However, the high interest rates, coupled with the lack of housing finance, began to have their effects in the latter part of the year. The flow-on effects of any decline in the housing industry are the most extensive of any industry and show up particularly in the timber and building materials industries.

Expenditure on capital equipment showed a strong performance in the first half of the year while construction of equipment by metal fabricators was maintained to a large extent by contracts let during 1981. That work was mostly concentrated in the larger workshops throughout the State. Sales of heavy transport vehicles were very strong in the first six months of the year but flattened out during 1982. The public sector capital expenditure assumed a larger proportion of the State's total expenditure during the last six months of the year and is now estimated to constitute more than 50 per cent of the total. Rail electrification, port development, water supply, airport development and electricity generation are the major components of public spending. A matter of concern to me is the increasing difficulty that large industry in this State is having in finding industrial sites.

As I mentioned earlier, one of this Government's policies is that minerals should, as far as possible, be processed in Queensland. This means that often the raw material has to be shipped to the processing plant and then the processed material has to be re-exported. I have received complaints from large companies about the difficulty they have in finding suitable sites near deep-water ports for these types of plants.

Queensland's processed products will always have to be exported; so industry must be close to the coast and, in some cases, on the coast. Therefore, there is a need to identify possible deep-water port sites and preserve them for future heavy industry use.

Another problem is the opposition by many people and by a number of local authorities to industry locating in their area. As we are all aware, industry provides jobs and, if costs are to be continually increased, there will be no jobs. Overseas, industry and residential development go side by side. It seems to me that if the requirements of the statutory authorities controlling water, air and noise pollution are met and the zoning is appropriate, then industry should be allowed to go where its costs are lowest. It is easy for a person to oppose industry being located in his own area if he has a well-paid job, but the issue basically is jobs or no jobs.

Late last financial year I approved that the department should undertake an internal investigation to assess the effectiveness of the department's incentives and policies in the light of the financial constraints at the present time. The opinions of development bureaus, manufacturing industry, whether on our Crown industrial estates or not, industrial organisations, departmental staff and others have been obtained. The Deputy Director (Administration) of the department, Mr Jack MacNamara, has recently returned from a study of incentives and policies provided to industry in Ireland, the United Kingdom, Malaysia and Singapore. I do not expect that the findings of this very thorough investigation will be available to me before June next year.

The department has once again participated in a number of regional and resource studies during the year. The main purpose of those investigations is to examine existing industry, infrastructure and resources of a defined region, assess the prospects and identify areas of opportunity for development.

The department has just completed the initial stages of a report examining the resources and industry of central Queensland. That report, which I expect to be released during the latter part of this financial year, is the second in a new series of regional studies and follows the publication of "Resources and Industry of Far North Queensland". These regional studies are designed to provide basic information on the physical, human and economic resources of the various Queensland regions, which assist in their promotion and development.

Another important publication by the department, which has just been released, is the "Queensland Manufacturers' Directory", the first of its kind ever published in this State. It contains a comprehensive listing of Queensland manufacturers with information on their products, brand names and chief executives.

Mr Davis: Do we have a copy of that?

Mr SULLIVAN: Could he read it and understand it, if he did? I recommend it to honourable members as it presents a profile on the growing and diversified nature of manufacturing activity in this State.

As manufacturing industries in the State have expanded, so has the demand for sites on our Crown industrial estates. In some growth areas, the department has been unable to provide sufficient industrial land to meet the demand and in fact the number of applications the department has received for industrial land during the past four years has increased by a staggering 263 per cent. To date we have spent \$59.8m on these estates. Included in the total appropriation of \$9.3m this financial year is \$6.6m for the development of new and the expansion of existing estates and \$1.8m for the acquisition of land. Included in this year's works program on Crown industrial estates are expenditures of \$1.1m at Cairns, \$1.5m at Marsden and more than half a million dollars development work at Gladstone and Southport. We are also planning to spend considerable sums at Caloundra, Mackay, Maryborough, Yatala, Rockhampton, Ingham, Hervey Bay, Chinchilla and other sites.

Just last Friday I took the opportunity of travelling with the local member, Mr Simpson, to inspect our latest estate, the Yandina Industrial Estate, at Noosaville, where we plan to spend \$380,000 this financial year on the first stage of the estate's development. Negotiations are currently under way for the acquisition of additional lands at Coolum, Gin Gin, Ipswich, Mackay and Yatala for the establishment of new or the expansion of existing estates. I was grateful to Mr Simpson for giving me the opportunity of visiting the area under consideration at Coolum. It will be part of the old Department of Primary Industries research station.

During the year the department also received an increased number of inquiries about the supply of factory buildings. Expenditure on factory buildings for pioneer industries to date totals \$15.3m, and provision has been made for a further \$795,000 this financial year to complete contracts on seven buildings and construct another two. The Crown industrial estates program is certainly one of the most ambitious and successful operations carried out by the Queensland Government and, as honourable members can see, we aim to continue improving and expanding our estates throughout the State.

The Department of Commercial and Industrial Development is one of the few Government departments that actively engages in publicity and promotion. I am sure all honourable members will have seen our advertising campaign on television, promoting Queensland-made goods through the "We make it great in the Sunshine State" logo. It could be said that we are engaged in marketing, and we are. We are selling Queensland. In addition, promotion of the State's investment opportunities will be carried in newspapers and magazines in Australia and overseas.

It is now two and a half years since the Government set up the Small Business Development Corporation with the express aim of promoting and providing assistance to the small business community in this State. The corporation has conducted numerous seminars and consultation clinics in provincial cities and towns, and these will be continued during the current financial year.

As honourable members will know, during the past 12 months or so the corporation has been closely involved in the controversial shop leases issue. I have no doubt that during the next 12 months this issue will continue to receive considerable attention from both the corporation and my department. I believe that the problems faced by people in that area can be solved.

The corporation has recently installed a computer and will be establishing data banks of information on the small business sector. It will also be used in the current investigation into freight charges in Queensland and their effect on the small business community. From the increasing number of inquiries being received from the small business community, it is obvious that there is a need for information on a whole range of subjects, such as finance, marketing, accounting, general management and establishment procedures. With this in mind, the department has reprinted several publications dealing with these subjects plus

two most recent publications, "The Case for Business Success" and "Shop Leases—What the Tenant Should Know", which I have tabled in this House. They have been made available to interested business people, and a great deal of appreciation has been expressed for the department's efforts. I can assure honourable members that the many back-up services provided by my department and the corporation for the small business community are greatly appreciated.

I would also like to pay a tribute to the Queensland Manufacturing Advisory Committee. That committee has worked very hard in assessing the problems of manufacturing industry and has made a number of recommendations—that have been of great value to the department and to me. The committee presented a pre-Budget submission to the Honourable the Deputy Premier and Treasurer on behalf of the manufacturing sector.

The committee has recommended to me that an investigation should be made to determine whether there are excess costs above those in the Brisbane area, both to individuals and manufacturing industries, located in regional areas. As I said earlier, this matter is being examined. I have approved the investigation, which it is proposed, will be carried out by Professor Harris of the James Cook University in Townsville. This investigation should be completed by June next year.

In conclusion, in outlining what has been achieved by the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development and the plans for the future, I remind the Committee that such things are achieved only through the dedication and hard work of the officers of that department.

I pay tribute to the director, Mr Don Young, his senior officers and all the other officers who make up the department. Mr Young took over from Mr Bensted early this year. He was a very senior man in the Co-ordinator-General's Department. He has fitted into the department very well. I pay tribute to John Bensted who retired last year. He was the director of the department for a number of years. He was there in my first year in office.

Officers of this department are very dedicated to their responsibilities. Honourable members have often told me how easily accessible they are, and what valuable advice they tender. They are very highly regarded interstate from where many inquiries come about what we have to offer in Queensland. I pay particular tribute to Mr Kevin Quinn who is in our Sydney office, to Mr Val West who is in the Melbourne office and to Mr John Kenny who, for a number of years, was in the Melbourne office but is now in Tokyo. All of them are virtually liaison people selling Queensland. Whenever I have been to Sydney or Melbourne and met people in commercial business who are thinking of investing in Queensland, or have established a business here but want to expand, they have always spoken very highly of the service and advice given by these officers.

I am pleased to put forward this introduction of my Estimates and look towards an open debate.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I inform the Committee that, on the Vote proposed, I will allow a full discussion on all the Minister's departmental Estimates (Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds, and Loan Fund Account).

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

Mr MILLINER (Everton) (12.29 p.m.): Honourable members have just witnessed what obviously will be the last introduction of Estimates by the present Minister for Commerce and Industry. After reading this morning's Press and listening to radio comments yesterday about his pending resignation, I was not surprised by the suggestion made in the media that if he did not resign by the end of next month the Premier would remove him unceremoniously from his present position.

The Minister's portfolio is a highly responsible one. The Minister is responsible for looking after business and commerce in this State.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: You would say that he is tired and looks like a big tabby cat.

Mr MILLINER: He does look tired. I do not believe that he has performed adequately in this portfolio. It is evident from his contribution on the sugar industry and many other primary industries that his heart is in primary production and not in manufacturing and commerce. He performed particularly well as Minister for Primary Industries but it is obvious from his contribution today that he has not had his heart in his present portfolio.

I make a pledge to the business community in Queensland that the Australian Labor Party will take up the fight for small business people and will not run away from the problems confronting them. Because of the problems facing the Government, it is quite obvious that it has a conflict of interest. It is experiencing tremendous difficulty in establishing a delicate balance between its private enterprise philosophy and Government involvement in private enterprise to assist where possible. Nowhere is that conflict of interest more evident than in the continuing saga of the Aspley hypermarket. The saga commenced earlier this year when the South African company Pic'n Pay announced its intention to build a large hypermarket in Aspley. It is interesting to recall some of the comments made at that time.

The matter was first raised by the honourable member for Aspley in this Chamber on 17 March. During her speech the honourable member for Chatsworth interjected that, if the Brisbane City Council did not go ahead with the rezoning, it was more likely than not that the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police would step in. In response to that interjection, the honourable member for Aspley said—

“It will certainly not get the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police to do it because I received an assurance today from the Deputy Premier and Treasurer that he will ask Cabinet to have the Small Business Development Corporation investigate the proposal and undertake an economic impact study on the effect such a development would have on the Queensland retailing community.”

Several other comments were made but we saw no action from the relevant departments.

In April this year Mr Doug Black, the manager of the Queensland Retail Traders and Shopkeepers Association, accused the Government of lying doggo in regard to the hypermarket. Following his statement the Minister decided that it was about time to get into the act. On 9 May he broadcast over radio stations 4SB in Kingaroy, 4TO in Townsville and 4RO in Rockhampton concerning the need for the Government to involve itself in protecting business. He said—

“That is why I have become personally involved in the latest attempt by a joint consortium of South African and Australian interests to develop a multi-million dollar shopping centre at Aspley in the northern suburbs of Brisbane.

There is also the proposal that the company is looking at other sites in Queensland, for example at Townsville and I have no doubt that if they prove successful then there will be a move to establish what has become known as hypermarkets in other provincial centres in this State.

The name hypermarket is in fact a new name in our vocabulary. It has been developed by a South African company to describe a retailing operation that sells practically everything, from a needle to a motor car.

The sales at these hypermarkets in South Africa are believed to average about \$2 million a week for each operation, which is massive trading when compared to the average supermarket in this country.

In view of the possible effects on the small business retailers in an area where a hypermarket might operate, I have asked the Small Business Development Corporation to prepare a report on the hypermarket project.”

It must be borne in mind that the member for Aspley said that she had a commitment from the Deputy Premier and Treasurer that he would ask Cabinet to instigate the report. I ask the Minister: Where is the report and what does it say? I ask the Minister to table the report that was prepared by the Small Business Development Corporation. The Minister also stated—

“This is the first such type of investigation that has been carried out in this State, or indeed Australia.

Within an area of 5 kilometres, which in the Brisbane area is limited but in a city such as Townsville, Rockhampton or Toowoomba would cover most of the retail traders, a hypermarket would create a serious trading decline for other retail outlets.

Extending this further to a 10 kilometre area, which the report considers would be the maximum effect of a hypermarket and the effects are multiplied to a much greater degree.

For example, you are looking at retail outlets in this area employing more than 15 000 people—”

those 15 000 people would be employed by approximately 2 350 businesses—

“and while not all of these employees would be put out of work by a hypermarket, there would certainly be a significant number of them having to look for new jobs.”

I have spoken to many business people on the north side of Brisbane where the hypermarket would be situated and affect businesses. I was told that business people are concerned about the prospect of a hypermarket to the extent that if they were contemplating putting on more employees, they would not go ahead with that project because they are apprehensive about embarking on such a project in view of the effects that the hypermarket may have on their businesses. I appeal to the Minister to do something about that.

Many thousands of young people will leave school at the end of the year and they will be looking for work. The retailing industry is traditionally an area in which many school-leavers are employed. The Minister further stated—

“The hypermarkets, by the very method of their operation would only be employing about a couple of hundred people.”

He also stated that he had sent the report of the Small Business Development Corporation to the Federal Treasurer, Mr John Howard, who told him that he would fully examine it. On the one hand he is saying that he will ask the Small Business Development Corporation to submit a report on the hypermarket to him. On the other hand, about three paragraphs later he says that he has the report and that he has sent the report to the Federal Treasurer. I hope that the Minister tables that report, in which he stated—

“I have sent the report of the Small Business Development Corporation to the Federal Treasurer, Mr John Howard, who has told me that he will fully examine all the implications of such a project before finally accepting or refusing an application for investment by the South African company in a hypermarket.

This is a decision which must be made by the Foreign Investment Review Board, which comes under the Treasurer's portfolio.

In the meantime, the Queensland Retail Traders and Shopkeepers Association has made its own submission opposing the project.

While I fully appreciate and realise the great advantages that Queensland has gained from overseas investment, I do not want to see the jobs of hundreds or even possibly thousands of Queenslanders put at risk and business go bankrupt because of the operations of one consortium.

However, I do not agree with the latest Victorian Government moves to restrict regional shopping centre plans by Australian based companies in that State.

There has to be a compromise, a balance that ensures all sections of the retail trade get a reasonable share of the market.”

That is what the Minister said in his weekly radio broadcast on 9 May. He has now decided to get himself heavily involved in the hypermarket issue. Unfortunately, the Minister encountered some problems in his own ranks. Quite obviously there is a deep division within Government ranks on this delicate area of the Minister's portfolio. One has only to examine the controversy surrounding the shopping leases and the statements made by the honourable members for Ashgrove and Toowong and various other Liberal members who unfortunately do not have the numbers or the principles to do anything about that matter.

The member for Aspley has been heavily involved in this matter. She is the member whose area is affected by the proposed hypermarket. She has made some very interesting comments about the hypermarket. On 6 May 1982, in the “Queensland Country Life”, Mrs Gabby Horan was reported as saying that a hypermarket would

create an ideal situation because a housewife could buy her groceries and then shop around for other items. The article further stated—

“The Liberal Member for Aspley, Brisbane, Mrs Beryce Nelson, is not as optimistic. She considers the concept will become a blight on the community.

Mrs Nelson describes a hypermarket as a gigantic corporate structure under one roof that strips the life out of a community.

Hypermarkets had their beginning in South Africa.

Mrs Nelson believes the Hypermarket concept is a ‘cartel’ operation under one roof that bypasses the normal community servicing operation.

‘The normal regional shopping centre allows individual traders to operate various stores, sometimes in direct competition, whereas the Hypermarket is totally controlled by the owner/operator. The local trader cannot participate,’ Mrs Nelson said.

Australia has a four-tiered shopping system. First the local or strip shopping which satisfies local one stop demands. The second is the community or local ‘down-town’ centres that throb with the humdrum of daily shopping, usually the congested strip centres prevalent in country towns.

The third kind is the regional shopping centres that house a cluster of specialty shops joined together by a large department store and supermarket.

The fourth rung of the shopping ladder is the true downtown shopping offered by State capital cities where the monoliths trade.

Mrs Nelson suggests the Hypermarket is going to produce a fifth and unwarranted tier of shopping.

One that local traders and established corporate retail giants believe will be a blight to their financial returns for decades to come.”

From that report and from statements made by the honourable member for Aspley in this Chamber, it is quite obvious that she is opposed to the establishment of the hypermarket. She has made that clear.

The Minister is also in conflict with members of his own party, the National Party. The organisational wing of the National Party has come out in opposition to the hypermarket. In “The Courier-Mail” of 21 April 1982 the following report appeared—

“The National Party is likely to support small businessmen in their opposition to the establishment of a hypermarket in the Brisbane suburb of Aspley.

If it goes ahead, it will be the first in Australia.

The hypermarket, a South African concept, is two to three times the size of conventional shopping centres.

The National Party’s small business committee chairman, Mr John Goleby, said yesterday there was mounting concern within small and big business circles at the prospect of hypermarkets being established.”

The smart money around the town is on Mr Goleby for elevation to the ministerial silk, if I might put it that way, when at the end of next month honourable members finally see the demise of the Minister for Commerce and Industry.

The report in “The Courier-Mail” went on to say—

“Mr Goleby said one of their major concerns was that it would jeopardise small businesses in the area.

An \$11 million hypermarket is planned on a 10.2 ha site at Aspley which has already been rezoned by the Brisbane City Council for a shopping centre.

Mr Goleby said the hypermarket would make existing shopping complexes look very small.”

Mr Goleby went on to deal with employment prospects.

Mr Davis: He is supporting the market.

Mr MILLINER: No, he is not supporting the establishment of the hypermarket. And he must find himself in a difficult position, because obviously he is in conflict with his philosophy of free enterprise. That philosophy is to let the market-place determine who survives and who goes under. Under the private enterprise concept the rich get richer and the small go broke.

Mr Davis: A dollar each way.

Mr MILLINER: That is right, but that is typical.

In addition to the honourable member for Redlands, the National Party as a whole became involved in the controversy surrounding the establishment of the hypermarket. Some time ago in the Press this report appeared—

“The National Party’s central council last night asked for an application by a South African firm for a hypermarket in Brisbane’s northside shopping suburb of Aspley to be blocked.

The plea went to Premier Mr Joh Bjelke-Petersen and Local Government Minister Mr Russ Hinze from the central council meeting in Brisbane.”

The National Party’s central council did not worry about the Minister who is the responsible Minister, the Minister for Commerce and Industry; it went right to the top—to the Premier and to the man who would like to be deputy leader of the National Party in the not too distant future.

The report continued—

“Mr Ron Boswell, the party’s metropolitan area vice president, claimed the foreign group was using a zoning loophole to promote a suburban trading concept years ahead of its time.

The NP council moved against hypermarket applications in Brisbane, irrespective of present zonings, until an economic impact study was held.

Mr Boswell said the concept was opposed by both big business and small traders.

He said an amendment, in line with changes to the Local Government Act some time ago, was needed to avert crippling effects on established traders—especially small businesses—by the hypermarket concept.”

A good deal of controversy has arisen among Government members over the hypermarket. The honourable member for Aspley has come out against it.

Mr Akers: She is fighting very hard against it.

Mr MILLINER: Yes, she is. The honourable member for Redlands, as chairman of the National Party’s small business committee, has also come out against it. Then Mr Ron Boswell, for and on behalf of the National Party executive, comes out and opposes the hypermarket.

On 26 August this year the Minister issued another Press release on the hypermarket. It read—

“The Queensland Government does not have any jurisdiction over the establishment of a new hypermarket at Aspley, the Minister for Commerce and Industry, Mr Vic Sullivan said today.”

It is interesting to note that it is suggested that the jurisdiction over the establishment of the hypermarket has been thrown back to the local authority, which in this case is the Brisbane City Council.

One must bear in mind that the boundaries of the proposed hypermarket extend much further than the boundaries of the Brisbane City Council. The proposed hypermarket is very close to the boundaries of the Pine Rivers Shire. The member for Redlands talked about a radius of 16 km. That would include the Caboolture Shire and the city of Redcliffe. It is quite ridiculous to suggest that the local authority, which in this case is the Brisbane City Council, will finally determine whether the proposal will proceed.

Mr Sullivan: In the new set-up, you are the Opposition spokesman for commerce and industrial development. You have only five minutes left. Are you not going to talk about industry all over Queensland?

Mr MILLINER: I am talking about the hypermarket and the problems that will confront the people in the area. As I have said, I have attended meetings, and I know that the people are gravely concerned. I believe that the Minister has ducked the issue.

The Press release continued—

“He said the Local Government Court had approved the proposal and the Federal Government had now allowed a one-third South African investment in the project.

The Brisbane City Council had designated the land for shopping centre purposes.

Mr Sullivan said there had been a great deal of misleading information on the Aspley project.

He had been informed by the Australian partners the Permewan Wright retailing group that there would be more than 40 small business retailers established in the complex.

The total area of the shopping centre would be 11 000 square metres which meant that there were at least five shopping centres in the Brisbane area larger than the planned Aspley centre."

I ask the Minister to tell me where those five shopping centres that are larger than the planned Aspley centre are located.

The Press release continued—

"The repeated accusation that a new Hypermarket at Aspley, larger than anything yet seen in Queensland and selling everything from matches to motor cars is, according to the Directors of Permewan Wright, completely wrong", said Mr Sullivan."

It was the Minister who said that the hypermarket would sell everything from needles to motor cars. The directors of that company have denied that.

The Press release continued—

"It appears that some people, for one reason or another have issued misleading statements on this issue, he said, 'The plans show a normal type shopping centre, including 42 retail shops, providing a service to local consumers.' "

On the same date, 26 August 1982, a Press article carried the headline, "Hypermarket gets Federal approval"; and quoted the developers, Permewan Wright, as saying that the development would proceed. Not once did they indicate that the development will be anything other than a hypermarket.

The Minister has a responsibility to the business community, to the 15 000 people employed in the shops affected by this proposal and to the many thousands of young people who will be leaving school at the end of this year. He should lay his cards on the table and table in this Chamber all the documentation on the proposed Aspley hypermarket.

In his radio broadcasts, the Minister indicated that a report has been prepared by the Small Business Development Corporation. He has sent a copy of that report to the Federal Treasurer (Mr Howard). Obviously, he had that document when he made the decision to allow the company to bring the money into Australia.

The Minister has a responsibility to the business community on the northside of Brisbane to table that report so that the fears that the people on the northside of Brisbane hold can be allayed or so that they can make some alternative arrangements. If the hypermarket proposal proceeds along the lines that the Minister has suggested—that is, that it will sell everything from needles to motor cars—there is no doubt that it will have a devastating effect on small business on the northside of Brisbane. Again, I appeal to the Minister to come clean and table all the documentation.

Mr McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (12.50 p.m.): I rise to support the remarks of the Minister in speaking to his Estimates of Commerce and Industry. I listened with great attention to the new Opposition spokesman on this portfolio. I was absolutely amazed that somebody so new would not take this opportunity to outline some of his philosophies on small business and development in Queensland. Instead we listened for 20 minutes to a speech about one hypermarket in Brisbane.

His only other comment was about the retirement of the Minister. The Minister has made a public statement that he will step down as Deputy Leader of the National Party; he has made no statement at all about retiring from Cabinet. I suggest to whoever wrote the article that appeared in one of today's newspapers that he might have to wait a little longer. I believe the Minister has served the Government well and will make up his own mind about when he wishes to retire. He certainly will not be hounded out by people not in Parliament, wherever they may come from.

The campaign to encourage people to invest in Queensland is being carried out very well by the present administration. I pay tribute to our old friend and colleague the honourable member for Yeronga who coined the excellent slogan, "We make it great in the Sunshine State", which was well received by the people of Queensland.

Mr Lee: There it is!

Mr McKECHNIE: Yes, he still has it on his coat. I support that slogan 100 per cent.

The Minister has developed the portfolio. People can say whatever they like about the present administration in Queensland, but the simple fact of the matter is that Queensland is creating most of the jobs in Australia, and the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Whatever personal criticisms may be levelled at the Minister from time to time by people outside this Chamber, the fact is that jobs are being created in Queensland and a heck of a lot of them are being created in secondary industry.

Although jobs are being created in Queensland, they are not being created fast enough, but of course the Queensland economy is locked into the Australian economy as a whole, and naturally the Australian economy is tied to the world economy. In comparison not only with other States but also with other countries in the world, the number of jobs created in Queensland is very favourable.

The Small Business Development Corporation was the brain-child of this Government. The head of that corporation, Mr Bill Lamond, is doing an excellent job in co-ordinating the voices of small business in the State. That is necessary because small business is literally small business, and it does not speak with a united voice. In its wisdom the Government decided to set up the corporation, and it very deliberately chose to make it a corporation rather than a Government department so that there would be a private enterprise involvement. It recruited the staff very carefully. I am quite confident that that corporation is playing a worthwhile role in bringing the voice of small business to the Government. Its investigation into freight charges is a very important task, and I look forward with interest to the recommendations contained in that report.

The sole topic of the Opposition spokesman's comments in relation to the Minister's portfolio was a proposed hypermarket in Brisbane, which brings up the matter of shopping centre leases. Many people would like to see a quick solution to that problem.

Mr Lee: The Opposition spokesman did not make his position clear.

Mr McKECHNIE: That is true, he did not. A solution to this problem must be found, but it will not be easy—certainly not as easy as many people try to make out. First, any action that is taken should not involve retrospective legislation. It is no good members of this Assembly condemning the Commonwealth Government for moves into retrospective legislation if they are going to try to talk the Queensland Government into introducing such legislation relative to shopping complex leases. That is just not on, and the Government should not become involved in it.

However, some of the leases that are negotiated are unfair, and a fairer system must be devised for future shopping complex leases, as well as for existing ones when they are renewed. I remember receiving a letter from a lady who has a retail fruit and vegetable shop at the Indooroopilly shopping complex. She wanted protection from what she saw as a vicious landlord. If one intends to offer protection to a person, one must also ensure that that person is also doing the right thing. So I wrote back to her saying that if she could prove to me that she was being treated unfairly by the landlord I would certainly take up her case. I also said that I would do that only if she could also prove to me that she was not ripping off her customers. I suggested that she might like to send me a copy of her latest balance sheet. Of course, she did not do that. As a matter of fact, she did not even reply to my letter, and I was told that she gave it to a member of the Opposition. How can a person seek protection if she is not prepared to produce evidence that proves that she is not in the same boat herself? I must admit that I am very suspicious about the profits that that woman is making in her business.

As to industry as a whole—it is well known that many people are coming to Queensland from interstate. I want to dispel the rumours that most of those people are age pensioners and the like. Everybody is welcome to come to Queensland, and if migrants are to be split into age groups, it should be said that the great percentage of people migrating to Queensland are in the 20 to 40 year age bracket. They are in the prime of their working lives and are not just coming here to retire. If it was not for Queensland creating so many jobs, the unemployment situation in Australia would be much worse than it is at the moment.

Mr Davis: Have you ever thought about joining Ashton's Circus?

Mr McKECHNIE: I have given some thought to it, but I have been told that I just could not compete with the honourable member for Brisbane Central.

The Minister mentioned that in the past four years there has been an increase of 263 per cent in demand for industrial land.

He mentioned also that the department is conducting an internal investigation to see whether there is some way in which the department can become even more successful than it is at the moment. I shall enlarge on that point after the luncheon recess.

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

Mr McKECHNIE: Before the luncheon recess, I mentioned the internal investigation being carried out by the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development relative to improving the department and encouraging further industries to become established in Queensland.

I am immensely concerned about the fact that some areas of the State have an overdemand for available industrial land while other areas have difficulty in attracting industry. I have not been able to understand the logic in the department's thinking on this matter. If money is tight when a private person approaches the department wanting to borrow money to develop an industry, the department's philosophy is to give a guarantee to help him get the money elsewhere rather than advance the money itself. On the other hand, when it comes to providing industrial estates, the department seems to believe that it should provide all the money to buy the land. That is not necessarily desirable.

On the Gold Coast or in Mackay, where there is a demand for industrial estates, perhaps private enterprise should be encouraged to develop them instead of the department's limited resources being used to purchase and develop the land. It might be better if the department gave guarantees to companies to develop industrial estates.

That is not a radical concept, because the department adopts a similar attitude when individuals or companies approach it to borrow money to begin a business. When insufficient money is available to enable industrial estates to be developed quickly, perhaps a guarantee could be given to private enterprise to enable it to do the job. That would save the Government a lot of money. Some of that money could be used to provide incentives to attract industries to areas that presently are not attracting as many as the Government would wish. Incentives must be given if industries are to be attracted to such areas.

Some years ago, when interest rates were lower than they are now, rental on industrial estates in Brisbane was 2½ per cent lower than the rental in less favoured areas. The difference is still 2½ per cent, but interest rates are now higher. Proportionately, the advantage is not as great as it used to be. I should like that matter to be closely investigated.

At one time, a 9½ per cent tax was imposed on wine sold at a winery. I remember that the present Minister for Commerce and Industry, in conjunction with the then Minister for Justice, changed the Wine Industry Act and the Liquor Act so that real incentives were given to encourage the establishment of wineries in Queensland. That has had a positive result. Six or seven wineries have been established in this State, compared with only one or two before the incentive was offered. If incentives were given to other industries they would establish in isolated areas.

One problem in encouraging industry to establish anywhere in Queensland is the throughput of a factory in an area. The sawmilling industry in my electorate has the problem of competing with southern mills that have a much larger throughput. The southern mills have the advantage of lower cost of production. The mills in my area are looking at amalgamation to overcome the problem. That is a shame, because they are the life-blood of some of the small towns. Currently the Inglewood and Goondiwindi mills are considering amalgamation, and I am pleased that the general manager of Laheys, or the parent company, Carricks, has agreed to go to the area and talk with the men. I am pleased, also, that the Minister for Lands and Forestry is in the Chamber, because he is aware of the problem and has agreed to talk to Carricks. I assure the men in the area that everything possible is being done to achieve the most satisfactory result.

Decentralisation depends on secondary industries in rural areas being based on primary industries. In his introductory remarks, the Minister mentioned the problems confronting rural industries. I inform city members of Parliament that, to overcome many of the problems facing Australia today, viable rural industries are needed, because they are responsible for creating many jobs in the country towns and in the city. Many city industries rely heavily on primary industry for their survival.

I was rather surprised when, on a television program, I heard the new Leader of the Opposition condemn the profit motive. He cannot have it both ways. If industry establishes in this State, it must have profits to survive. The new Leader of the Opposition has based his career on consumer protection.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Where did he say that?

Mr McKECHNIE: I heard him on television express concern in no uncertain manner about the profit motive.

Business does not operate only for the sake of making profit. If it is to survive and, more importantly, expand and create jobs, it must make a profit. Profit has been the most powerful motive for the creation of jobs in any country. Look at the difference between the number of jobs created in a Communist country and in a democratic country. In order to create jobs and encourage development in Queensland, the Government must redouble its efforts and ensure that the introduction of the 38-hour week is postponed for some years until the Australian economy is in better shape.

There is no doubt that Queensland's economy is in better shape than the economy of other States. That has been brought about by the Government of this State. No Government, no matter how good it is, can solve the unemployment problem by itself. The only Government that can go a long way towards doing so is the Federal Government. Its policies are far superior to those of the Opposition, but they are still not good enough. The Queensland Government has encouraged development by being a low-tax State. Until the Commonwealth Government comes to grips with the problem of high taxation, unemployment will continue. Businessmen are looking for stable countries in which to invest. If the Commonwealth Government would assist in making this country a low-tax nation, it would make the job of all State Governments much easier in creating jobs and encouraging development.

Mr MOORE: (Windsor) (2.26 p.m.): I commend the Minister for Commerce and Industry for his attitude to industry. He has done everything within his power to assist industry. He has offered a helping hand where it has been needed. The Department of Commerce and Industry does not have a very large budget. Its allocation, which is between \$14m and \$15m, is not a large amount of money. In terms of Budget allocations, it would receive one of the lowest sums.

Judging by the small number of Acts administered by the department one would think that the Minister's job was a sinecure, but his portfolio entails more than the administration of Acts. In the past Queensland did not have a Minister who specialised in establishing industry, because we lived in a self-reliant world. There was not a great deal of technology; the skills of the work-force were relied upon. The Minister's department is a most important one. Although it is a Government department, it is not a large employer of labour. It tries to establish industry by the encouragement of private enterprise, which generates employment. We cannot survive as a nation simply by taking in each other's washing or by employing more and more public servants. Although they may do a community job, they are non-producers. Members of my political persuasion often say, "Produce, produce, produce", when they themselves have never produced a thing in their lives, and never could. The production of articles that can be used is not regarded by many people of my political persuasion and by white-collar workers as their vocation.

Mr Hooper: What is your political persuasion?

Mr MOORE: I am a Tory from way back, and will remain one. I will not embarrass the honourable member by asking the honourable member his political persuasion.

Industry in Queensland, and indeed Australia, will not get on its feet while so many people are unemployed and receiving the dole. Although the unemployed are poor, they do not work for the benefits that they receive. The remainder of the work-force is required to provide the money to keep the unemployed above or on the bread-line. Companies are required to pay tax of 47½ per cent. John Citizen, the electrician, the plumber, or any other person working in his own business, is paying tax at the rate of 50c in the dollar.

That is a very great disincentive. The Federal and State Governments must look at the work-force and say, "If we are going to pay unemployed people a certain amount of money, they should do some work in return for that money." The work that they do should not be chipping footpaths; it should be something productive. To a large extent, productive work is self-generating.

Industries in Queensland and in Australia would be encouraged if the label "Made in Australia" was looked on as a badge of excellence. In days gone by, Japanese toys were cheap and were held together with little pieces of tin bent over. After young Johnny had wound up a Japanese toy three or four times, and sat on it, it was nothing more than a piece of rubbish. However, Japanese toys are no longer like that.

The first Japanese motor bike that I saw had every nut and bolt chromed over and the nuts were acorn nuts. There were no raw edges on which the rider could cut himself. Although the British-built BSAs were excellent motor bikes, anyone who brushed against them would knock a yard of skin off on the rough edges. On top of that, the British bikes were fitted with kick-starters. What did the Japanese do? They asked, "Why must a rider have to kick-start a motor bike? Why can't bikes be fitted with starter motors? After all, they have a battery and they have a generator for the lights, so why can't they have a self-starter?" The Japanese produced a motor bike with a self-starter. Nowadays, to some extent the label "Made in Japan" is a mark of excellence.

I realise that in many instances in the field of electronics the Japanese simply took the idea from America, which is the leader in that field. When one country borrows an idea from another country, or when one industry borrows an idea from another, it can, with the use of people trained in the respective field, make some modification and turn out a very good article.

Australia produces some very good products. However, some are not very good. It produces good machinery and it manufactures steel that lasts. Unfortunately, some manufacturers are quite prepared to have their products fall to bits. A motor mower, for example, might not be balanced correctly and it might be held together with self-tapping screws. The result is that vibration occurs and the next thing the mower case falls to pieces. American manufacturers are adopting a similar line of thought. I own a Jeep. Some American-made cars are manufactured so badly that if they are driven over a rough road almost everything falls off. The parts are held together by PK screws with PAL washers behind them. As soon as they work loose, there is nothing to stop them falling out. The result is that parts drop off along the road.

Bob Windsor, a former member for Ithaca, had a company called Windsor Engineering in Fortitude Valley, which made planer blades. On one occasion when he was in the United States he visited a sawmill and saw planers ripping through imported timbers. During a smoko break when the planers were not working he had a look at the blades and asked one of the men, "When did you sharpen these last?" The man said, "A month ago." Bob Windsor saw how good the blades were and asked, "Where can I get some of that steel?" He bought similar steel and manufactured planer blades for sawmills in Queensland. Everybody sought Bob Windsor's planer blades because they stood up to the job.

I would like to think that everything produced in Australia was par excellence. The Minister should say to industry, "Listen, don't make it to last five years. Don't put that obsolescence factor into the article by design. Make it last for ever. If people want to change it, they can change it simply for changes sake, not because the article does not have merit."

Mr Vaughan: What about profit motivation that the member for Carnarvon mentioned before?

Mr MOORE: There must be profit motivation, because it is from profits that companies pay taxes and accumulate reserves which they can use to carry them over bad times. Profits can be used to carry out experiments. I know that "profit" is not a dirty word in the minds of some members of the Labor Party.

Mr Vaughan: Thank you very much.

Mr MOORE: I am not trying to rubbish the honourable member; I saw the point that he was making.

With competition, there cannot be excessive profits. Once an industry successfully establishes itself in this country, it is not long before it has competition. People in business are like hawks; they are watching all the time to see what others are doing. There is nothing wrong with excessive profits, except where they are earned in a monopolistic situation, and I have never advocated that.

Today, one must be appalled at all the talk about recession and depression because so much of the work-force is unemployed. The present economic problems will not be overcome in six months or a year. An economy gradually declines into a recession or depression and then gradually claws its way out of it. It will not be easy. Queensland and Australia cannot isolate themselves and say "We will put up trade barriers." That is the last thing we want. However, we should be producing more than we are at present.

There is no reason in the world why we should not be manufacturing all the ships, machine tools, tractors and other farm machinery that are needed. If, in manufacturing those articles, we have to set up some trade barriers, fair enough.

Let us say that we export \$500m worth of coal to Japan. In Australia that coal is produced in an industry that is not labour intensive, but we have to buy back from Japan transistor radios, motor cars, refrigerators and other prime-cost articles which are manufactured in labour-intensive industries. Under those circumstances, if we are to have an equal balance of trade with Japan, how can we maintain our own work-force? A balance in trade means that Australia has to purchase from the country that buys our exports an equal value of goods. That cannot be done when Australia sells a bulk commodity and then buys back thousands and thousands of tin-openers and what-have-you.

I have always believed that charity begins at home, and that it is no good not having tariff barriers if the country still has a great number of unemployed. In the future the unemployed will consist largely of persons who have never worked from the day they left school, persons who have been on the dole, persons who have been absolutely demoralised and, because all incentive has disappeared, persons who do not want to work. They do not know anything about a 40-hour week.

Some people believe that the working week should be reduced to 38 hours. But the 38 hours is not the problem; the problem is the hourly rate. Finally it comes down to the capacity of industry to pay. It is all very well for members of Parliament, unions or anyone else to say that the cost of living has increased so that employees need more money to buy their slice of the cake. If they want a bigger slice of the cake, a bigger cake has to be made; there is no other way around it. It is a big problem that has no simple solution. The printing of money to pay a work-force that is not producing is not the solution to the problem. Finally it gets down to the capacity of industry to pay. The Public Service should not be the leader in the wages stakes, because the only money that public servants get is the money that comes from industry and from the taxpayer.

The cost to industry is not only the applicable hourly rate but also loadings such as the 17½ per cent paid for holiday pay. Surely every employee should realise that if he wants to go on holidays in, say, 12 months' time he should put away some money for them. The boss should not have to provide the employee with extra holiday pay. Another loading is the cost of sick leave, which is abused by some. That benefit is absolutely necessary for those who really need it, but members of the work-force should not say, "I've got a couple of weeks' sick leave due so I think I'll go fishing for a day."

Mr FitzGerald: They don't disagree with it, do they?

Mr MOORE: They have their own opinions about it. In the length of time allowed one could develop any one of a dozen points which would be enough for the agenda of a seminar. To the entire work-force and all the unemployed in Queensland we have to say, "What does Queensland need? What does it really lack?"

Opposition Members: A Labor Government.

Mr MOORE: I don't think that will ever happen. Honourable members opposite should not hold their breath until that happens.

A painfully obvious need is housing. Because a number of the unemployed are unskilled, in this day and age there is no reason in the wide world why houses could not be built on the principle of an assembly line. Frames and other parts of houses could be constructed by an unskilled work-force.

We need more buildings for educational purposes. We also need more hospital buildings to accommodate the chronically ill. The lack of such buildings is a crime when one thinks of the \$1,200m that is spent on supporting mothers' benefits—

Mr Davis: How much?

Mr MOORE: \$1,200m.

Mr Davis: Fair go.

Mr MOORE: Yes, it is, and about \$2,000m is spent on unemployment benefits.

(Time expired.)

Mr McLEAN (Bulimba) (2.45 p.m.): While listening to the Minister's speech I thought that I was living in another world. The rosy picture painted by him certainly did not fit in with some of the problems that exist in my electorate, and in Queensland generally. He painted an unbelievable picture of expansion. He said that manufacturing industries seemed to be going well, particularly the furniture manufacturing industry. He also referred to another industry that is vital to Queensland, namely the sugar industry. But he did not say a great deal about the other manufacturing industries that are not so buoyant at present, nor did he touch on the fact that unemployment in Australia has passed the half million mark, and that the betting around the ridges is that it is not "if" but "when" it will reach the one million mark. People with a knowledge of industrial relations are saying that youth unemployment could reach 20 per cent of total unemployment by the end of the year, and surely that is a situation of which no Government could be proud.

Mr Jennings: Who is saying that?

Mr McLEAN: Plenty of people with expertise in that area.

Turning to the subject of inflation—figures have just been released showing that the annual rate of inflation is now running at 12.3 per cent, surely a very embarrassing figure for a Government that has made the lowering of inflation one of its major policies. We have also been told that for the first time in 30 years there has been a decline in the gross national product. Again, surely that is an alarming situation for any Government, particularly a Government that is so boastful of its achievements in the economic area. The same thing could be said of the Queensland Government. For instance, the Minister did not refer to the alarming unemployment in the metal, clothing and textile, footwear, rubber and building industries. I could go on; the list is endless.

I recently read a very interesting article about the rubber industry. It stated that four years ago 90 per cent of the tyres used in Australia were manufactured in Australia, but today that figure has dropped to 42 per cent. Four years ago 20 000 persons worked in the industry but the number has now been reduced to 10 000. That is just one example. I could refer to industry after industry to show that the policies of the National and Liberal Parties in this nation are not working.

Just recently Fraser said, "Hard times are to come." I would like him to talk to the unemployed, the pensioners and the low-income earners in my electorate, who are certain that the hard times are already here. We face a recession or a depression, whichever one likes to call it, that has been brought about by the policies of the Liberal and National Parties. We are facing a bust that has followed a boom. Over the extended period in which the Liberal and National Parties have been in office we have seen a number of boom and bust situations. There has been no stability in the economy, and the blame for that is passed from the State Government to the Federal Government, from a State National-Liberal Government to a Federal Liberal-National Government. But they are the same parties, and their policies are designed in the same boardrooms and convention rooms. It is very convenient for this Government to pass the blame to the Federal Government as if it were a different body, but it is composed of people from the same parties. The Federal Government then lays the blame for the economic situation on the world recession. Fair enough, there is a world recession and it can be partly blamed for Australian economic conditions.

We are all aware that we cannot isolate ourselves, but this Government's priorities are completely wrong. It has no policies aimed at alleviating the hardship suffered by the unemployed. What have the National and Liberal Parties in Queensland done in this area? Not one thing! Most Liberal politicians, both here and in the Commonwealth sphere, really do not know what unemployment means. They do not realise that people stand in queues at dole payment centres; they do not realise that they have to fill in endless forms; they do not realise that they are being degraded and that they have to watch their life savings slowly dwindle. They do not realise that the bread-winner in the family has to sit back and watch his family go without.

Mr FitzGerald: That is bunkum, and you know it.

Mr McLEAN: It is not bunkum; it is true. I suggest that the honourable member should come to my area one day and get into the queue.

Mr FitzGerald: You said that we would not know what it is like.

Mr McLEAN: The problem is there; it exists.

It is time that the Government did something about the unemployment problem, instead of giving priority to other matters, as it has over the years.

I will now deal with the "Buy Queensland made" campaign which has been under way for some time. I am sure that all honourable members have seen the elaborate, expensive promotions, publications and advertisements in the media relating to that campaign. I should like the Minister to visit my area and tell the boat-builders about it. Boat-building is a long-established industry on the Brisbane River and along the Queensland coastline. Great fears are held about the boat-building industry being lost to Queensland completely.

This industry has a long, proud history. It has proved to be very competitive and that it can build a world-class product. It has also proved that it can build any type of boat. In my electorate, Millkraft Thompson has had more than 40 years' experience, and Norman Wright has had more than 70 years' experience in boat-building. But Queensland could lose the industry. If that should happen the State will also lose the skills that have been attained over a long period. It would be a crying shame if that were allowed to happen. I believe that the possible loss of this industry can be attributed to the incompetence of both the State and Federal Governments and to their total disregard for the industry. Because of the Government's policies, Queensland boat-builders have probably suffered more than the members of other industries. The Federal Government has imposed sales tax on the industry and has entered into a trade agreement with New Zealand, which will probably put another nail in its coffin. At the same time, the State Government has imposed a trawler freeze.

That leads me to an issue concerning the Queensland Government that really rubs the salt into the wound. I refer to the recent purchase by the State Government of a police launch from the Cheoy Lee Shipyard in Hong Kong, following tenders being called by the State Stores Board on 18 November 1981. After the announcement that that boat was to be purchased, Opposition members asked certain questions. Firstly, the honourable member for Maryborough asked the Premier whether the boat was a production-line boat, or a sports fishing boat with some modification. The Premier answered, "No." I do not know whether that was a deliberate lie or whether the Premier was misinformed, but it was most certainly a lie. I do not accuse the Premier of deliberately misleading the Assembly or lying to it, but most certainly his statement was untrue.

Mr SULLIVAN: I rise to a point of order. I draw to your attention, Mr Row, the fact that the honourable member stated that the Premier told lies to the Assembly. That is incorrect, and I ask for a withdrawal.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I rise to a point of order.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Row): Order! I shall deal with one point of order at a time. I accept the Minister's contention that the honourable member for Bulimba did use the word "lies". I ask the honourable member to moderate his language.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I rise to a point of order.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I shall deal with one point of order at a time. I ask the honourable member for Bulimba to withdraw the word.

Mr McLEAN: I did not actually say that. If I may, I will explain that a question was asked by the honourable member for Maryborough about whether the police launch was a production-line launch manufactured in Hong Kong, with some modifications; the Premier answered, "No." I said that, regardless of whether or not the Premier was misinformed, that was definitely wrong. I do not know whether it was deliberate or not. I cannot accuse the Premier of deliberately lying to the House, but what he said was virtually an untruth.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I accept the honourable member's explanation. He will continue.

Mr McLEAN: Following that question, I asked a question of the Premier, who was acting Minister for Police. It contained 18 very pertinent points. The Premier's answer was very short and sharp. He said—

"The simple facts are that the successful tenderer offered a launch in accordance with police requirements, whereas local boat-builders did not."

I repeat that the Premier was misinformed. To say the least, he misled the House.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: In other words, he told a lie?

Mr McLEAN: I believe that his answer was completely untrue and unfair. The boat purchased does not meet the requirements of the State Stores tender sent to the local boat-yards; it does not even come near them. The boat purchased was a production-line boat from Hong Kong. I have a photograph of it. The document says that it is a production-line boat. That is the boat purchased by the State Government. It is like the "Queensland Made" tag inside my coat. It is very upsetting and, to say the least, verges on dishonesty.

I shall go a little further and point out some—I repeat, "some"—of the differences. The cockpit on the boat purchased is well under size compared with what was asked for of the local boat-builders. A ramp is non-existent. The duck-board, which, according to the tenders sent to the local boat-builders, was supposed to be removable, is fixed. Ventilation to the engine-room appears to be non-existent. The positioning of the dinghy limits forward vision. The sports or fishing version of the boat coming from Hong Kong has fly-bridge controls, whereas the police launch does not. Surely the removal of the engines is an important aspect. It was not looked into. Either the fly-bridge has to come off or the aft bulkhead has to come off to get the engines out.

Mr Smith: Do you think that a kickback was involved?

Mr McLEAN: Of course. There is a lot of doubt about the purchase. It highlights the hypocrisy of this Government.

The State Stores tender document reads—

"Queensland-produced goods are preferred and will be accorded the prescribed preference over items manufactured in other states or overseas in accordance with the Government policy."

I could go on and on. Many aspects show up the hypocrisy of the Government. The document refers to a point that must be answered by the Government. It reads—

"Any modifications required by the Police Department on any plans and specifications accepted by the Police Department be extra charges in addition to the contract prices, if additional costs involved."

As the boat is different in so many ways from the specifications sent to the local boat-builders, where does the Government stand? Who will foot the bills?

The price differences emphasise the hypocrisy of the Government. The Hong Kong shipyard submitted two quotes, one for \$272,550 and the second for \$285,200, taking into account the 15 per cent incentive. Norman Wright submitted two quotes, one for \$287,927.50 and the second for \$286,955.50. Millkraft, the other Brisbane boat-yard, submitted a price of \$315,700. That is bad enough. When one looks at those figures, they are probably well in front. But by the time all the extras are added, the local

product will probably be the one that should have been purchased. There are very grave doubts about why the boat was purchased overseas. That is a question that must be answered by the Government.

The local boat-yards were badly treated. To rub salt into the wound, a senior police officer attached to the Water Police stated publicly that the local product was inferior. That is complete rubbish. The boat-building industry in Brisbane can hold its own in Australia or, indeed, in the world. The senior police officer who made that comment should be reprimanded.

I ask whether the final decision to purchase the boat was made on a Police Department recommendation to Cabinet. I am told that it was. If that is so, how much study went into the purchase of the boat, who was behind the scenes, and which expert made the recommendation? Was it made by someone who was qualified to make it?

Mr Smith: Someone had a free trip to Hong Kong.

Mr McLEAN: Exactly.

The Minister might go further and give the reasons why, as stated in his answer to me, the tenders from the local boat-builders did not meet the requirements. It is very important that the boat-builders know that and that the Government clear its name. At present, there is a dark cloud hanging over the whole issue. Were the specifications that were given to the local boat-builders also given to the Hong Kong builder? When the boat was being built, were inspections made of the boat in its production stages, as is done in Australia? If that is so, who paid for those inspections? Was an officer from the Department of Harbours and Marine sent to Hong Kong to inspect the boat during the various stages of its construction? If an inspection was not made, that is a variation of the requirements that were placed on local boat-builders.

Mr Smith: How can you tell those Hong Kong boats apart?

Mr McLEAN: That is right; it is a production-line boat. Members of this Assembly were misled into believing that it was not.

Why are there such major structural differences between the Hong Kong boat and the requirements placed on local builders? Were the boat-builders allowed a further chance to tender when it was decided by the department to change the specifications of the vessel? Someone should explain why the whole superstructure of the boat that was purchased must be removed in order to remove the engine, if that is a fact.

I point out that, some time ago, the agent on the Gold Coast from whom the boat was purchased was fined \$5,000 for false advertising. If that is so, what checks were made of the validity of the propaganda that was given to people before the boat was purchased? In an answer to me, the Premier stated, "The simple facts are that the successful tenderer offered a launch in accordance with police requirements, whereas local boat builders did not." That highlights the hypocrisy that is demonstrated by the Government. That happens when a Government has been in power for too long, as the Government of Queensland has been. It has failed in many areas. I have cited only one instance of that. A Labor Government has so much more to offer. It has positive policies in the area of employment, stability and equality of living standards.

The Labor Party is pledged to develop productive and viable industries and, as well, competitive industries. The National and Liberal Parties have proved that they do not care and it is obvious from their policies that they have no concern for the unemployed. In the policies of those parties I see no plans for changing the present situation. The economic situation throughout the world is bad, but Australia's is worse. Australia has more to offer, so with the adoption of positive policies the lot of the worker in this country can be improved. It is time that the problems confronting the unemployed, the pensioners and the low wage earners were taken into account.

(Time expired.)

Mr JENNINGS (Southport) (3.6 p.m.): I compliment the Minister for his introduction of his Estimates and for the work of his department. No-one would disagree with the contention that if commerce and industry are going well the country is going well, and that if there is something wrong with commerce and industry there is something wrong with the country, with policies or with some areas.

Early in his speech the Minister acknowledged the importance of rural industries to our commerce and industry. The whole history of this nation revolves around the land. So, too, does the history of my party. The reason why Queensland presently enjoys stability is that it has had sound government for the past 25 years. The Government's policies are based on its land background and on business experience with people.

The Minister referred to depressed markets for minerals and for processed minerals. Opposition members are critical of the Government's policies. At present the community is confronted by two major problems: a lack of confidence on the part of industry in itself and its future, and the impact of trade unions and trade-unionists.

Opposition members refer to the depressed state of industry and to unemployment. Recently the Labor spokesman on mines and energy spoke about the depressed state of the mining industry. He claimed that certain projects would not be developed and asked why they were not going ahead. On that occasion I said—I say it again—that few people realise that the main reason why mineral projects are not going ahead is that a log of claims has been drawn up by the Australian Coal and Shale Employees Federation.

An Opposition Member: Rubbish!

Mr JENNINGS: I have a document to prove it.

Everyone knows that a company could invest millions of dollars before it got one goer. Of every thousand authorities to prospect, approximately 100 are examined on the ground, 10 are drilled and one is brought into production.

This log of claims is the reason why companies are shying off Australia. It asks for \$1,000 a week minimum wage and a minimum payment of \$20 per shift, in addition to all other payments, for dirty work, erection of scaffolding—

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr JENNINGS: I am reading what is set out in the log of claims. If Opposition members are silly enough not to realise that this is the type of thing that is frightening investment away, they need to be put straight. Opposition members talk about unemployment. Employment will be created if workers are prepared to accept reasonable results. All through his speech the Minister said that high costs were destroying this country. We cannot compete or sell our goods overseas. We have large inland areas on which we can graze sheep and cattle. We can produce beef cattle cheaper than anywhere else in the world.

The Australian Coal and Shale Employees Federation will kill the mining industry with its log of claims. The log of claims continues—

“Special rates

(i) A minimum payment of \$20.00 per shift shall be paid in addition to all other payments for each of the following:

Dirty work: Erection of scaffolding; First aid allowance; Height money; Shaft sinking or Drift driving; Shiftmen boring shotholes in stone; Shiftmen working in high places; Timber drawing; Timbering and tunnelling through falls; Walking time; Washery allowance; Water money.

(ii) A minimum payment of \$50.00 per shift shall be paid in addition to all other payments to the following:

Transport allowance.”

Can anyone imagine a person coming to this country, risking his money in finding a mine and then trying to pay those allowances?

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is not speaking to the Estimates under debate. Obviously, he is speaking to the Employment and Labour Relations Estimates appertaining to the mining industry, which does not come within the Minister's portfolio.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Akers): Order! I think that the honourable member has related his remarks just sufficiently to the Estimates under discussion, but I ask him to confine himself to the Minister's Estimates.

Mr JENNINGS: I am fascinated that such a point of order should have been taken, because this is the fundamental factor that affects commerce and industry. This is the reason why we are not getting investment in Australia and mines off the ground and why we are not getting factories producing the tools that the miners need. This is the fundamental cause. It is greed. An article in the Financial Australian section of "The Australian" of 20 July last year stated—

"The investment boom has unleashed naked greed in Australian society and forced the pace and need for structural changes to avoid jeopardising the great prospects for the 1980s."

I shall continue to refer to the log of claims of the Australian Coal and Shale Employees Federation. It continues—

"Hours

A maximum of twenty-eight hours per week to be worked within Monday to Friday in shifts of 7 hours each bank to bank. (Including a crib time of sixty minutes counted as time worked)."

Overtime

No employee shall be required to work overtime. Where an employee elects to work overtime he shall be paid for at quadruple the rate paid for the day or shift on which the overtime is worked.

An employee recalled to work overtime shall be paid a minimum of eight hours at the above overtime rate for each time he is so recalled, the employee shall not be required to work the full eight hours if the job he was recalled to perform is completed within a shorter period."

Then it refers to the afternoon and night shifts. Do honourable members know how much annual leave the federation wants? Twenty-five weeks. That is in the log of claims.

That is absolutely fundamental to what the Minister said. He referred to costs and to depressed confidence. That log of claims is the sort of thing that is destroying people's confidence to invest in this country. It is the reason why other countries are looking elsewhere for their iron ore and coal.

One of the reasons why there has been so much construction going on in Queensland is that people have been able to get jobs done. They did not have the influences of people such as Gallagher. Last year, I attended a meeting on the Gold Coast which was called to discuss shorter working hours. Union leaders should get up and say, "Right, let us all work 42 hours a week for the same rate of pay and we will get increased bonuses for increased productivity." That is what should happen, but the union leaders do not want that. They do not want incentives.

In his speech the Minister referred to high costs. It has been proved that we can compete with the rest of the world in the construction of homes because the union structure does not have an impact on home construction. Each little subcontractor, whether he be a carpenter or a plumber, works for himself. He is not interested in going on strike; he is interested only in doing a good job. The efficiency of the Australian home industry has been proved. When people buy a home now they are getting better value dollar for dollar than they got years ago.

Last night on the Gold Coast a symposium on investment and the downturn in investment was held. Union activity is one of the reasons for the lack of confidence but another reason for the lack of confidence in investment in Australia is the question mark of retrospective tax legislation. I have already stated that I am 100 per cent in favour of throwing the book at any crooks who cheat the tax man, but I think that could be done under existing laws. Even people who sign a will—a document—or become a trustee or anything else can be affected by retrospective legislation, so the whole future of Australia will be placed in jeopardy.

What is happening now is that people are not sure of their positions; the confidence to invest has been destroyed. People are not confident that the laws under which they invest today will be the laws of tomorrow. As a result they have decided to sit back and protect the few assets that they have. In other words, they will sit back and do nothing. Today no encouragement is given to people to go out and risk their dough. The economy of this nation was built up by people who were prepared to risk their dough. Back in the 1800s people in the bush faced up to the challenge. They worked very hard with their

cattle and sheep; they risked their dough, their lives and their futures. They made the country that we have, but it is being destroyed by a bunch of bureaucrats who sit in a building in a city where they have not risked a thing.

People have to be encouraged to come here, so we must offer the maximum incentives. The Minister spoke of incentives for pioneer industries, such as providing land for appropriate industries. The economic climate is so bad at the moment that people will not invest their money. They will not invest in mines, or anything else because a profit cannot be guaranteed. Until we get profit, we cannot have social welfare. If we have a strong private enterprise economy we can have social welfare better than anywhere else in the world, if we are prepared to be reasonable. What must be faced up to at the moment is that people do not have the confidence.

Let us face it, there could not be a better time to encourage investment. Look at what has happened: interest rates are coming down in the United States and in England. Those countries are looking for places to invest. They do not want to invest any more in South America or in countries such as Poland with its socialist regime. Investors have already lost a great deal of money in those countries. We must ensure that people once again have confidence in our economy.

It is all very well to say that there will be retrospective legislation only in the tax area, but it will put many other things in jeopardy. The need for retrospective legislation is because certain people who were aware of the problem some years ago did not take any action when they should have.

Mr Vaughan: That was Howard.

Mr JENNINGS: No, he took action on some other things.

When Frank Crean was the Federal Treasurer he said that the then Government would take action on the Curran scheme—tomorrow.

Mr FitzGerald: What happened to him?

Mr JENNINGS: He got the shunt.

The next Treasurer was Jim Cairns who said much the same thing—it would be fixed tomorrow.

Mr FitzGerald: What happened to him?

Mr JENNINGS: He went, too.

The next Treasurer was Hayden, who is now the Federal Leader of the Opposition. He said the same thing, but the Labor Government did nothing. Who did something about it? Howard. The whole problem was not faced up to when it should have been.

I thank the Minister and his staff for the industrial sites that have been developed on the Gold Coast. One problem that has arisen is the discretionary power given to the department to decide how long somebody has to perform under the terms of a lease. I know that discussions have been held with the Minister on this subject. It is very important that pioneer industries be encouraged, but, on the other hand, it is also important that private enterprise develop industrial estates. The Gold Coast has some very good industrial estates. In his speech the Minister said that some areas do not want industry. I assure him that the Gold Coast definitely wants it.

The estates that have been prepared and developed by the department on the Gold Coast are excellent. But we need to make sure that the occupants of such estates perform, because if they do they create jobs quickly, and that is important.

Another repercussion of the proposed retrospective tax legislation has been the fear it has caused in the business community. Business confidence has been affected because the Federal Leader of the Opposition set out in Parliament to personally smear and denigrate private citizens without laying any specific charges. He just named a lot of people, but he did it in such a way that it has left a great deal of distaste. His methods are basically wrong. When he was given two copies of the Costigan report in confidence, he spoke only two sentences. He said, "The contents would blow your mild. It is full of people in the Liberal Party." Then he started to name a few people. There will be other names—

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr JENNINGS: The honourable member should not talk to me about the Labor Party, or I will tell him what its members did in Victoria. They are not lily-whites.

At present the Federal Government is conducting an inquiry into public administration. Inquiries of that sort also affect business and commerce. Mr McPhee has also set up an inquiry into industrial relations. Unfortunately, inquiries of that type develop into a buck-passing situation and nothing happens.

The availability of finance is very important to the development of industry and commerce. The country is developing and the financial structure is growing, but the banks are becoming fewer in number, which is not good. It is most important that the banks give 100 per cent encouragement to private enterprise. In that regard the report of the Campbell committee recommended a number of worthwhile changes. It is said of business in this country that if the building industry is going well then the country is going well, but that if the building industry is not going well the country is not going well. The building industry is not going too well at the moment! There seem to be a lot of delays in the approval of plans by local authorities. The Lady Small Haven on the Gold Coast recently applied for permission to construct extensions. The area was reserved for such buildings and there were existing buildings on the site, but it took six months for the council to approve the plans. Years ago I went to a council, handed over two copies of my plans, paid the money, the plans were stamped, and away I went.

Money has to be put back into the building industry. The recent State Government initiative in regard to housing is certainly worth while. We should look more closely at the situation in the United States where municipal bonds are issued on which the interest paid is non-taxable. The interest rate is a lot less than the bank rate, but because it is non-taxable the council can borrow cheaper money and everyone benefits. The adoption of such a program here would benefit the housing industry. We can learn from financial arrangements overseas. Perhaps we have not been sufficiently venturesome in money matters. Housing is the basic fundamental of the building industry. When people buy a house they need refrigerators, furnishings and so on.

The inflation rate at present is not good, and no-one can argue that one of the reasons for the increase in the inflation rate is excessive wage demands. Wages have increased at a far greater rate than they should have. People just should not claim \$1,000 a week. All workers have to realise the economic situation. For instance, the building unions on the Gold Coast did not want a shorter working week last year. Problems began only when rabble-rousers arrived from the South.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr JENNINGS: I left afterwards. The southerners said that they did not want me there, otherwise I would have stayed with them. The next day, a couple of men called at my office in confidence—I will not name them—and said, "We don't want a shorter working week, because the market cannot stand it." They could visualise the situation that exists today. Those working men said to me, "We have seen all the strikes down South. We are up here because of them."

Once again, I compliment the Minister on doing a very worthwhile job. I also compliment his officers, who are very co-operative and who have been of great assistance to me.

Mr LESTER (Peak Downs) (3.26 p.m.): Mr Akers—

Mr Vaughan: No travelogues, Vince.

Mr LESTER: It is very interesting to note that the ALP has challenged me not to give a travelogue. In other words, they are saying that they do not want to hear about the electorate of Peak Downs, the Central Highlands and Central Queensland generally. Be that as it may, Mr Akers, at the appropriate time, they will hear something about those areas.

Mr Hooper: Every time you embark upon one of your travelogues, you hold me enthralled.

Mr LESTER: The honourable member was not very enthralled on his last visit to my area; in fact, he won me a lot of votes by going there.

I thank the Minister for the assistance that he has given me. I thank also a number of his departmental officers for the way in which they have assisted me with the many problems I have brought to their attention. It is very satisfying to get in touch with a department and tell an officer about the problems confronting a constituent, knowing that he, in turn, will get in touch with the person concerned. At least the Minister's officers try to help. Unfortunately, that does not always happen, and sometimes a member is embarrassed. When a member of Parliament brings a problem to the notice of a departmental officer, that officer has a duty to telephone either the member or his constituent and inform him what is being done about it. Basically, members are elected to Parliament to try to assist people.

The honourable member for Southport made some interesting comments on the building industry. He said that if it is not functioning efficiently and constructing houses and buildings, an enormous number of people are affected. His words are very apposite when it is remembered that tradesmen are closely involved with the building of houses, motor cars and so on.

House-roofing is usually done by a plumber. Electricity connections are carried out by an electrician, and the flooring by a carpenter. Even bread and meat are supplied by tradesmen—a baker and a butcher, respectively. The trade side of industry is extremely important. It is important to foster the building industry and generally promote the trades.

I am very distressed that interest rates should be so high. Without doubt, they are causing many problems in the extremely important home-building industry. If people obtain loans from banks at reasonable rates of interest, they will build homes. That, in turn, provides jobs for the tradesmen who build the homes.

In some ways the banks have a bit to answer for. They advertise their prime lending rate as 14.5 per cent, or whatever it might be. A person goes to a bank to obtain a loan. Probably he will be given about half the amount that he requires at 14.5 per cent, and he will then be referred to one of the bank's finance companies to obtain the remainder at about 18 per cent or be provided with the balance on a roll-on bond on which the interest rate varies from 18 to 22 per cent.

I strongly urge that the Minister talk to the banks. They have to accept a fair bit of the responsibility for stifling industry. All industry has to cope with inflation and high interest rates. It is desirable that interest rates should be lowered to enable people to borrow, as they did a few years ago, at a much lower rate of interest. People had confidence to borrow and buy then; they do not have confidence now. If they want to borrow \$50,000, they may obtain \$25,000 at the lower rate of interest and have to pay nearly 20 per cent interest on the balance.

Mr Davis: Name them.

Mr LESTER: All banks are involved. Members of the Labor Party, instead of trying to overcome this problem, are in the pocket of the banks. The honourable member for Brisbane Central suggests that I name the banks. Honourable members opposite are acting as if they are lily-white and would not say anything derogatory about the banks. Perhaps the banks are coming to the party and financing the fund-raising competition that the Labor Party intends to introduce. Opposition members criticise the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation, yet they intend to do much the same thing. It is obvious that they will have to rely on the banks to finance them. However, that is the Labor Party and that is the way Opposition members operate. They are preventing me from dealing with the very important subject of interest rates and the general invigoration of the economy so that people can buy homes.

If people are able to buy homes, that gives an incentive to business and to tradesmen to expand from a small operation to a bigger operation and then branch out into specialist services, such as providing doors and door handles—enterprises in which people are employed. There must be an enormous concentration on the home-building industry, which relies, of course, on a reasonable rate of interest.

The Parliament must encourage the development of small business. Without it the State cannot continue to advance. The Government must be enormously careful not to allow overriding by large combines. Once they have eliminated enough small businesses they get together, work out rents among themselves and literally turn the remaining small business people into something little better than serfs, who are totally bound by their rents.

In these modern times, when the usual concept is for larger combines to get together, I hark back to the days when I, as a young man just out of his apprenticeship and with just enough money to pay a deposit on a small business, was able to go into Central Queensland and, by sheer hard work and with some common sense, build my business up and ultimately enter the field of politics. What I did was done years ago by a number of people in different fields of activity.

Anybody with a reasonable education should be given the opportunity to go out into the business world and to get himself into a situation in which he can conduct his own business and expand it with sheer hard work. At present, things are more difficult, but that opportunity is not irretrievable if the Parliament fosters the concept of small business instead of just talking about it. If that is done, many more Australians will have an incentive in life and a goal to strive for, and will be able to help and educate their families.

Mr Randell: Isn't that what our Government encourages?

Mr LESTER: That is correct. However, that is not the case with the ALP.

I can remember when the Government tried very desperately to help the small bakers, who were being ravaged by some of the large combines. Support from the ALP was not forthcoming when the member for Flinders and I led an all-out blitz on what the big combines were trying to do. They were trying to get around all types of legislation that was introduced. The ALP did not support us. It claimed that the consumers would have suffered. The ALP was taken in by the advertising of the big combine that promised in places such as Hughenden bread would be available at a 30 per cent discount. It supplied cheaper bread, but in the process it broke the baker who operated in one of those small towns. The moment it broke the baker in that town, the price of bread went to a price that was higher than what was originally charged. In addition, the services were reduced. In many places in Queensland bread is not delivered daily, as did the small baker. Smallgoods are not produced any more in that town and, generally speaking, day-old bread is dumped into the local store at any time of the day. Often the residents are forced to eat stale bread. That is one clear instance in which a big combine has not done the right thing by the people.

The ALP was sucked in by the big combines that advertised that they would supply the public with cheaper bread. The ALP fell for that. The ordinary public is paying for that in the form of higher prices and fewer services. The ALP has referred to a total revamp on unemployment. In deed, many of the ALP policies caused the present problems. Of course, it began with the election of the Whitlam Government. The unemployment rate at that time was 1.5 per cent. Before the Whitlam Government took office small businesses were operating reasonably well. The Whitlam Government decimated small business, and now the unemployment rate is much higher. The ALP has the effrontery to say how bad the unemployment rate is at present and how terrible the Government has been. However, the socialist policies of the ALP started the strong drift towards unemployment in our nation.

It is like trying to revamp an old car engine. If the damage has been done and the carburettor is repaired, there is strife with the radiator. If a person fits new spark plugs, he has trouble with the distributor. Although the Commonwealth Government, under the leadership of Mr Fraser and Mr Anthony, has tried very hard, it has had to repair a broken-down car engine following the terrible days of the Whitlam Government.

Mr Vaughan: You still believe in Santa Claus.

Mr LESTER: Opposition members are talking about Santa Claus. Every night they go to bed and pray to Santa Claus, hoping that he will fix up their policies that are going wrong. But that is typical of members of the ALP and the way they work. Of course, they know what happened in the Federal sphere and they know what is happening now in New South Wales and Victoria.

It is quite clear that Queenslanders must do everything they can to foster the free enterprise concept, by which the small person can be given a go. The Government must now plan a policy of catering for the 60 000 or so people a year who come to Queensland from the South and New Zealand. They know that in this the Sunshine State controlled by its excellent Government they will have some hope.

It is clear that greater attention must be paid to Central Queensland. Without fear of contradiction I claim that it is the backbone of the State. Central Queensland embraces the area from Mackay, through Rockhampton to Gladstone, across the hinterland from Rolleston out to Springsure, Emerald, Capella, Clermont and Moranbah, and out west to Longreach. That massive area is not merely a desert with a few cows roaming around; it is a highly diversified area.

The Mackay region, for example, possesses wonderful tourist attractions, such as the Great Barrier Reef islands, and it contains the sugar industry, the Hay Point coal-loading facility and the new port of Dalrymple Bay. A grain terminal is being constructed for the export of grain from the Central Highlands. As I say, the Mackay region is a diversified area.

Further inland, massive development is taking place in the coal-mining industry. Approximately 20 million tonnes of coal is produced annually. In the near future the area will produce not only coking coal but also steaming coal. That will eventually provide electricity in the homes in Japan.

Furthermore, the gemfields provide revenue amounting to \$20m a year. They are, of course, also a wonderful tourist attraction. The grainlands are doubling their production every three years. The area contains the cattle industry and the Fairbairn Dam. The central city of Rockhampton is the gateway to the Yeppoon tourist resort.

Mr Prest: I thought you were going to say "Iwasaki".

Mr LESTER: The Iwasaki resort will work, and the Government will ensure that it works. It will be an excellent resort.

Further south lies the Gladstone area with all its diversification. It contains a magnificent power-station, a clinker plant, an aluminium industry, a massive port with coal-loading facilities and grain-handling facilities, and so on.

So, all in all, tremendous diversification of industry can be found in Central Queensland. Together with that, the area contains a sound home-building industry, which provides employment for many people.

The Government must do its utmost to promote Central Queensland at all times. It must ensure that the good work done by the people of Central Queensland is recognised. The area contributes a great deal of money by way of taxation and charges to both the Federal Government and the State Government.

Finally, I refer to small business in country areas. Even though an area is declared drought stricken, small business people have a great deal of difficulty in keeping going. They find it difficult to borrow money at reasonable rates of interest. I ask the Minister to ensure that money is made available to people in small business in country areas in the same way as it is made available to the members of the grazing fraternity when they are in dire circumstances and require help.

Mr MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (3.46 p.m.): I am pleased to be able to speak in the debate on the Estimates of the Minister for Commerce and Industry. It is interesting to note that the Commerce and Industry Estimates and the Estimates for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs are to be debated this week. I do not know whether we should infer from that that the Estimates have to be dealt with quickly before new Ministers are appointed to those portfolios. Truthfully, I cannot understand why the Premier keeps saying that the Minister for Commerce and Industry is too old. I thought that the Minister was younger than the Premier.

As I say, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak in the debate on the Commerce and Industry Estimates, because commerce is very important to our State. Naturally, in the commercial area there are many companies, and today I wish to speak about one particular company. It would have been better if that company had never started operations in Queensland. I hope that we can do something to get rid of that type of company.

The company to which I refer is the Queensland Buyers Advisory Service, which was wound up on 30 August this year. At that time, the managing director of the company was Mr A. Ruscuklic. When the company was wound up, it owed about \$700,000 to creditors and also in unsecured loans. That money will be lost because the

company was, what is termed in Queensland, a \$2 company. That is the type of commerce that we allow to exist in Queensland under our laws. We should do something to stop such companies operating in Queensland.

I shall explain briefly the way in which the Queensland Buyers Advisory Service operated. It sold to consumers the right to use the company as an advisory service. It provided that service for an annual membership of \$122. For that membership fee a person had the right to find out from the company the best type of a particular product on the market and where to get it at the lowest price.

What the company did not tell people was that it was saying to companies in Queensland, "If you pay us \$1,050 we will allow you to be one of the companies that we recommend." If a company did not pay \$1,050 it was not in the running to be recommended to anybody. The company recommended the products of companies that were paying \$1,050. In Queensland, we allowed a company to take money from both ends. It was charging consumers \$120 for one year's membership, and it was charging companies \$1,050 to have their products recommended.

Mr Davis: Gabby Horan supported the same sort of thing a number of years ago.

Mr MACKENROTH: She probably did.

When we talk about commerce and industry in Queensland we should remember that that is the type of company that we have to stop from ripping off the people and other companies in Queensland.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Akers): Order! I point out to the honourable member that at the beginning of the debate the Chairman of Committees gave a ruling, part of which was that the necessity for legislation and matters involving legislation could not be discussed in Committee of Supply, and I ask the honourable member to adhere to that ruling.

Mr MACKENROTH: I will not again mention legislation.

Mr Vaughan: But we can speak about enforcing the law.

Mr MACKENROTH: Yes, we certainly can speak about that, and, indeed, that is what industry and commerce are all about.

What I am speaking about is a company that was operating as a commercial enterprise but which should not be operating, and would not be if the laws were enforced. To try to give some background on that company, I will read to the Committee a statutory declaration that I intend to later table for the benefit of honourable members. It will give the Committee an idea of what I am complaining about. It reads—

"I, George Raymond Shaw of Unit 4, 47 Cracknell Road Annerley 4103 in the State of Queensland, Managing Director, do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

That in January 1982 a meeting was held between Alex Ruscuklic, Graham Roberts, Glen Jenkinson and Ray Shaw to discuss the terms of settlement by QBAS to Intermedia and Sales Advertising.

At that meeting Alex Ruscuklic stated that QBAS (more specifically, the Buyers Advisory Service section) was never intended to function more than five years. He stated its primary aim was to provide quick funds to assist in establishing other subsidiary companies and that when they (Global Purchasing Services, QBAS—Adam and other companies) were off the ground, QBAS would be wound up. He stated that the QBAS concept would never survive in the longterm because of high overheads that occurred in trying to maintain a large membership base. The fact that QBAS sold so many two and three year memberships confirmed the trouble they would be in around twelve months time.

I questioned whether he was aware of consumer dissatisfaction with the service (BAS) and he replied 'Yes'. At that stage he had fired the BAS manager and stated that the service would be the first area to go in the future. He mentioned that he was negotiating with a large membership organisation (now known to be the University of Queensland Credit Union) and if they joined, the load on the BAS department could not be handled. He stated that it was his intention to transfer BAS to Global who would charge a fee for its services.

Returning to the discussion about the limited life span of QBAS, Alex stated that it was safe for a few years yet and that we would receive our money.

To say that Glen and I were shocked was an understatement. We questioned him further and he drew diagrammes of the company structure to show how QBAS fitted into the plan.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the provisions of 'The Oaths Act 1867-1960'.

Signed G. R. Shaw."

That was declared before a justice of the peace. I have a number of other statutory declarations that I will table. They give similar information, information that Alex Ruskucklic had intended to fold up the company when it owed a considerable amount of money.

I now wish to quote from a letter that has been sent to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Wright) by Ray Shaw, which outlines his case. I will table the complete letter of four pages, but I wish to quote a few paragraphs so that honourable members can gauge the character of the person of whom I am speaking. One paragraph reads—

"During the period from 19 February to 4 June, several meetings were held between Glen Jenkinson and myself and other creditors—one meeting in fact which Mr Ruskucklic and Mr Roberts attended. It almost resulted in fisticuffs between Mr Jenkinson and Mr Ruskucklic. By this stage Glen and I were totally sick of the situation and Glen intimated to Alex that there was more than one way to discredit QBAS if it didn't pay up. Glen mentioned he had contacts in the media; Alex replied that Glen Jenkinson would be found wearing cement shoes in the botton of the harbour. Alex maintained that Glen was a stupid man and didn't know who he was dealing with—the full extent of his background was not known to Glen. Alex stated in no uncertain terms that he had good connections with organised crime, although I personally believe that to be more bravado than truth."

That is the type of person of whom I am speaking.

The final part of the letter reads—

"As it now stands, Glen and myself hold director's guarantees. However, these are fairly worthless insofar as they are limited to what the directors can realise. Alex Ruskucklic's unit, 20 Roseville, Macquarie Street, St Lucia, is already under caveat to SGIO Building Society, Bank of New South Wales, General Credits Ltd, Adori Nominees Pty Ltd trading as Intermedia, and Jan Kosakiewicz. The latter informs me that some 6-7 weeks ago, Alex Ruskucklic landed on his doorstep at the Gold Coast and pleaded for a loan of up to \$400,000 cash. Jan had recently received \$250,000 in compensation for an accident, and knowing Alex Ruskucklic as a school friend, loaned him \$45,000 in cash. Alex consented to a caveat over his unit as security.

According to Jan and his solicitors, Alex did not tell him of any other caveats or securities being held. Jan was very upset when he heard the extent of QBAS debts and is undertaking action to recover his money from Alex personally."

He has conned this person, who is a paraplegic, out of \$45,000 that he received by way of compensation for injuries sustained in an accident.

To give members an idea of that company's involvement I refer to a document prepared by Dun & Bradstreet. The information was supplied by Tricia Bower, a director of QBAS. The document states that during the 1980-81 financial year turnover was in the vicinity of \$1.3m, with trading conditions described as "quieter at this time". There are some 13 700 subscribers to the service at \$122 each. I will table this report from Dun & Bradstreet because it sets out exactly the company's assets.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, the company went into liquidation on 30 August this year. I will quote part of a question asked in this Assembly on 13 October by the honourable member for Rockhampton, now the Leader of the Opposition. Part of that question dealt with a company Global-QBAS Group Pty Ltd—note the extra

fancy word "Global". He asked who were the directors and proprietors of the company. The answer stated—

"The public records held in the commissioner's office detail the current directors as:—

Name
Joseph Henry Sanders
Alex Ruscuklic
David Vincent McCarthy

As the company is not yet required to lodge an annual return, details of the current shareholders are not known. However, an allotment of 998 \$1 shares was made to Buyers Holdings (Aust) Pty Ltd on 31 August 1982."

He also asked—

"Are the directors and proprietors of QBAS the same people as those now running Global—QBAS Group Pty Ltd?"

The answer was—

"From time to time since 18 November 1981, A. Ruscuklic has been a director of Queensland Buyers Advisory Service Pty Ltd and Global—QBAS Group Pty Ltd.

The Corporate Affairs records reveal that A. Ruscuklic was a shareholder of Queensland Buyers Advisory Service Pty Ltd and is also a shareholder of Buyers Holdings (Aust) Pty Ltd, which as mentioned above was allotted shares in Global—QBAS Group Pty Ltd."

So A. Ruscuklic now owns Global—QBAS Group Pty Ltd. To enable Ruscuklic to make this transition from QBAS to Global—QBAS, he had to ensure that QBAS did not go into liquidation before the transformation had occurred. When a creditor threatened to put QBAS into liquidation he received a letter dated 4 June 1982, signed by a Tricia Bower, director and company secretary of the Queensland Buyers Advisory Service. I will also table that letter. The letter stated that the company was having problems with its cash flow, and in order to turn around the situation a number of steps had been taken relating to the board. Alex Ruscuklic had resigned as governing director and Jeffrey Gung was appointed a director. In relation to the management, the letter pointed out that Alex Ruscuklic had resigned as managing director. That letter was sent to a creditor on 4 June 1982 to prevent his putting the company into liquidation. Yet on 19 July, only six weeks later, Alex Ruscuklic was permitted to go ahead and put the company into liquidation. I understand that Mr Ruscuklic is now saying that his new company did not take over any consumers from QBAS.

Only two weeks ago "The Courier-Mail" reported Ruscuklic as stating that Global—QBAS had taken over all of the consumers and the records so that it would be able to carry on. He is now trying to get out of that—to draw those two companies away—and make out that there is no connection.

The documents that I will table, and the points I have made, show a clear connection between Global—QBAS and QBAS, and that connection is a man called Alex Ruscuklic. An urgent investigation is needed under our present Queensland laws. The Government should act to freeze any assets of the company—if it has any assets—so that the people who have lost money can get it back. I call on the Government to take immediate action to prevent this type of corporate crime. As soon as corporate crime is stopped we can talk about how industry and commerce can progress in Queensland.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents referred to on the table.

Mr GOLEBY (Redlands) (4.1 p.m.): Commerce and industry are very important in any society; they are particularly important in a State such as Queensland with development potential. Undoubtedly, Queensland is the growth State in the nation. It is the most decentralised Australian State, the lowest-taxed State, and the State that encourages business and promotes growth. All that is backed by statistics which show that over 1000 people a week are attracted to Queensland to share in its grand life-style.

Perhaps honourable members should ask themselves why people are coming to the Sunshine State in such numbers. It is a State of opportunity. It is backed by sound Government; it provides more job opportunities; it has the lowest inflation rate in the

nation. Business is encouraged and, above all, through the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development, industrial estates are being developed to cater for, in particular, manufacturing industries.

Queensland has the lowest electricity charges in Australia. That leads me to what is happening in New South Wales, where industry is being forced to shut its doors because of the high power costs. Until a few years ago, New South Wales could boast about low electricity charges and the fact that it was a major industrialised State. That situation has changed. One has only to talk to New South Wales industrialists to discover what has happened to electricity costs there. In some county council areas power costs have increased by over 100 per cent.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr GOLEBY: Opposition members do not seem to like my recording that information, but it is a fact.

In the Hunter Valley, where much of the power is generated, power costs have increased by over 100 per cent. In fact, in New South Wales, the cost of power has increased in the past 12 months by from 60 per cent to over 100 per cent.

Queensland has been responsible for half of the jobs created in Australia. In some southern States, employment has declined.

Having said that, I ask: What is the good of all those advantages in Queensland if unions do not act responsibly? One hears cries for a shorter working week and sees huge wage claims. If Queensland and Australia are to maintain people in employment, they must be able to compete with their neighbours. This nation has been forced off world markets in many areas because, with the present wage structure, it cannot compete. Constant wage increases mean the loss of further jobs.

Because of wage increases, men are being replaced by machines. Many industries today are employing fewer people because they are no longer economical. Because high labour costs make business uncompetitive, machines are taking the place of men. That is happening in the industrial area, in primary production and in all facets of industry. Look at what is happening in the mining industry!

Unions must become more responsible. Compare the unions in Australia with those in the United States of America. Their philosophies are completely different. Agreements are reached in the United States and they are adhered to. The concept of unionism in the United States is a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. That philosophy has long since been forgotten in Queensland. It is now a case of doing as little as possible for as much pay as possible. Unfortunately, that seems to be the aim of the majority of unions today. The Opposition will not like my saying that many of our unions have come under Communist influence. It seems to be normal to claim as much pay as possible, to disrupt as much as possible and to create as much disharmony as possible between the worker and the boss. Because of this, industry and the wage system get out of hand.

Unions should seek to increase productivity, not to reduce it. The greatest threat to industry today is posed by the unrealistic demands by militant unions. Shorter working hours do not create jobs; they increase costs. That is borne out in the market-place. It stands to reason that if people work fewer hours for the same amount of pay, costs will increase. It results in factories being used less economically and in overhead costs increasing. This results in a higher cost for the finished product.

Cost pressures are forcing small industrialists to accept take-over offers from monopolies. How many small industrialists in this State have been forced to throw in the towel and accept take-over offers from larger monopolies? Only two years ago a major interstate firm completely crippled the poultry industry following a take-over. That is only one instance.

Only this morning a small, successful industrialist told me that he had reached the end of the trail and could not keep going because of the high overheads caused by union wage claims. That family company had been in business for over 30 years. It will be forced to accept the take-over offer of a southern monopoly. It might make Opposition members happy to think that a small concern is being put out of business because of industrial problems that have been forced upon it by militant unions, but I do not think that way and the people of Queensland do not think that way.

Mr Vaughan: Did he come from Victoria this year or last year?

Mr GOLEBY: He has been here for 30 years.

I challenge the new Leader of the Opposition, if he intends to stand up for Queensland and the industrial scene, to make sure that jobs are created and not lost by the actions of militant unions to which he, like previous leaders of the Opposition, is subservient. The small businessman is crippled by overhead costs. I would like the new Leader of the Opposition—there have been four or five of them in as many years—to right the situation in this State.

The Minister and his predecessor have been responsible for the development of many Crown industrial estates, which have decentralised industry throughout Queensland. No matter where we go we see industrial estates in the larger and smaller country towns. Queensland is the most decentralised State in Australia. Crown industrial estates, which have been developed throughout the State, assist in decentralisation and make it possible for an industry to operate in a country town in which there is a work-force and in which it can obtain its raw materials on site. I compliment the department and its officers who have applied themselves loyally to developing Crown industrial estates.

Industrial estates are helping the small manufacturer. The policy of the department is to save on capital works costs and thus allow the small manufacturer to put his funds into machinery. He can capitalise his industry in such a way that he does not need to be worried about the cost of providing land and buildings. I would like to think that industrial estates will continue to expand.

Recently the Minister for Lands negotiated an industrial estate in the electorate of Redlands. I look forward to the day when that manufacturing estate, which I hope will comprise 50-odd acres, will be able to provide for the small industries of that area which is fairly close to Brisbane. It has a tremendous potential to provide work for the many people who at present must travel to Brisbane each day.

The small business community has been under tremendous stress during recent years. That has been brought about through no fault of its own but by the development of new techniques and new concepts in the market-place in the leasing of shopping centres. Many small businessmen have been embarrassed by lease documents and new lease concepts. Those problems have been created by a few landlords. We only hear about those tenants who receive the rough end of the pineapple. In a few shopping centres, unscrupulous landlords—I believe that only 5 per cent of landlords are guilty of the malpractices that have been referred to—have caused ripples throughout the small business industry. Many problems were encountered last year at Indooroopilly. It is unfortunate that a large organisation, such as Westfield, should have seen fit to virtually screw the small tenant to the extent that it did. That brought the whole industry into disrepute. It has been necessary for the Government to carefully examine what has been taking place in that area. At present the Government is looking at ways and means, perhaps by the introduction of legislation, to stop some of the undesirable practices.

I wish to make some comments on goodwill. In some cases, when a tenant sells a business, before the lease can be transferred the landlord insists that the goodwill be shared between the tenant and the landlord. I cannot believe that that in itself is a just practice, nor is it a practice that should be encouraged. Any goodwill that has been built up by a tenant in the conduct of his business over the years should surely benefit the tenant and not be shared with the landlord.

Some rents are based on turnover. Under some conditions, that may be quite acceptable. In fact, some tenants seem to prefer it that way. To ensure a stable market-place, so that a tenant can go ahead with confidence and build up a business, controls must be imposed. A successful tenant will have a larger turnover, and if that principle is applied, he will have to pay a higher rent. If that is going to be the practice, it will be necessary to place a limit on turnover rents. If rents are not agreed upon by the tenant and the landlord, a ceiling must be imposed. It just cannot go on for ever; a fair thing is a fair thing.

Key money is an extortionist's delight. Some unscrupulous landlords have found that if they cannot obtain money one way, they will get it another way. Key money becomes the order of the day. Large sums of money change hands and no record is kept. That money is tax free. The small business tenant is at the mercy of the landlord. He has no option but to pay or to get out and leave the business that he has built up over the years.

The Minister referred to the booklet on shop leases. It is a guide to tenants in shopping centres. That booklet offers good advice to a prospective tenant who wishes to take up a lease in a shopping centre.

There are many pitfalls for the unsuspecting tenant. Only a small percentage of landlords are at fault, but the fact is that this situation has arisen in the market-place and it behoves the Government to do something about it.

I give full marks to the Small Business Development Corporation for the work that it has done. If any organisation has put its finger on the trouble spots and looked after the small businessman, it is the Small Business Development Corporation. I give full marks to its director, Mr Lamond. He is a practical man with wide business experience as a retailer and a real estate agent. He has been able to apply his knowledge for the benefit of small business people in this city.

Queensland is a great State and Australia is a great nation. Their potential is tremendous. More than that, it is boundless. All that is required is confidence in the market-place and confidence in the work-place. I have referred to the scene in the United States of America, where trade unions adopt a responsible attitude. They make sure that the worker does a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. Unfortunately, that is not so in Australia. Here the attitude seems to be, "Get all you can for as little as you have to give." The economic scene in the United States of America has changed dramatically over recent months. Interest rates have fallen considerably and the share market has improved. Unfortunately, that is not the case in Australia.

What this nation needs is confidence. That confidence needs to be given by the Federal Government. No nation can prosper and build up confidence in the market-place if its Government continually has the jitters about elections and adopts a "Will we or won't we?" attitude. A nation must be positive; it must have positive leadership. Queensland has positive leadership. Even today's "Telegraph" reports that the Premier and the Deputy Premier have stated that if the Queensland Government were to apply its techniques in the management of the nation the nation would soon be back on the right track towards consolidation and progress. That is what this nation needs.

I call upon the Federal Government to give leadership and to instil the confidence that this nation requires. It should forget about elections and about the dos and don'ts. It should get on with the job. Queensland is a great State and it is one that possesses tremendous potential. Similarly, Australia has the potential to be a great nation. If we all co-operate and pull together it can again become a great nation.

Mr SIMPSON (Cooroola) (4.19 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to support the Minister in the presentation of his Estimates. Every community needs its job base, whether it be tourism, manufacturing, or any other field of employment. Without that, the community will not be a balanced community and young people will not be able to obtain the education necessary for entry into a trade or any other job. They will not be able to play the role of useful members of the community.

Industry needs to be decentralised. If it is centralised, the pressures of economies of scale will build up continually towards one central point. There needs to be a conscious attitude towards decentralisation.

Queensland has found that the best way to achieve decentralisation is to develop its natural resources and to offer opportunities based on those natural resources. I hope that the Government continues to implement that policy. Brisbane itself will grow to a city of greater magnitude than otherwise will be the case if the commodities that are necessary to sustain its growth are transported over ever-increasing distances.

One of the limiting factors in development is lack of water. Generally in Queensland, the water resources are situated along the eastern seaboard, and industries should be established in those areas. Energy is another resource that is essential to industry, and this State is very well endowed with it. Power and water are the essential resources for industry, and industry should be established in areas in which those resources are found. They should not be carted hundreds of miles to artificially develop a large city. When an area is artificially established, there are many problems with transportation and the disposal of effluent, and it is very costly to overcome those problems.

The Government must continue to encourage decentralisation in Queensland. This State is already the leader in that field, and I commend the Minister for furthering that policy by developing industrial estates. Obviously, the incentive that the Government

provides for decentralisation is only as good as the priority in funding allows. I am fortunate in that the Yandina Industrial Estate is located in my electorate and already industry has established itself in the first part of that estate. Clearing has also commenced on the Noosaville Industrial Estate. The Minister referred to the expenditure of \$380,000 on development there, and that is anxiously awaited.

It is no good educating young people in the community and then forcing them to leave the area because there are no jobs. Wherever possible, job opportunities should be provided in the community in which young people live. That assists decentralisation and also enables young people to continue to reside in their own community. However, that is not to say that people who cannot find a job should not, in the short term, seek a job elsewhere. Because of the development that is taking place in this State, many young people are coming to Queensland. More people than ever before are in employment here. Although the Opposition likes to highlight the negative side by referring to unemployment in this State, I would rather refer to the positive side of the Government's policies and to those people who are getting jobs.

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr SIMPSON: The honourable member is like those people who stand up at high school speech nights and say, "You may as well lie down and die. There is no chance of your getting a job." That is a ridiculous attitude to adopt.

Mr Borbidge: Merchants of doom.

Mr SIMPSON: Yes. That is all one hears from the members of the socialist Labor Party. They say of anyone who may aspire to a worthwhile position, "Knock him on the head. He might show us up." They do not encourage people, as I do, to endeavour to get a job. The keen job-seekers are getting jobs. They are not waiting for ages to get a job. They will take any job; they will go anywhere to get a job.

In the past 12 months there has been a positive indication of that in Central Queensland, where many job vacancies have been filled. Twelve months ago that was not happening. That is an example of people relocating themselves. Unfortunately for Queensland's unemployed, many of those job vacancies were filled by people from other States who had the get up and go to come to Central Queensland. People from other parts of the State, such as South-west Queensland, did not travel to try to obtain those jobs.

After a person has secured employment and gained experience—that is the most difficult thing for young people to do—he can rely on that experience and be more selective in choosing the location of his next employment and perhaps be able to gain a job nearer to his home.

I commend the Minister on the positive measures he has taken to encourage industry, because young people with good ideas do not always have the financial capacity to implement them. More could be done to foster the interests of people who invent things and those who have good ideas. They must not be lost to other States or overseas. The Government should move more positively to evaluate good and worthwhile ideas, schemes and processes and, once they have been evaluated, do all that is possible to help. That includes the granting of worthwhile loans and the use of the Government's good offices to liaise with people in industry with a capacity to develop those processes in this State.

Any product released into the market-place must compete with all other similar products, and in most instances the market finds its own level. If a product is too dear, it will not sell. A good product that competes well will be sold easily. However, I am concerned that that is not the case in the labour market, which is often artificially supported to such an extent that unemployment is created. Some industries cannot use labour that is too dear. Honourable members have heard arguments both here and outside about increased productivity in a particular industry. In fact, what has happened is that the labour content has become so dear that the employer has had to install machinery to do the job of many people. Because of the improved productivity, the remaining employees then say that they should be paid more.

Some of the more radical union leaders should be more responsible and look at the economics of the industry in which they are involved to see whether they will be able to meet demands for higher wages or whether those demands will force the industry to mechanise to such an extent that employees will become redundant. Those union leaders should look past the end of their noses and consider the long-term future to see whether

they can retain their members in the industry. More of that sort of thing is done in the United States of America than has ever been considered in Australia. It is unfortunate that that has not happened here, because Australia is the lucky country, with many wonderful opportunities that, because of the attitude of unions, have not been exploited to its advantage.

A glaring example of that is to be found in the tourist industry, in which, in many instances, people want only part-time employment and do not want payment at triple time or two and a half times the normal rate. Tourism is a labour-intensive industry that could absorb those who find it difficult to get a job. Those who have been displaced by technology could be trained to attain the skills needed for tourism. An infusion of more labour into the tourist industry could help Queensland gain a greater share of the market by developing its natural resources of beaches, rivers and parks and also, with promotion similar to that used in other industries, attract from overseas more people who can afford to travel to this country to enjoy its wonders. They should receive \$1.10 in value for every \$1 that they spend here, so that they will tell their friends about Queensland and will also come back again themselves. I am referring to the additional 10c not in terms of money but in terms of the smile that goes with the service provided in the tourist industry. That is the intangible, the cream that satisfies people and brings them back.

I am concerned that the Government has not grasped the opportunity of abolishing pay-roll tax, which is a great disincentive to employment in this State, although I realise that that would create problems when the Treasurer tries to balance a budget in such difficult times. I would like to see the Government go to the Commonwealth Government with a proposal to abolish pay-roll tax and guarantee to employ so many more people directly from the saving in pay-roll tax if the Commonwealth Government would, by way of subsidy, give a like reduction from the savings it would make in dole payments. Not only would the Government be setting an example, as it did with death duties; it would also attract more industry to this State and thus reduce overall unemployment in Australia. That is the sort of positive attitude that should be adopted in negotiations with the Federal Government, because this State has control only over the rate of pay-roll tax, whereas the Federal Government controls the payment of unemployment benefits.

As the Government endeavours to attract new industries to this State, it should also be mindful of Australia's defence needs. If ever Australia goes to war, do we have the capacity to defend ourselves or clothe ourselves? At the moment we do not, and I am disappointed that that situation has been allowed to develop. I realise that we in this Assembly do not control the restrictions on trade, the tariff barriers and the support for industry that combines to prevent the establishment of industries essential to our defence in time of war; but, again, I think we should be talking to our Federal counterparts about the establishment of defence industries, particularly when the setting up of certain industries oriented towards the defence of this country could absorb some of the growing unemployment in the other States.

The proper control of industry in this State has set an example to the rest of the country and has shown Queensland not only as an ideal holiday destination but also as an ideal place for people to work, raise their families and retire. In all, this State has all the ingredients necessary for a balanced economy.

Mr Fouras: You can't even provide enough money for home nursing services.

Mr SIMPSON: Yes, we can provide all those things with self help. But in that regard what we can do—this does not pertain to the Estimates under discussion—is to encourage self-help rather than the subsidy and hand-out syndrome that members opposite would foster. I do not agree that that is the way to do it, and that is where we differ.

Basically, the difference between our side of the Chamber and the Opposition side is the way we go about these things. We believe that the profit motive is the stimulus which will make people become industrious and try harder, whereas Labor believes in the socialist idea that people will work for the sheer ideal of being good fellows in the community. On other occasions we have pointed out that in the socialist community those who are too good show up the others and they are knocked back. That system does not work.

If members opposite think that that is idle talk, I will get down to a few basics—to the people who have to contend with climate, soil and all the other problems. In those circumstances, the socialist countries of the world cannot feed themselves. That is the system which the Labor Party would introduce to Queensland if it were in Government.

Mr Hansen: Will they starve?

Mr SIMPSON: Yes, they will starve.

The socialist countries rely on the western economies based on free enterprise to produce enough food to feed themselves, the hungry people in the socialist countries and those less fortunate people in emerging countries, who have been used to a subsistence economy, when they fall on hard times.

Mr Hansen: Who pays for that?

Mr SIMPSON: It is paid for by the energetic endeavours of those people who are properly motivated by the free enterprise system. I thought I was getting through to the honourable member.

Mr Hansen: How do the socialists pay for it?

Mr SIMPSON: They do not. They hope that people will labour sufficiently hard to feed themselves, but that does not work. Without the free enterprise ethic, which motivates endeavour based on reward, no-one will try to do his best. The socialist system does not foster persons such as those who got us to the moon, those who will go a little further with a new enterprise, those who try to make an article even better than it has been made, or those who try to improve an article for the sheer desire of perfection.

The man with the inquiring mind believes that if he can perfect a new process or a better one he will receive a return. That is the whole ethic behind the free enterprise system. That is where we differ. It is about time that we impressed upon people that if they want socialism, even though it has an academic front in the form of Mr Wright, it is destined to make them poorer and hungrier without the opportunities that are available under the free enterprise system.

(Time expired.)

Mr HANSEN (Maryborough) (4.38 p.m.): I must emphasise the importance of these Estimates. I am sure that the Minister is very proud to be introducing them. He paid tribute to Mr Bensted, the former director, and to the present director, Mr Young. He is fortunate in having a man of his calibre in charge. Mr Young is chairman of the Industries Assistance Board, chairman of the Gladstone Area Water Board, deputy chairman of the Queensland Film Corporation, a member of the Queensland Manufacturing Advisory Committee and the State Export Advisory Committee, the Government representative of Morris Woollen Mills, a member of the Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland and a member of the Council of the Queensland Institute of Technology. I am sure that his qualifications are very valuable in discussions on development. A few years ago he was also associated with the Co-ordinator-General's Department and the regional development scheme under which the resources of an area were looked at from the point of view of future development.

Although the scheme did not always work as intended, much valuable information was collated during that period about what industries could be established, what resources were available by way of power, water and labour, both male and female and both skilled and unskilled, and who could be trained. I congratulate the Minister on the people that he has grouped round him.

It is with sadness that I remember the industries that existed in Queensland and in Australia 10 years ago that no longer exist. Why do they not exist? Because they have been flushed out of existence? Is that the reason? In Brisbane alone at least two manufacturers, who were exporting shoes to Europe, are no longer operating. I do not think that, because of that fact, we buy cheaper shoes, although we may in some instances.

Not so many years ago three gas, electric and fuel stove manufactures existed in Brisbane. Three stove foundries operated in Maryborough. The last of them is being pulled down. They had their uses. They trained people in the various skills. Will this apply to other established industries? The honourable member for Bulimba mentioned that the boat-building industry is being plagued by sales tax regulations and will be affected by the Closer Economic Relations agreement with New Zealand, which will allow vessels built in New Zealand under a subsidy scheme to be sold in competition with the Queensland product. I do not know that "competition" is the right word when an overseas Government is subsidising the manufacture in its country of goods that are sold in Queensland.

The main point is that we are losing the skills. The previous speaker pointed out that we need skills and referred to their importance in defence. Australia, under a Labor Government, harnessed those skills in a mighty war effort. This isolated country, which was cut off from the shipping lanes, was able to produce equipment because it had the massive manpower required. As I said, we are losing those skills. It is cheaper to buy goods produced overseas.

This morning the Minister for Transport said that the Railway Department had placed an order with George and Ashton of Dunedin for the supply of 50 refrigerated freight containers. It is not simply a matter of looking at figures and the degree of preference. The Government should consider the advisability of having the containers constructed in Queensland because, when we require them, they might not otherwise be available. The skills required to manufacture those containers could be used in other directions when required, for defence for instance.

Consideration must also be given to who pays the taxes. It is no use claiming that the Commonwealth Government gets all the taxes, because under the tax-sharing agreement the State Government and local government receive a share. Because the skilled people in Queensland are not being employed, other people with jobs will have to pay additional taxes to keep them. Those matters should be exercising the Minister's mind.

We should not be looking at saving a few dollars on a particular contract. We should consider whether an industry is worth saving. Is it better to forget about the local industry and buy from the entrepreneurs in Korea and Hong Kong? Recently State Stores called tenders for chains. Out of a total of 33 tenders submitted, only three were successful. The successful tenderers were firms that imported chains from Korea. In Korea people are forced to work in factories under a contract system. I do not think that any Australian would want to work under such a system. However, we are going to take advantage of that and sacrifice another industry that is just hanging on. I refer to Faulkner chains. It is the only manufacturer of stud-link chains in Australia. That company is very close to going to the wall. Treasury officials are known to have hearts of stone and sometimes cannot see the merit of a particular project, but when they find that there is nobody paying the taxes to pay their wages, maybe they might look at matters in a different light. Some people live in a very isolated and insulated situation; nevertheless, they are the ones who make judgments on such matters.

The Minister referred to the large number of people coming from overseas who are interested in establishing industries in Queensland. The department has the benefit of resource surveys of different districts. It knows what is available and what might suit these people. Honourable members say that some industries are pricing themselves out of the market because employees are asking for increased wages. I would not like to think that those honourable members are suggesting that the people who work in shoe factories should be working under the same conditions as those working in factories in the Philippines. That country has a secret police force, and if anyone working in a factory utters a murmur, he finds himself on a variety of charges. A system similar to martial law prevails. There are extremes of poverty and wealth. We have built ourselves a better Australia, and we ought to keep it that way. It was once said that Britain was the shopkeeper of Europe. Britain had ships trading round the world, and it was able to capitalise on that. Her manufacturing industries were built up. Australia is sending materials overseas to be manufactured into various articles that are sent back to Australia. Australians are thus being deprived of a livelihood. The number of unemployed is increasing. We should employ those people at some cost rather than spend that money on unemployment benefits. Not enough preference is being given to local manufacturers. A former Minister for Commerce and Industry (Mr Lee) earned himself the nickname of "Norm the Flasher" because he was always promoting the "Buy Queensland made" campaign. Many people believed in that campaign.

Overseas tenders are being accepted, with the result that some local industries are going to the wall. They will not recover. That saddens me. Queensland needs industries. I realise that the community is faced with technological change. The previous speaker said that, if machinery has been introduced to do away with the need to employ people, the workers should not be claiming that they have a right to some share of the increased productivity. I do not go along with that suggestion.

I am pleased that the Director of the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development is on the council of the Queensland Institute of Technology. He has a sound knowledge of what is going on in the technological field. The community needs to be one step ahead of technological change. It is no use waiting for technology to be introduced. The community needs to realise what the situation will be with the introduction of technology and how it will affect all people, not just the manufacturers and those in competition in certain areas.

The problem is a very complex one and does not have an easy solution. Anyone who is looking for an easy solution must get in on the ground floor before technological change comes about. It is simple to learn what can be expected, because many changes have already occurred in the United States of America and, to a lesser extent, in Europe. Queensland should take heed of what has happened and it should do something before technology is applied totally throughout the nation.

Mr Harper: Doesn't a lot of this come back to the high price for Australian raw steel?

Mr HANSEN: Perhaps that, together with many other aspects, should be looked at. Does the honourable member mean that Australia can ship its raw materials and import steel from Japan?

Mr Harper: Doesn't it relate to the high cost structure of producing raw steel?

Mr Burns: There is some tariff protection built into that.

Mr HANSEN: There is some tariff protection in it. In his speech, the Minister referred to the protection that is given in the European Economic Community. It is ruining some of Australia's primary industries. However, that is a problem that we have to cope with. It is not beyond the wit of people with determination to find a solution to the problem, but I realise that the solution will not be a simple one.

I accept that assistance has been given to a number of industries. I pay a tribute to the Small Business Development Corporation for the work that it has done. It has assisted businesses in various ways. However, further assistance is needed. As recently as last Saturday, I saw in a supermarket in Maryborough a sign with the words, "Due to the landlords' policies we will be shifting." I suppose that business is lucky to have another place to shift to.

Irrespective of the advice given by the department to tenants, they should not be charged rentals based on their income or profits. I realise that profit is a great incentive to people. However, it should not be something from which the silent partner takes his share all the time. Provisions allowing for the taking of a share of the profits are written into leasing agreements to such an extent that they have become almost a way of life. Although such provisions have been criticised, they seem to prevail. I do not know to what extent the Government will have to lean on landlords, but I heard the Minister say that he does not want to have to introduce legislation. Perhaps he should introduce legislation to see how landlords react to it.

As to financial assistance to industries—I asked the Minister a question about two industries that have received it in the past year. The report of the department shows that on 22 September 1978 South Queensland Meats Pty Ltd of Tansey received a guaranteed advance of \$30,000. To date no amount has been repaid, so the \$30,000 is still outstanding. I ask the Minister: What is the position? Will that \$30,000 be written off, or are attempts being made to recover it? Is the company still operating, and does it have assets from which the \$30,000 can be recovered? Or is it a case of the Government's getting into line with the rest of the creditors?

I refer also to Meggitt Limited, to whom the Government provided an advance of \$3.5m. Last year, the company repaid \$149,445, and this year it repaid \$388,889. An amount of \$3,111,111 is still outstanding. I understand that a grain growers' co-operative purchased Meggitts. Recently, this Assembly passed legislation that provided that if a company is taken over, the credit available to it can be transferred to the new owners if they are an approved organisation. What is the position with the advance that was made to Meggitts? Has it been transferred to the grain growers' co-operative.

Mr Sullivan: No, to the Cotton Marketing Board, and I shall give the honourable member the details when I reply to the debate.

Mr HANSEN: I thank the Minister very much.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise) (4.57 p.m.): In speaking to the Estimates of the Minister for Commerce and Industry, I comment first that in my time in this Assembly I have found the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development to be an efficient and professional department, and that is very much a reflection of the calibre of its officers. The Government, through departments such as the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development, has a very strong responsibility to create the right environment in which business can prosper, expand and employ more people.

It was pleasing to read in today's "Daily Sun" an editorial entitled "A buffer zone for inflation". It reads—

"Australia's inflation rate is hardly inspiring in these times of crumbling employment prospects.

But one lesson in the otherwise gloomy picture emerges for all Queenslanders.

Forget the derogatory remarks fired off at us by southerners. We're doing all right, thanks.

Australia's overall inflation rate has reached a staggering 12.3 per cent. But not in Queensland.

The figures released by the Bureau of Statistics show the advantages our State is enjoying over the rest of our nation.

We're insulated by a State Government which doesn't try to balance its Budget by placing State taxes on top of the Federal excise on such items as petrol and cigarettes.

The Queensland Government deserves congratulations for its determination to keep health care and hospital services as simple as possible through the current and previous Federal governments.

While double-digit inflation is an evil which must be harnessed it is re-assuring that at least Queensland is seeking to minimise the suffering."

When one travels to other States, one finds that the standing of this State and this Government is remarkably high. Last week, I attended a tourism convention in Singapore. That country has no natural resources but, through the hard work of its citizens and the good government that has been provided, it now has, after Japan, the second highest per capita income in all Asia. While I was in Singapore, the Prime Minister of that country, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, was in Queensland for talks with the Premier and other members of the Government. He visited the Gold Coast.

It was very interesting to note how the Singapore media saw how Queensland was performing and realised its potential as a place to invest. In "The Straits Times", which is the major newspaper in Singapore, on Wednesday 20 October, an article headlined "PM to get investment feel of Queensland" stated—

"Queensland's production of goods and services, we are told, is growing faster than Australia's as a whole. It has an abundance of natural resources such as copper, silver, lead, zinc, nickel and coal. It is active in agriculture, industry and tourism."

The next is the important part for Queensland—

"Mr Lee, as Prime Minister, is chairman of the Government of Singapore Investment Corporation (GIC). This was set up earlier this year to improve management of Singapore's external reserves and to diversify the investment of surplus funds.

The reserves, built up from about S\$3 billion a decade ago to some S\$14 billion today, are hard-earned money. They need to be safeguarded, yet it is money that should be put to work.

Having heard and read so much about Queensland's economic success and the drive of its leaders, Mr Lee wants to see if his personal impression will confirm what third parties have told him."

On the front page of the same newspaper on the following day, Thursday, 21 October, an article stated—

“Projects for Study.

PM looks At Queensland.

Mr Lee Kuan Yew's visit here today could lead to a joint coal project with Queensland, Singapore investments in tourism and real estate here—and direct flights between Singapore and Brisbane or Townsville.”

The articles continued in clearly glowing terms. Quite obviously the Singapore contingent was impressed with what it saw and was impressed with the Government.

Another feature story in the same edition of that newspaper carried the headline “Capital-hungry Qld woos Singapore. Profitable ventures for our reserves sought.” I think that it is significant that the standing of Queensland is such that Singapore and Mr Lee are looking here as a place to invest and as a place in which they can have confidence in the environment that the Government of the day has created.

I wish to raise a few areas of concern which I believe should be examined by the Minister and his department because they affect those people in the community whom the department seeks to serve. I refer firstly to the availability of industrial land, which has been a considerable problem in the growth areas of the State. I am very pleased that relatively recently the department was able to purchase a 130 ha site at Burleigh/Merrimac. That will go some way towards meeting the demand on the Gold Coast. I hope the Minister will give the feasibility study into the development of the land a high priority so that it can be completed in the near future, and that the land can be brought on-stream for manufacturing industry as soon as possible.

The high cost of land in the developing areas of the State leads to another problem, one that has been experienced in my area and probably in other areas of the State. I believe it must be tackled quickly and, if necessary, ruthlessly. I refer to the situation that arises when land on Crown estates has been allocated and then not utilised by the companies or individuals concerned. As the representative of an area where land for manufacturing industry is at a premium, I find it very frustrating to drive around the estates and see block after block that has not been utilised. I understand that there are very complex legal problems, but it is an area to which the department must give close consideration. There is obviously a flaw in the system that has led to the problem arising. What can be done to overcome such a problem must be examined as a matter of urgency. An individual or a company sits on Government land, on quite favourable terms, that could otherwise be allocated to somebody else. I know that that is causing concern to the joint councils' development committee on the Gold Coast at present.

Another area that I would like to see examined is the degree of assistance that can be given by the department under the present guide-lines. Some time ago a privately-owned family company was the only Australian manufacturer of a product that was at that time in great demand. To keep faith with his market the manufacturer had to increase production and expand but, because of the high costs involved in securing new and additional equipment, he was faced with a liquidity problem. It was only of a short-term nature, but he fell outside the guide-lines set down for Government guarantees. The matter was discussed with officers of the department who were most helpful, and certainly they made a detailed investigation into what could be done to assist that small business operator through a temporary problem that he had to overcome to maintain his sales at a satisfactory level and eventually to employ more staff. I would like to see the Government and the department give further consideration to that aspect, as that problem is not unique.

The Small Business Development Corporation has played a major role in assisting and providing guidance for many Queenslanders. I particularly commend the board of that corporation, including Mr Bert Pepper from the Gold Coast and Mr Bill Lamond and his staff. They are an extremely efficient and dedicated unit, and it is to the Government's great credit that it had the foresight to create such a corporation and to make sure it was competent to fulfil the charter that was outlined for it.

I have two areas of concern relating to small business. One is the proliferation of regulation, red tape and bureaucracy. There is a very real need for constant monitoring to assess the cost of excessive Government regulation of small business. In the present economic situation that has become of great importance, this Government has an unsurpassed

record of encouraging employment and giving employers and business the incentive to expand. We need to closely monitor the processes of government to ensure that where we have regulation it is streamlined, minimised and efficient. We need to look closely at the efficiency and performance of Government departments, semi-Government bodies, both State and Federal, and local authorities that, by necessity and law, have the capacity to make life either easier or more difficult for small business and commerce in general. We need to make sure, for example, that we never again experience the delays that, earlier this year and through most of last year, were commonplace in the Titles Office, delays that cost many businesses many thousands of dollars that, in the present economic situation, are now needed so much. We need to be constantly assessing trouble spots, and acting accordingly. I deliberately mentioned local authorities because they, too, have a very important responsibility in this regard, and the financial imposts that they can apply to small business and to commerce can be quite considerable. Either the Small Business Development Corporation or some group working closely with it should make sure that we have an ongoing program to monitor the performance of Government departments and agencies with a view to making appropriate recommendations to Government as those problems arise.

I am pleased that the Australian Bureau of Statistics has not been making the great nuisance of itself that it was some months ago. The ABS has an important function, but from time to time it has the capacity to demand, under threat of prosecution, certain time-consuming and confidential information from the business community. A recent bureaucratic innovation has been what the ABS refers to as random surveys, information that is time consuming for business to collate and questionable for the bureau to use. The results of some of these surveys border on being completely useless, but they are then dispersed to a large number of organisations, the justification for whose existence is often debatable. Although I realise that the ABS operates under a Federal Act, it must be monitored and reminded from time to time that sometimes it goes too far and places unreasonable burdens on small business and commercial activity in this State.

The question of commercial lease transactions has taken up many hours of debate in this Chamber and, indeed, outside Parliament. As the matter is presently before two Government committees with a view to making recommendations to the Government, I express the hope that the momentum built up on this issue will continue and that an acceptable conclusion will be reached. It is better for the matter to be fully considered now rather than for us to rush in to tackle the problem and only half solve it or create as many problems as we solve. A grievance-settling procedure is needed, as is a model lease. Some outrageous practices that have become quite commonplace in certain areas of the industry must be stopped.

I do not, and I cannot, subscribe to the socialist view of industry regulation, because that is how black-markets are created and ultimately, how more problems are created than were discernible originally. It is a complex issue, but throughout Queensland it is the issue of the day for small business.

The Government must make sure that it follows this matter through to its conclusion as soon as possible. The small business community expects that the Government will act. The action taken so far has been welcomed by small business organisations. Indeed, the Minister's department and the Small Business Development Corporation have been in the forefront in examining the problem to see what can be done to overcome it.

Overall, I am very pleased with the performance of this efficient and co-operative Government department. In the area that I represent the department's activities are very important, and I thank the officers and the Minister for the courtesy and co-operation that they have extended to me. I should be very pleased if consideration could be given to the matters I have raised today.

Mr SMITH (Townsville West) (5.12 p.m.): Today, when the Minister chose to talk about the sugar industry in his introductory remarks, that was a sad reflection on the lack of forward-thinking of a department that chooses to lead with discussion on an industry that has been around since before the turn of the century. I should have thought that his introductory remarks would have concerned an industry that was more than an extension of a primary industry.

Mr Gygar: You do not think the sugar industry is important.

Mr SMITH: I did not say that.

I noticed in the Queensland Government Directory, under the section dealing with the responsibilities for the Minister for Commerce and Industry, that the first item listed as ministerial responsibility is "advertising". When one looks at the lack of practical achievement of the Government in this area, one is drawn inevitably to the conclusion that the main achievement has been in the volume of the advertising material produced. That is certainly not a result which is bringing Queensland to the forefront as a manufacturing State or, for that matter, a centre for commerce.

Only last Tuesday, I drew attention to the relative performance of economies that tend to rely on production of minerals and raw materials compared with economies that rely on a high percentage of output resulting from technological advance and education of the people which results in a highly skilled work-force. I will probably have more to say on that later.

In a nutshell, though, if the high-technology countries are not doing well economically, the position arises where, almost immediately, the mineral exports from trading sources like Queensland are reduced or not required at all. Queensland has become very much a captive of those nations, particularly Japan, which is so much more technologically advanced than Queensland and, unfortunately, for that matter, Australia.

There should certainly be no complacency, considering the figures available from the Australian Year Book, 1980-81. It lists the value added by the manufacturing industry as a percentage contribution by States. Admittedly the figures are for the previous year, but they suggest that Queensland's share is only 10.5 per cent compared to Victoria's share of 33.1 per cent and New South Wales' share of 39 per cent. Clearly the great majority of production in Queensland has traditionally served as appendages of our primary industries, such as sugar, meat, and food and, of course, more recently, mining.

An examination of the value of manufactured exports shows that Queensland's share is certainly, but regrettably, not significant. For the 1980-81 period, the estimate of the value of Queensland's manufactured exports was about \$460m in comparison with New South Wales' and Victoria's manufactured exports of \$1,218m and \$745m respectively for the same period. In export earnings by manufacturing industries, New South Wales contributed almost 40 per cent, Victoria almost 24 per cent and Queensland only 15 per cent.

When an examination of the total value of Queensland manufacturers is undertaken, other telling figures, which are clearly shown for the 1980-81 period, indicate that such important products as chemical plastics and rubber and petroleum—the very heart of modern industry—accounted in Queensland for only 7.4 per cent of the total value of manufactured goods. Paper and paper products were also low at 6.9 per cent.

In terms of the value of overseas trade, the Premier always erroneously attempts to convey the view that Western Australia and Queensland are the only two States that contribute in a worthwhile way to the value of Australia's export earnings. There is no doubt that in recent years Queensland has become progressively stronger. It is, however, only in the last couple of years that Queensland has managed to surpass New South Wales. According to the most recent figures available to me, there was a very small difference, with Queensland at 23.5 per cent and New South Wales at 23.3 per cent; so it is completely unrealistic to say that Queensland is all that far ahead of New South Wales. As well, by way of comparison, on those same figures, Victoria for that same year was still slightly ahead of Western Australia with 20.8 per cent compared with Western Australia with 19.7 per cent. Only in coal does Queensland, with 53.5 per cent of overseas exports, score significantly over New South Wales, with 46.1 per cent. I am not saying that we should not be proud of Queensland's performance—I am certainly proud of it—but it would be much better if our Government spokesmen stuck to the facts instead of posturing over these matters. It has to be remembered in the much-vaunted mineral production area that the reality is that Queensland is only a marginally bigger producer than New South Wales—25.7 per cent to 22 per cent.

To look again at the many facets of stated ministerial responsibilities—decentralisation, finance and financial assistance certainly deserve some comment. I will come back to decentralisation later. At the moment I am interested in some of the published figures in the Estimates. I notice that the actual expenditure of \$8,801,315 is some \$807,000 over budget, or an approximate 11.4 per cent overrun. In a comparatively small total budget allocation of \$7,093,799, that figure is a very significant overrun.

I have yet to be convinced that an element of bad management is not involved. It appears that there was no original allocation for the \$1.4m expended on the item "Special Grant to Industries Fund." That may well provide the explanation. I note that the figure for this year for that item is \$4.8m and I am not opposed to the increase—in fact I welcome it—provided the money is spent both justly and wisely. This morning the Minister made no attempt to explain where the money was to be spent. With such a significant increase, the Parliament is entitled to be told.

I do not want to hear about hydrogen-car developments or some of the other crazy ventures that have previously attracted funds on the basis of political whim or patronage.

I read with interest the report of the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development which was presented to Parliament only a few days ago. I would just like to touch on a few of the comments, the classic being on page 3—

"There appears to have been a deterioration in consumer confidence and a growing uncertainty as to the future course of the economy, particularly in relation to unemployment as the year progressed"

I do not think one needs to have a PhD to work that out.

It then goes on to say that exceptions were in the retail outlets specialising in discount furniture and motor vehicles—hardly exceptions in any way likely to compensate for an otherwise generally poor economic performance. Because of policies and deals, including freight deals, motor vehicle sales are fast reaching the stage at which smaller dealers in country towns are being priced out of existence. It may well be that before too long, centres like Bowen, Ayr, Ingham, Innisfail, to name just a few coastal towns about which I am concerned, will not be able to sustain vehicle distributorships. We will probably find that the remaining outlets in North Queensland for the sale of vehicles will be confined to the major centres, such as Cairns, Townsville and Mackay. That would certainly be a tragedy, particularly in terms of the after-sales service available for those vehicles and in terms of the loss of employment opportunities in the smaller centres.

On page 7, under the heading of "Industrial Relations", the report states—

"According to records of the number of working days lost because of strikes, the level of industrial disputation appeared to ease in 1981-82, for example in the ten months to April 1982, the number of days lost was 396,500 compared with 522,100 for the same period last year."

Some of the Government windbags in the Parliament, including the Premier, Deputy Premier and Ministers, have made all sorts of adverse and stupid comments about the state of industrial disputation under the Cain and Wran Governments. I find the report in "The Canberra Times" of 20 September very interesting. It is an authoritative publication. It states that the days lost because of industrial action were cut by 82 per cent since Labor came into office in Victoria. That is for a period of about six months.

I notice further in the report that there is to be produced a Queensland manufacturers directory, providing a comprehensive list of Queensland manufacturers together with information as to their products and brand names, thereby providing a profile of the manufacturing activities in the State. I believe that is a very good move and is certainly well and truly overdue. I can only wonder why it was not produced before. It can only serve to assist to generate more business within the State.

Mr Davis: Have you seen one?

Mr SMITH: Not yet. I will be interested to see it. I fail to understand why it has not been produced previously.

Schedule 7 lists industries in receipt of financial assistance. It is a fair measure of the amount of assistance being provided to industries outside the Brisbane area that only one Townsville firm, that of General Engineering and Agencies, is presently in receipt of any financial assistance whatsoever. Most of the money in fact is for assistance to projects in the Brisbane area.

Mr Burns: South Queensland Government.

Mr SMITH: That is right.

The same sort of relative expenditure is evident in schedule 6, which lists expenditure on factory buildings for pioneering industries. There we find expenditure up to 30 June 1981 as follows: Metropolitan, \$1.6m; Gold Coast, \$1.5m; Ipswich, \$2.7m; and the Toowoomba area, another \$2m. By comparison, Townsville has received a mere \$362,000; Rockhampton, about \$500,000; and Cairns, a miserly figure of \$260,000.

An Opposition Member: Shocking!

Mr SMITH: Shame indeed.

Those figures demonstrate the lack of assistance and, for that matter, incentive, for serious decentralisation.

When I closely examine the Government's concept of decentralisation, I wonder whether it really means anything more than industry that is situated 10 or 15 km from the Brisbane GPO.

The North Queensland city of Townsville is not only central to North Queensland in the geographical sense but also central to the engineering capacity of North Queensland, being something like 1500 km by road from Brisbane. In spite of this, much of the engineering and fabrication work for whatever development projects are occurring in North Queensland is presently going to constructors either in Brisbane or, in some instances, even in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. The Perth example must demonstrate, if nothing else, that something is out of balance.

It has been pointed out time and time again that, unless local engineering firms are placed on a more competitive basis with their southern counterparts, particularly in respect of steel prices, they will clearly be uncompetitive in relation to their ability to supply products for such projects as the Burdekin River Dam—if it ever gets off the ground—the new casino and the new airport, to name but a few. One of the ventures I should also name, of course, is the recently announced project to construct 13 locomotives in Townsville at a cost in excess of \$18m.

In September this year, a delegation from the Townsville Development Bureau visited Brisbane for an audience with the Premier on this very problem. I understand that the Minister was also in attendance at that particular meeting, along with the Co-ordinator-General. The Premier apparently indicated his support for capital city steel-pricing for Townsville. That was some time ago now.

Support is one thing; I want to know when it will be transformed into action. I want to know when that capital city pricing for Townsville will be brought about. Basic freight charges are adding \$40 a tonne to the cost. I want to know when the Government's Canberra crony Mr Howard will remove the 17½ per cent sales tax on the freight component of the cost of goods. Few charges imposed by any Government, either Federal or State, could be so blatantly unfair.

The Government of this State has always brushed aside urgings for decentralisation, and its catchcry has been, "We are already the most decentralised State." Unfortunately, that is not correct. The figures will prove that Tasmania is the most decentralised State. Queensland had the opportunity between 1972 and 1975 to do much in terms of decentralisation. It was in a position to avail itself of the assistance which was then being provided by the Whitlam Government—assistance of which New South Wales and Victoria made good use. But for purely political reasons Queensland did not.

Unlike New South Wales and Victoria, Queensland has no department concerned with decentralisation. In Victoria, the department is called the Department of State Development, Decentralisation and Tourism, and has a Minister. In New South Wales, the department also has a separate Minister and is called simply the Department of Decentralisation.

In Queensland, the word "decentralisation" did not appear under the heading "Ministerial responsibilities" for any of the State Cabinet portfolios listed in the Queensland Government Directory up to and including 1979. The nearest that ministerial responsibilities came to decentralisation was State Planning and Development, a responsibility of the Premier. It meant nothing.

The Townsville Development Bureau has appealed for zone decentralisation incentives. It pointed out, as I have done, that at present the incentives to industry are virtually identical, whether an industry is setting up near to Brisbane or in North Queensland.

There are incentives to industry which, in some cases, favour country locations. However, most of those incentives are equally applicable to Brisbane and the surrounding areas, so they cannot, by definition, be regarded as incentives to decentralise. The Queensland Government has not made loans to decentralise industries. Instead, it has provided Crown industrial estates. Most of the industrial estates are, of course, located in provincial cities, but there are also industrial estates in Brisbane. The conditions for leasing such estates are the same in Brisbane and in provincial areas.

Since the price of industrial land in Brisbane tends to be higher than that in provincial cities, the significance of Crown industrial estates available on attractive terms is that it is more helpful to an industry locating in Brisbane than it is to an industry locating in a provincial city. Thus the Crown industrial estates are in no way related to the encouragement of decentralised industry. In many ways, they have the reverse effect.

Last week, I spoke at length about the serious problems that pay-roll tax imposes on industry, and its effect on employment. I posed some serious questions to the Treasurer, but his reply chose to ignore them. His one-paragraph response to the pay-roll tax question indicated his complete inability to think along anything but the firmly fixed line he has followed—a fixed line that successive Treasurers of conservative Governments in Queensland have followed for over 25 years. I challenge the Treasurer to make a proper response to the pay-roll tax question.

The unemployment figures for Townsville for the quarter ended 30 June 1982 were 2 287 males, 978 females, 777 junior males and 762 junior females. Those figures compare with notified job vacancies of 1 331 for adults and 462 for juniors—and that is before the school-leavers come onto the market.

One type of development which seems to have excellent prospects in North Queensland is, of course, the tourist industry. It is also fair to say that the tourist industry needs a number of major focal points which require a very heavy injection of finance. A great number of smaller fragmented attractions do not achieve anything like the same impact.

One project which would be of immense benefit to Townsville is the project known as "The Great Barrier Reef World" complex, proposed for lower Flinders Street, Townsville. A feasibility study was financed principally by the Development Bureau. The first stage would be for an omnimax theatre, and it is recommended that it ought to commence immediately, one of the reasons being that it could provide some impediment for similar types of attraction which might otherwise be constructed elsewhere. It was proposed that it should be completed by 1984 and developed by private funds in accordance with normal commercial practice. Undoubtedly, however, there are many areas where, if proper attention were paid to decentralisation incentives, the State Government could assist quite dramatically in getting this project off the ground.

That project would have a second stage, which would be an aquarium and offices for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. It is proposed that the second stage would be completed by 1987, and be financed by the Commonwealth Government. The third stage, a museum, is proposed to be completed by 1988. The suggestion is that the State Government ought to meet the costs of that museum. Provincial Queensland receives little help from Government for this type of facility.

(Time expired.)

Mr POWELL (Isis) (5.33 p.m.): The Estimates before the Committee indicate that \$14,342,900 will be spent by the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development in the coming 12 months. I wish to make a few remarks about the department and the way in which I believe it should be working, and also to congratulate the officers who travel throughout the State inspecting industry and getting a good grasp of the needs of the State.

There is some unemployment in Queensland, and anybody who does not recognise that fact is avoiding the true position. Anyone who does not acknowledge the work that is done by this department and other departments in Queensland in an attempt to overcome the unemployment problem is also avoiding the truth and putting his head in the sand.

The industrial estates that the Government has been able to establish throughout the State are a credit to the Government and to the policies that have been followed. Other Governments could adopt similar policies. Within my electorate, three industrial estates have been established and a fourth is to be developed shortly.

One of the most successful industrial estates in provincial parts of Queensland is the Bundaberg estate. Anybody from this Parliament who is interested in finding out about development in Queensland would be well advised to travel to Bundaberg and inspect that industrial estate and the type of enterprise that has been established there. Generally speaking, it is small business. With the exception of Massey-Ferguson (Australia) Limited, there are no big enterprises there. They are small businesses in which people have taken the bit between their teeth and gone ahead to build on something that the Government has encouraged. The fact that the Government will develop land, construct buildings and then lease the land and the buildings to enterprises at a very reasonable amount of money is, in my view, to its credit. It is something that ought to be recognised by people who wish to criticise the work of the Government in industrial development.

Congratulations are also due to officers who seek to place industries. Quite clearly, this department comes in contact with industries from other States and, in some cases, other countries interested in setting up in Queensland. I will not go into the reasons for that, which have been canvassed a number of times in this debate; but the fact is that companies are coming to Queensland and the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development has the responsibility to advise them where to locate in Queensland. One finds that in 95 per cent, or even more, of cases the placement is ideal. Indeed, if the Alcan smelter, which had been planned for Goodwood near Bundaberg, had gone ahead, its placement would have been ideal from both an environmental and an industrial point of view and, ultimately, from an economic point of view. That sort of placement is important.

It is unfortunate that the department does not seem to have control over all industries coming into the State. To do that would be to cut across boundaries of local government, and the department would get itself into a bit of strife if it tried to do that. One of the industries that concerns me—I know it concerns some members—is the proposed Du Pont factory, which it is rumoured will be built near Toowoomba, almost in the heart of the city. Quite frankly, that is absolutely the wrong place for such an industry. I am sure that if the department had a say in that sort of planning, that industry would not be right on the outskirts of a major provincial city; rather would it be in a place in which, if anything went wrong, no problems would arise from its siting. I support the honourable member for Toowoomba North in his objection to the placement of that factory virtually right next door to him. The Government should have a say in the placement of industries of that type.

Mr Burns: Where are you going to put it—Hervey Bay, Scarness or Fraser Island?

Mr POWELL: No, not likely.

I turn now to the development of industrial estates and to the way in which that development comes about. In my electorate, the siting of the industrial estate at Childers has caused some controversy. My representations for the establishment of an industrial estate at Childers go back to as early as 1975. It is only through the astuteness of the current Minister that the industrial estate was established at Childers. The Minister and the department went to the Isis Shire Council and stated that the industrial estate would be placed wherever it wanted. A number of areas were examined until a location was chosen. The decision was made on the advice of the local authority concerned.

Some concern has since been shown about its siting. I must confess that I would rather it was in another part of Childers, or in an area just outside Childers; but the fact is that there is to be an industrial estate there, and it is most unlikely that any noxious industry will ever be placed there. The point that I made in relation to the Du Pont factory in Toowoomba is valid in this case, because the industrial estate at Childers, and the types of industry that use it, will be completely controlled by the Government, and no noxious industry will be able to slip through under its guard. So I applaud the Minister for the way in which he went about that exercise, and I thank him sincerely for his assistance.

Industrial estates are usually promoted on a local basis, and again I think that is the right way to go about it. The local people know what sort of industries will be established. You will notice, Mr Akers, that again I speak very strongly about local control over the types of industry that are being established in an area. In my opinion, that is very important. The local promotion of the area is also important.

The Hervey Bay Industrial Estate is administered by the Hervey Bay Town Council, and a good relationship has been built up. The industrial estate is sited very unfortunately, and I say that because its situation militates against its maximum utilisation. That industrial estate is not serviced by public transport and is nowhere near a railway line. In fact, the estate at Hervey Bay is closer to the airport than it is to the railway line. One would imagine that it would be more sensible to have an industrial estate closer to a railway line than to an airport. However, the fact is that it is there, and it is clear that, as Hervey Bay grows, the estate will develop along similar lines to the estates in Bundaberg and Maryborough.

The Minister also has under his control the Small Business Development Corporation. In my view, the corporation has been a real plus for Queensland. The Government has shown that it is interested in small business not only in an academic fashion but also in a positive fashion, because, through its Small Business Development Corporation, it is able to give advice to small business and do everything but tell the businessman what he should do to make a profit. Through the corporation, the Government is able to support small business, encourage it and place it where it will obviously best survive. There has been some debate in this Assembly—I have also read it in the newspapers and heard it on the radio and television—to the effect that making a profit is a bad thing. But surely it is as plain as the nose on one's face that if business does not make a profit wages will not be paid, and if there is no profit available for wages to be paid there will be no money available for jobs to be created. So it is quite clear that business must make a profit, and, through the corporation that we have at our disposal, we have experts who can advise business on how it can make a profit so that its investment is worth while.

Very often one hears criticism about companies such as Utah and BHP for the massive profits that they announce. A profit of \$181m is a lot of money—a tremendous amount of money—but when one compares that amount to the amount of investment that a company has made, one finds that the return is about 1 or 2 per cent. I can never quite understand how reasonable people criticise the large profits that are made by such companies—large in figures—without relating them to the cost of investment.

If I have money to invest, I go to a financial institution to find out which investment pays the highest interest rate, and I invest my money in it, provided everything else is equal. I guarantee that the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who interjects so frequently, invests in exactly the same way with the large sums that he has to deal with. He makes sure that he gets the maximum return on his capital. I would be prepared to bet that he does not invest for a return of less than 10 per cent; but he criticises companies that make profits that are lower than the savings bank interest rate.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr POWELL: It is quite clear that the people who avoid that argument are those who have their heads planted very firmly in the sand. It is quite clear to me, too, that if this nation is ever to get itself onto a sensible economic basis, sensible profits must be made and people must be encouraged to reinvest their money in companies so that more jobs can be created.

If the past stupid situation continues to prevail, in which people attack companies simply because they make a profit, claiming negatively that more tax should be taken from them, job creation will not occur. If ever a nation needed job creation at the moment, it is Australia. In its Budget, the State Government has done everything possible to encourage industry to operate economically enough to create further jobs, and so lessen the scourge of unemployment.

In this debate, we have heard about the manufacture of Queensland goods. I have no doubt that the speaker who follows me will speak about the problems, as he sees them, in his electorate. I have sympathy with him, and I am sure that other members will have sympathy with him. We believe that, where possible, the Queensland Government and the Queensland people should buy Queensland-made goods.

Mr Davis: You do not practise what you preach.

Mr POWELL: Is the noisy member for Brisbane Central prepared to pay 50 per cent more for an article, simply because it is made in Queensland, than he would pay for an article of equal quality made elsewhere?

Mr Davis: You have asked me.

Mr POWELL: I will answer for the honourable member. He would say that he would not be prepared to do that. Publicly, his answer might be different; but privately, through his pocket, his answer would be, "No". He would not be prepared to do that. That is the crux of the whole problem.

This morning, we heard the Minister for Transport answer very lucidly a question asked about refrigerated wagons. It was quite clear that the company in Queensland was just not competitive. I am not blaming the management of the company or the workers. Probably the company submitted as competitive a tender as it could. The Government must encourage local industries and it must have them competing for contracts within Queensland; but clearly we must also ensure that their tenders are competitive. The taxpayers' funds must not be squandered in the way in which many people are suggesting.

About 12 months ago questions were asked about a police boat that was purchased from Taiwan instead of from a local boat-builder.

Mr Davis: It was Hong Kong.

Mr POWELL: I bow to the honourable member's knowledge of the East. The boat was certainly imported from overseas, where the wage structure was much lower than ours. That is the crux of the whole problem. If the Government develops industry in Queensland and if more jobs are created, especially in the manufacturing area, I am all for that. I would love to see Australia with viable manufacturing industries for motor vehicles, clothing and all manner of things. This country ought to be self-sufficient. If it is to develop, its industries must remain competitive on a world basis.

Members criticise primary industries because they are not competitive. Every primary industry has to compete on the world market. If those industries do not compete on the world market, they do not sell their goods. If they do not sell their goods, they do not buy manufactured articles. If they do not buy manufactured articles, the jobs that some members opposite are talking about cannot be created. There is the whole thing in a nutshell. Primary industries must be economically viable so that they can compete on international markets. They must be able to buy the materials to produce their goods on an economic basis so that they can sell them overseas economically.

The same applies to manufacturing industries. It is plain that, if manufacturing industry in this country is to survive, it must be not only efficient but also cost efficient. It is quite clear that, although there are tariff barriers and embargoes on some imported products, manufacturing industries in this country will never succeed till they have a basis of efficiency similar to that achieved by some types of industry overseas. There has been talk about the clothing industry, the footwear industry and the motor vehicle industry. Every honourable member would prefer to buy an Australian motor car, Australian shoes and Australian clothes; but when we are faced with the economic fact that those articles will cost 50 per cent more than imported articles, we buy the imported goods.

The other thing is that, particularly in the case of motor vehicles and machinery, very often the Australian product is inferior to as well as more expensive than the overseas product. It is quite clear to me that something must be done about the whole structure of Australian manufacturing industry and retail industry so that they are competitive on the local market. If that is not done, this nation is in for very severe economic strife in the future.

(Time expired.)

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (5.53 p.m.): One of the areas of the Minister's responsibilities is decentralisation. I want to talk about the alarming drift to the cities in Queensland and the prediction by the Co-ordinator-General's Department that, by the year 2001, 60 per cent of Queenslanders will live in the south-east corner of the State.

Anybody who has been to country towns lately knows that many of them are losing their banks, doctors, chemists and even their pubs. Shops are boarded up and there is an air of despondency. Very few people are lining up for a drink in the public bars. Queensland is facing an inland crisis. I am talking about the Far West, the area that the Minister and the National Party are supposed to have represented in this Parliament for more than 20 years.

According to the figures, the western part of the State is dropping away. The reason why the Government has to continue loading boundaries and gerrymandering electorates to look after its vote in the West is that it has done nothing to keep the people there. The

kids and their parents have to leave the inland towns to find jobs. They face a depressing future, there being nothing left for them in western Queensland. The trend is for people to leave the West and come to the East. There is a migration to the South. They are mostly young people who are escaping the dying towns.

The Government takes credit for two major growth fields. One is minerals, which the Government did not put in the ground. It has no control over their location. The inland mineral towns create the money that then comes to the coast. When ports and smelters are built on the coast, the money for the establishment of infrastructure is spent in the coastal towns, so the country towns do not derive much benefit from that. The sun-belt settlers—the people who come to Queensland because of its good climatic conditions—settle on the coastal strip and the country areas gain little from them. It is time that the Government formulated some concrete plans for the future of Western Queensland towns. The Minister knows that nothing has been planned. Government supporters can visit the areas represented by the Premier and the member for Balonne, South-west Queensland, North-west Queensland, and the mining towns of Gunpowder, Mary Kathleen, Monument that have closed down, and they can say to themselves, “Where are the long-term plans for Western and Northern Queensland that the Government has adopted?” They are just not there. It is time that some plans were formulated.

Technological changes that have occurred will affect dramatically the working lives of our children in the future. By the year 2000 there will be no jobs for many of the young girls who expect to obtain employment in shopping centres, offices and banks. Where is the Government's plan? What plans does the Government have to create jobs for them? Not a single word has been said about technological change this year or last year. Thousands of kids are losing their jobs and there is a likelihood that more and more jobs will go down the drain. And yet there is not one single word from the Government about that.

From time to time we hear about the “Buy Queensland made” campaign and we see the advertisement flashing the suit coat of the former Minister.

I intend to refer to Murarrie Engineering Services, the purchase of the police boat and a number of other occasions when the Government did not buy Queensland-made goods—occasions when it has not put its money where its mouth is and when it has refused to accept the advertising slogans and jingles that it uses before an election to generate support for its so-called campaign for the State. It is time that the Government told the truth and talked facts. When I hear the stories about the thousands of people coming across the border, I wonder what they are eating and what they are buying. When I see the BBC store at East Brisbane closing its doors, when I see Malleys, which makes refrigerators and washing machines, sacking 105 staff, when I see employees in other industries being sacked, when the operators of the second container terminal close their doors and go back to the south after looking for trade for six months and not being able to enter into a single contract, no-one can tell me that somewhere along the line the boom talk is no more than bull. It is time that the people of Queensland were told the truth. I do not want the Government to talk gloom; I want it to speak the truth. It is no good making airy-fairy promises. The people who went into that port did so because the Government was talking about all the new business that was supposed to be coming to Queensland. No new trade came to Queensland through their terminal—not one new customer! That company walked out losing its money. Does the Government want to see businessmen lose their money? Does the Government want to see workers lose their jobs? Last night on television a manufacturer said that he came from Victoria to Queensland and set up a business, but because Government contracts were going to New Zealand he might as well go there because that is where the action is. It is time the truth came out. There should be no more bull, no more hot air, no more advertising slogans and jingles but plain, hard facts. Queenslanders will cop hard facts, and they will listen to facts and act on facts.

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

Mr BURNS: Before the recess for dinner I was saying that, like many other countries and States, Queensland is presently facing a serious economic problem. I had said that it was time that the Government started to talk honestly to the people of Queensland and to take them into its confidence. The people of Queensland are entitled to know some true facts about the situation that faces them.

Mr Moore: If they are facts, they are going to be true.

Mr BURNS: Not always, especially "facts" given by this Government. It churns out what it pretends to be facts.

Let me touch on a few of the Government's so-called facts. Firstly, there was the Goodwood smelter. There were also the Rundle shale-oil project outside Gladstone and the great boom that was going to occur in shale oil at Julia Creek on the line to Mt Isa. They were not facts at all.

What happened to the proposed coal-to-oil plant that was promised? What happened to the hundred thousand dollar tourist resort that the former Minister for Tourism, who was defeated at the last election, promised for Magnetic Island? What about the Hartley computer people, who were to be promised all sorts of money to remain here and who are now in the hands of the receiver? What about White Trucks, which closed down and sacked its workers? What about TNT overnight express, which has sacked some of its workers? What about Versatile Toft, which has sacked 104 workers? What about the proposed building projects worth \$1.2m that went out of existence in March this year?

They are all facts, but no mention is made of them in the Press releases handed out by the Government. We hear about the boom; we do not hear the facts.

What happened with Sir Edward Lyons and Katies, his clothing firm? He, the darling of the National Party, was to be loaned money to set up a clothing firm at Beenleigh and employ a thousand people. That was before the last election. What is the result? Not one job; not one dollar has been spent by Katies.

What about the hydrogen car that was going to run on water? We were told by the Government that all that anyone had to do was put water in it. The only trouble was that the fellow involved forgot to bring the key along. What about the Howard Power Station, which the people concerned were going to buy for the purpose of manufacturing hydrogen cars? Nothing has happened. What happened to some of these projects that were promised before the last election? What about the railway line that was going to be constructed from east to west? What about the steel mill that was going to be established in Queensland?

Mr Moore: We will still do that.

Mr BURNS: It is only pie in the sky. As for the honourable member for Windsor, he might not even be here much longer. He still has problems within his party. He should worry about the internal preselection problems.

The Government announced the construction of a \$5m film studio on the Gold Coast. When the film "The Thornbirds", which depicts conditions in the Australian Outback, was being made, a shanty was erected in Los Angeles for use in the film. When a TV feature about a holiday on an island was being filmed, a sand island was constructed in Victoria for it. The Government talks a lot, but it provides very little action. It makes a lot of promises that it does not keep.

At present, the biggest growth area in Queensland is bankruptcy and pawnbroking. Another big growth area is sleeping under bridges. A big growth area is the problem confronting families in making ends meet. The biggest growth area in this Parliament is hot air. It is about time that the Government really did something for Queenslanders.

The Minister for Transport is in the Chamber, and I know that he has been waiting for me to give him an explanation as to why I believe workers in my area were robbed of their jobs by the Transport Department and this Government.

For some time the Queensland Government spent millions of dollars in promoting its "Buy Queensland made" campaign. A former Minister, the Honourable Norman Lee, used to flash his coat and show a "Buy Queensland made" sticker. There is not much evidence of the Queensland Government's buying Queensland made.

The Queensland Government Railway Department called tenders for the manufacture and supply of 50 mechanically refrigerated containers. The specification number was RS8227. A company in my area, Murarrie Engineering Services, is currently constructing 50 such containers. So don't let the Government claim that that company's prices are too high or that the wages paid to the workers are too high. That company's job is a good one.

Mr Moore: Why didn't they tender?

Mr BURNS: I will explain if the honourable member for Windsor settles down for a moment and does not get his hair in a knot.

The results of the tenders were that George & Ashton (New Zealand) Limited submitted a tender of \$1,596,100, Murarrie Engineering Services of Brisbane submitted a tender of \$2,194,000 and Maxicube of Melbourne submitted a tender of \$2,207,750.

The refrigerated containers consist of two components, the insulated container and the refrigerated machinery unit which is attached to the insulated container. The New Zealand manufacturer intends constructing the refrigerated containers in New Zealand and purchasing the machinery units in Sydney. Those machinery units are made in America, but the company will buy them in Australia because that is the way in which it will be able to rot the system under the free trade agreement and rot some of our tariff protection policies. That is what that company has done, and it has done it very successfully, and, in the process, taken 100 jobs away from this State. The company is using our money to create jobs in New Zealand while our blokes are out of work.

Following construction of the containers in New Zealand, they will be shipped to Australia and have the machinery attached to them here. New Zealand regulations permit the manufacturer to import the majority of materials required duty free.

Mr LANE: I rise to a point of order. The statement made by the honourable member is incorrect and dishonest and I ask him to withdraw it. The company will not be shipping them here.

Mr BURNS: That is not a reflection on him.

The CHAIRMAN: No.

Mr BURNS: With due respect, if that is the sort of point of order that the Minister makes, it is no wonder that the railways are in trouble and are losing so much money. As I was saying, New Zealand regulations permit the manufacturer to import the majority of materials required duty free. In addition, we understand that the New Zealand Government provides very generous export incentives for containers being exported. There is no argument about that. That is what the New Zealand Government does. I rang New Zealand and checked.

On arrival in Australia, the insulated containers qualify for exemption from import duty, provided that the New Zealand content, that is labour and materials, exceeds 50 per cent. That is the reason why the mechanical section is installed in Australia.

Mr Lane: They put them in over there.

Mr BURNS: They are installed in Australia.

By purchasing the machinery unit within Australia and not including it in the import value of the total unit, we believe that the 50 per cent New Zealand content has been achieved. The Australian manufacturer is faced with paying duty on certain of the components required in building the insulated container and, furthermore, must buy Australian-produced steel and aluminium the price of which is increased by a tariff of between 10 per cent and 25 per cent. In fact, a tariff of 40 per cent is imposed on some of the fibreglass and panel materials.

We are saying to our people, "You buy the tariff-protected metal, the steel and aluminium, and the fibreglass at all the highly inflated prices and the New Zealand fellow can go overseas and buy it at the cheaper rates and send it over here." No-one can tell me that he will not do that.

It should not be the intent of the existing trade agreement to allow evasion of duty by installing refrigeration machinery outside New Zealand. Failure to obtain this tender will place in jeopardy the future of the company in my electorate, its employees and the many subcontractors who supply the various components during manufacture. Failure to win the Railway Department contract will result in a major subcontracting company, Maxicube, ceasing to manufacture in Queensland. Representatives of the company said on television last night that they would be most unlikely to consider expanding the company's operation outside Victoria after such a closure. They came here at the invitation of the Government, but now they say, "Look, if that is the way it is going to happen, there is no use our being here." In fact, they go even further. In a letter to Ministers they said that in the present circumstances it would be more beneficial for the company to establish itself as a manufacturer in New Zealand with some service facilities in Australia.

This company is saying, "Look, if that is the way the rules can be used to put our blokes out of work and send one of our companies broke, we will go and set up in New Zealand and export in the same way." That is crazy. Someone asked me, "How can the taxpayer subsidise this?" The Government subsidises just about everything, from drought relief when it is dry to flood relief when it is wet. We are always talking about subsidies. We are talking about 100 workers who will be put out of work and paid the dole for the five or six months that they could have worked on those contracts. In addition, that company would have paid pay-roll tax to the State Government and income tax to the Commonwealth Government. Also, the extra money that the workers would have earned would have been spent on articles on which sales tax would have been paid. Government members say that it is more in our interests to put those blokes on the dole and their families in need than to pay the small amount of money involved to help the company.

Mr Goleby: What about a reduction in pay?

Mr BURNS: That is what is wrong with Government members. I have never heard them talking about their taking a reduction in pay. They take their pay like everybody else in the community. Why should an Australian worker be paid less? Why should an Australian worker have his pay reduced so that a New Zealand bloke can get a job? Why can't the Government call tenders from Australian manufacturers? Why do we have to call tenders in New Zealand? Somebody said to me that once the tenders had been called the deal had to be gone along with. That is crazy.

It is time we started to look after Queenslanders. The Government urges people to buy Queensland made so that it can protect Queensland jobs. It trumpets that at every election-time; it gets on its stump and shouts that the Government is the best fighter for Queensland ever—but that is only when there is a vote in it, or when there is a buck in it for the National Party. Government members believe in fighting for Queensland if there is a buck in it for them. If there is a quick buck in it for the National Party or, the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation, National Party members are interested. But other than that, there is no way in the world that they are interested in buying Queensland made.

My submission is that we ought to be doing this for our own people. We ought to be standing up for Queenslanders and Queensland jobs. I cannot believe that a way cannot be found to call tenders so that containers for our own railways are manufactured in our own State. This State has private enterprise people with the expertise who are willing to tender, willing to take the gamble and willing to set up business here. Yet this free enterprise Government has to go overseas to find a manufacturer for them. It went to Hong Kong to purchase the police boat! No wonder boat builders complained at National Party conferences about the arrangements that have allowed their own boat-building industry to be threatened.

One only has to go down to the wharves to see the amount of mechanical and electrical equipment from Japan and Korea that is going to the Tarong Power Station and Wivenhoe Dam. Some of the roads in my electorate had to be widened so that they could cope with the massive electrical and mechanical gear that was imported. That equipment could have been manufactured in Queensland, but it came from Korea and then had to be transported to those areas.

Mr Vaughan: At dumped prices!

Mr BURNS: Of course it was at dumped prices, yet the honourable member for Redlands wants our blokes to work coolie wages; he wants them to live in shacks just as they do in Taiwan, Korea and similar places. He wants them to be second-rate citizens. In this place the Australian worker does not count; he never counts with the National Party. We never hear National Party members speaking about decent working conditions and decent wages for Australian workers. From this Minister and other Ministers we always hear about the rotten worker asking for too much money. They always want to run the Australian worker down, but he is equal to any other worker in the world. Members opposite want him to vote for them at election-time when they pretend that they are on his side. National Party members will blame the union bosses and everybody else, but the problem stems from their own Government's lack of planning; their own Government has failed to do its job.

I do not want to hear any rubbish from National Party members about being concerned for the Australian worker. Every time anything happens here the Premier or someone else says, "Why doesn't the worker take less money? Why doesn't the worker cop it sweet? Why doesn't the working class family do without? Why don't the workers' kids miss out on something that our people get?" National Party members want the worker to be hit so that the Government can hold its head up high. Why should a Queensland worker be classed as second-rate? Why should a Queensland worker be treated differently from a New Zealand worker? There is no way in the world that the Government's story can be sold to me. So I do not want to hear any more about the "Buy Queensland made" campaign. Scrap the slogan, scrap the stickers—unless the Government is prepared to do something about it.

Mr Wharton interjected.

Mr BURNS: Claudie, don't talk to me. You had a bacon factory in my area that couldn't even keep the blokes employed, because of overseas imports.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr BURNS: I am sorry, Mr Miller. I will not call him "Claudie", but I don't know what else to call him.

I know of people who are trying to buy apprenticeships for their kids. While the Government trumpets about the work opportunities in the State, I know of bosses who have been told by mothers and fathers that they will be given money if they employ their lad as an apprentice. What condition is the State in if that sort of thing happens? On the one hand, the Government speaks about thousands of people coming here and all the jobs they create, and yet on the other hand the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations tells people to get their kids out of school early and get them on the list for a job because things are going to be hard. Certainly things will be hard. There is nothing in the Minister's speech about technological change and nothing about unemployment—no plan, no action, no concern.

When 950 people turned up for 50 jobs at Noosa a few months ago, we heard not one word from the Government about any plan for jobs for those unlucky people. Not one cent is spent to provide jobs for them. But as soon as some problem confronts one of its own clique in the National Party, out come the subsidies.

(Time expired.)

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (7.30 p.m.): Because of the allegations made against this Government by the honourable member for Lytton, I think it is necessary that I answer immediately a couple of the propositions that he put which were obviously not in accordance with fact. One of the basic points made by the honourable member related to the supply of containers with refrigeration units attached. The honourable member alleged that the refrigeration units would be purchased and fitted in Australia, and therefore evade customs duty when they were eventually brought in from New Zealand.

Obviously before I made the recommendation to Cabinet for the tender to go to the New Zealand firm, I had that matter checked out. The advice I have from the Commissioner for Railways is that the assertion by the honourable member was not correct and that it was merely an assumption. It is not unlike the honourable member and his colleagues to base speeches in this place on assumption rather than on proper research and fact. It is not correct that the refrigeration units will be ordered and fitted in Australia. They will be ordered through an Australian firm, but installed in New Zealand by the firm George & Ashton (New Zealand) Limited. The containers from New Zealand will suffer liability as regards duty when they land in Australia as complete refrigerated containers. So one of the most basic propositions put forward by the honourable member is obviously misleading.

That part of the contract with which the honourable member did not grapple, of course, was the preference that is given by this Government to local firms. That preference is achieved by adding a penalty to tenders from firms which manufacture outside the decentralised areas of Queensland. In this instance, with an overseas firm involved, it amounts to a total of 15 per cent, and when 15 per cent is added to the tender price of the New Zealand firm, and one adds the 10 per cent customs duty that will be charged by the Australian Government, collected and paid into the pockets of the taxpayers

of this country, the New Zealand firm still won the contract by \$349,250 in a contract of something just under \$2m. The honourable member did not address himself in any way to which Australians would find that \$349,000 out of their own pockets, and the honourable member might perhaps volunteer—

Mr BURNS: I rise to a point of order. I would ask the Minister to tell me about the \$2.1m the Government is finding for a jet for the Premier to play with.

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

Mr LANE: The honourable member is a famous political practitioner. Ever since he has been here most of his arguments have been shallow and politically based, and under examination by authoritative people have been proved to be fallacious and misleading. I know that it does not bother his conscience that he misleads the people of Queensland and tries to incite the unemployed in this State, about whom we are all concerned. Those things do not bother his conscience at all. He does not deal in fact. He did not pay tribute to the fact that the Queensland Government at present imposes a 15 per cent penalty on overseas firms. It is added to their tender price, and the tender is assessed on that basis. But in addition to that I remind honourable members that New Zealand happens to be a friendly country which is just across the sea from us. It happens to be a near neighbour. New Zealanders are our trading partners; people with whom we do a lot of business; people to whom we sell goods; people to whom we would like to generate some good will and maintain it.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr LANE: The honourable member mentioned none of those things.

He did not once mention the 15 per cent penalty that is imposed on overseas firms—

Mr Burns interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Committee will come to order. I warn the honourable member for Lytton under Standing Order 123A.

Mr LANE: I am used to the honourable member for Lytton calling names across the Chamber—catcheries, cliches and foul names is all he is famous for. We all know his shallow political arguments. But when we get down to the facts, the firm in his electorate about which he is making such a fuss, Murarrie Engineering Services, is owned by the P & O company. That great international conglomerate, P & O, is not exactly a tiny backyard Queensland firm.

One of the State's greatest lobbyists, namely Brian Baillie, is a director of that company. The honourable member has carried the bag frequently for him relative to Fisherman Islands and many of the other things that that company has attempted to get done by lobbying through back doors in this State.

It is unusual for a Minister on this side of the Chamber, a champion of private enterprise, to be able to accuse the honourable member for Lytton of being the carpet-bagger or the bagman for Brian Baillie and the P & O, but that is what I am doing tonight.

All honourable members are aware of the reputation of that company and the way in which it selfishly tried to have exclusivity at the newly developed Port of Brisbane in the honourable member's electorate. We all know that it lobbies frequently, that it wines and dines people.

I like Queensland companies that win contracts on their merits, companies that submit a tender on a proper, firm basis—a basis that is clearly understood by all other tenderers. One of the firm conditions of tender available to anyone—even to the honourable member for Lytton, if he would call to look at the contract—is that a 15 per cent penalty applies to overseas companies. I will post the honourable member for Lytton a copy of the standard conditions of tendering. Overseas companies tender on that basis, knowing that they will suffer a 15 per cent penalty, and they still win the contract on merit, in honest, open and free competition.

The honourable member for Lytton suggested that the Government, after calling tenders, should change the ground rules so that a particular company will be favoured. That is not on in my portfolio. I will not engage in retrospective tendering practices that change the rules after tenders have been received. That is dishonest, and I will not engage in it.

The honourable member for Lytton put forward the proposition that some weird discretion should be exercised, that there should be some breaking of the conditions of tender that were clearly entered into. Who will pay the \$349,250 if the Government gives the job to Murarrie Engineering? Will the honourable member for Lytton take his hat around the Trades Hall or around the public bar of the Colmslie Hotel to make up the difference so that the contract can be given unfairly to a company that tendered on one basis but now wants the ground rules changed?

The honourable member for Lytton made an unfortunate suggestion, but that is not uncommon in this place. Over the years, we have all become used to the honourable member for Lytton and his propositions. I thought he would have come back as leader of the ALP in this place, because he is typical of members of the Labor Party who so often make shallow propositions and say anything. They frequently take part in superficial TV entertainment programs and say anything that they like. They then come to this place and berate people under privilege.

I came into the Chamber to listen to the honourable member for Lytton because I wanted to see how fair he would be. He did not mention the 15 per cent penalty, the 10 per cent customs duty or the \$349,000-odd difference that has to be made up by the tax-payers. Had his proposition been honest and balanced, he would have mentioned those three propositions. No member heard the honourable member for Lytton mention them tonight. He is condemned by his lack of fairness.

Mr BURNS: I rise to a point of order. I would like to order 100 copies of the Minister's speech for the families of the workers who will be out of work.

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

Mr BERTONI (Mt Isa) (7.40 p.m.): It gives me much pleasure to speak in this debate. Tonight I want to tell the Committee of my serious and sincere concern that the Government may be accused of doing nothing but paying lip-service to an area of the community which is directly more important than any other single factor in the lives of most Queenslanders. I refer of course to small businesses which are undoubtedly the real backbone of this nation, if only because, according to reliable estimates, they provide employment for more than half of the work-force of this State and nation.

Adolf Hitler, a man whom most of us are not given to quoting, once commented that he would easily crush Britain because it was a nation of shopkeepers. He certainly did not understand that what he called shopkeepers were one of the main threads of British society and that they gave Britain its fierce independence, its resilience, its ingenuity and its refusal to be beaten. At that time Britain was a nation of individuals who had the will to strike out on their own, to risk homes, savings and security to build something for themselves which invariably spilled over to become something for many shops, work-shops, small manufacturing plants and factories, providing employment for millions, security of employment and economic stimulus, because the man who has risked everything to build something does not stop. He builds more and makes more job-security money to circulate among many more people. This spirit of enterprise, this will to strike out alone and build something made Britain and kept her one of the world's most influential nations for several centuries until the creeping disease of socialism and the welfare State overtook the people of Britain.

I am sounding a warning in this place that this nation—from my point of view particularly this State—is running the risk of creating a similar disastrous vacuum between the primary industry that is no longer labour intensive and the mineral industry which every day becomes less and less dependent on labour. It seems to me that Queensland, without doubt the State of greatest promise in this nation, has put most of its eggs dangerously in the two baskets of rural and mining industries.

We are simply not doing enough to ensure security in the huge sector in between. We are not doing enough to ensure a fair go for the true private or, should I say, personal enterprise. We are not doing enough to secure the future of the 60 per cent or so Queenslanders who have a pay packet, a house, a family and dreams only because of small businesses.

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. I hate to bring this to your attention, Mr Miller, but the honourable member for Mt Isa is reading his speech.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! All honourable members on both sides of the Chamber use copious notes.

Mr BERTONI: Thank you, Mr Miller.

All honourable members are well aware of the statement in today's Press that the Government is to review the preference given to local companies in the granting of Government contracts, because it has been found that overseas companies can beat our local prices largely because, particularly in the case of New Zealand, other Governments use tariff protection to bolster local industry. It is just crazy that overseas manufacturers—and they are not all in areas of so-called slave-labour wages—can build and transport what we need more cheaply than we can build and deliver it ourselves. It is not all because wages are high in this country. There is no doubt that wages in Australia are high in comparison with those paid anywhere else in the world but Governments, both State and Federal, can help enormously. When it is boiled down they are giving the taxpayers' money back to the taxpayer.

I should like to comment on specific areas in which the State Government can and should help the vital small business sector so that tens of thousands of Queenslanders can approach the future in security. Rural Queensland suffers from the payment of sales tax on freight. It is the most ridiculous type of tax. Freight rates to the remote areas of Australia are high, and for the tax to be imposed on cost plus freight makes it the most unjust and unjustifiable tax. This was one of the main subjects raised at the North Australian conference in Port Hedland.

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr BERTONI: Would the honourable member like to make outside the House the remark that he made the other day?

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Certainly.

Mr BERTONI: It would be appreciated if the honourable member would make the statement outside the House. I am sure he will not, because he likes to make such statements only under the privilege of the House.

Much publicity has been given to a zone allowance inquiry first publicised by the Treasurer in September 1980. In the electorate of Mt Isa, the chamber of commerce and the Mt Isa Development Bureau made forceful submissions to the Cox Inquiry in April 1981, giving the inquiry an insight into the problems of living and working in isolation as seen by those in the area. A factor that was found most distasteful was that the Treasurer saw fit to change the terms of reference subsequent to the public inquiry. Submissions were handed to the Prime Minister and to the Treasurer, together with a petition signed by over 7 000 Mount Isa citizens. The result of all that effort was nil. The zone allowance was downgraded and then given back. That is a very sore point with people living in country areas.

The anomalies and differentials in freight charges between locations the same distance from major cities have long been a bone of contention. During preliminary investigations conducted by the Small Business Development Corporation, some startling data has emerged. For instance, the cost of freight by road between a particular major city and a provincial town was \$3.50 for a small article transported by a local carrier; it cost \$25 to have the same article transported between the same points by one of the large corporate transport companies. That is a problem that must be overcome.

I would now like to bring up the point that big business should pay on time. In every community, small business is a Cinderella organisation and is forced to fend, usually unsuccessfully, for itself in times of difficulty. Small business is carrying the large businesses. Credit is extended by big businesses for 7 or 15 days, definitely for no longer than 30 days; whereas requests for settling of accounts by big business are ignored, as are pleas for credit for 90 days or more.

I would like to cite an instance involving one of the leading railway carriers in this State, QRX. It sent out a letter to one of my constituents who owed the firm \$16.35. He was sent a "please pay" priority-paid letter stating that its trading terms were definitely seven days and that action would be taken if the debt of \$16.35 was not paid within that time. That same company owed the person concerned \$1,622.20. The company had taken many months to pay that amount. He wrote a letter to the company and he made pertinent comments that should be recorded in "Hansard". The letter states—

"It is little realised or acknowledged how much 'Big Business' is carried on the back-bone overdraft of 'small business'. Day by day we are dragged down by the demise of business giants or aspirants to same, the directors of whom wax fat and are even rewarded by Knighthood. Should you be surprised by this reaction, I suggest you are out of touch with reality and the little people who help keep you afloat.

Finally I hereby trust to the integrity of your office staff to ensure this objection of manners displayed by 'Big Business' reaches the management of the company."

That indicates what happens between small business and big business. Small business is left carrying the burden of big business, which does not pay its accounts on time.

Mr Davis: Who wrote that letter?

Mr BERTONI: One of my constituents.

Mr Davis: To you?

Mr BERTONI: No, to the Small Business Development Corporation. There is no secret involved. The gentleman who wrote the letter was Mr Keoghan of Keoghan's Crane Service and Cartage. There is no secrecy in the documentation.

Another point I take up is representation on the Small Business Development Corporation. Time after time, whether on that corporation or on a tourist development association, one sees members representing coastal areas. Very few people from inland areas are given an opportunity to serve on them. It is about time that the Government saw fit to give people from western areas, particularly from the North-west, an opportunity to represent their areas on such bodies. After all, those areas play a significant role in supporting the remainder of the State. I urge the Government to recognise that fact, because lack of representation is a very sore point among people in country areas.

Another important matter that is crying out for immediate action, which has been promised but has not materialised, is that of retail shop leases and the completely unfair conditions that are imposed by some landlords. I want to know what has happened to the pledge that was made by the Government to redress the situation and, if necessary, to legislate to stop what the Premier has termed unethical practices by some landlords.

I am aware of all the statements that have been made and of all the cases quoted in the meetings of parliamentary committees on this issue. Where have those statements and meetings led? When will the small business people, the true free enterprise people, be given by the Government the moral support that they at least have the right to expect? When will the Government stamp out percentage turnover rent without option? When will it stamp out the immoral claim by landlords to the goodwill of businesses? When will it stamp out sloppy accounting by landlords to their tenants for the management and promotion of shopping centres? When will it stamp out leases without option and other practices that have been mentioned from time to time in this Chamber? When is the Government going to act, now that it is obvious to everyone that self-regulation, as suggested by the Cooper report, does not work? When is the Government going to lift the threat of overseas-financed hypermarkets from every small businessman in retailing in the State? Why do we still hear talk about model leases that simply cannot be enforced? Why is the Government taking so long to cushion the largest employment sector against a general recession?

I sincerely hope that many of the points that I have mentioned tonight will lead to the introduction of legislation next year and that, at long last, something is done to protect small business, which employs more than 60 per cent of the work-force.

In conclusion, I thank the Minister at least for his co-operation and understanding of some of the problems that have arisen. I thank Don Young for the assistance that he has given me over the years. I thank Bill Lamond and the Small Business Development Corporation for their co-operation and understanding. I hope that, at long last, with greater public awareness of the problems confronting small business, the Government will be seen to be doing something for small business.

Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (7.54 p.m.): I have pleasure in speaking to these Estimates. I am very pleased to see that Don Young is now the director of the department. All of us know that he is a very capable officer. Formerly he was in the Co-ordinator-General's Department. No doubt the Minister is very pleased to have him in his department. He has wide experience and is a very capable officer.

It is fortunate that the department is headed by a capable director, because at the present time the Minister is weathering a storm. It is unfortunate that a man who had done so much for his party and who had spent such a long time in it and in Parliament should be pressured to move aside allegedly for a younger person. The Minister would be one of the better Ministers in Cabinet. I am quite certain that if Ministers were rated on ability, the Minister for Commerce and Industry would receive top marks.

I note from the Estimates that the staff of the department is to be increased from 99 to 108, an increase of nine. I also note that the appropriation for the Chief Office has been increased from \$7,093,799 in 1981-82 to \$14,058,900 in 1982-83, which is a significant increase. The appropriation for the item "Travelling Expenses, Printing, Stationery and Incidentals" has been increased from \$533,225 in 1981-82 to \$631,100 in 1982-83.

Turning to the Budget Speech and Financial Statement, I note that \$9.3m is being provided for capital works for the development of industrial estates. Of the 51 industrial estates throughout Queensland, 43 are situated in provincial areas.

One of the matters that worry me is that the department is very selective in the type of industry or business that is allowed to establish itself in the industrial estates. I am aware of a person who was looking for land in Gladstone on which to erect a shed to store his demolition materials. To this time, he has been unsuccessful in his endeavours to obtain a site in one of the Crown industrial estates. I would like the Minister to adopt a more sympathetic approach towards some of these small business people. This is a free enterprise Government and, under it, demolition is big business. The Government had to bring in the demolition people after midnight to knock down the Bellevue.

Mr Davis: I was there.

Mr PREST: Yes, the honourable member was outside the fence, and I remember the jostling in which he was involved in trying to protect that building, but it was all to no avail.

Mr Gygar: What rubbish!

Mr PREST: The honourable member for Brisbane Central is a man of integrity, unlike the member for Stafford who will be keeping his seat warm for another 12 months, and then moving on.

I note that about 83 buildings have been completed under the Pioneer Industries Assistance Scheme.

I turn now to some unfortunate people about whom we hear very little. Because of the policies adopted by this Government and the Federal Government, particularly in relation to high interest rates and uncontrolled rents, many small business people have gone to the wall. In 1981-82, 532 businesses went into liquidation in this State alone.

Of course, we do not know how many hundreds or even thousands of small businesses have simply closed their doors and the owners walked out, lost all their possessions and all that they had ever worked for. Today the Minister said what a wonderful State we are in and how buoyant the business sector is. To contradict that I will read from some newspaper articles, the first of which appeared in "The Courier-Mail" of 11 August 1982—

"Jobs go without warning

One of Bundaberg's biggest employers, Versatile Toft Limited, retrenched 104 employees yesterday.

The employees, from the company's administrative and manufacturing divisions, were told of their retrenchments at 2.30 p.m. and were given one week's pay in lieu of notice, plus normal redundancy payments.

The decision to retrench nearly a third of Versatile Toft's workforce was made after two major orders fell through last Thursday.

Vesatile Toft, one of the sugar town's biggest employers, cut its work force to 250 on Monday in the face of depressed sugar prices and a depressed economy.

The retrenchments lifted the district's unofficial employment figures to near 2 000—10 per cent of the workforce.

There is little hope of placing many of the newly unemployed in work in the area."

At that time in Bundaberg 2 000 people, or 10 per cent of the work-force, were unemployed, and the latest figure for Queensland is 74 600, with many more thousands to join that number as the school year draws to a close. What opportunity do those young people have of getting jobs?

A Press article of 13 August stated—

"Walkers Limited has shelved plans for a \$4 million expansion at its Mackay plant because of a recession in the sugar and coal industries.

It would have provided about 35 new jobs.

Walkers provide components for the coal mining industry in the Bowen Basin and the sugar industry from Mackay north."

One has to look only at Blackwater to see what is happening in the coal-mining industry, and I have heard that even at Moura there could be big retrenchments.

Mr. Vaughan: It is only the start.

Mr PREST: That is right. The Government has been warned about it, but it has done nothing. That is a good example of its attitude: do nothing and play along with the big companies.

Another newspaper article of 13 August stated—

"White shuts truck plant in Brisbane

The receiver and manager of White Motor Corp (Australia) Pty Ltd yesterday revealed the manufacturing plant of the company at Coopers Plains, Brisbane, had closed until further notice.

The closure follows difficulties in carrying on within the constraints of receivership and the tough trading conditions in the truck industry.

Mr Allpass said the company's workforce was being reduced progressively."

Yet the Government tells us that Queensland has a very buoyant economy and business sector. A Press article of 16 August stated—

"Malleys sack 105 workers in reorganisation

A Woollongabba factory has sacked 105 workers under a rationalisation of labor plan.

The 105 workers were retrenched on August 2. There still were more than 200 people working at the Deshon Street factory, said Mr Watkins.

In 1968 Malleys announced a \$2 million expansion plan for the Deshon Street works and employed more than 700 people in Brisbane.

The union now believed that fewer than 200 people worked at the plant, he said."

The Government came into power in 1957, yet the employees in one factory alone have been reduced from 700 in 1968 to 200 today. How can the Government be proud of its achievement in the business sector?

A Press article of 19 August 1982 stated—

“Transport jobs lost

About 22 workers will lose their jobs at Jetaway Pty Ltd in Brisbane tomorrow as another Queensland freight company buckles under the weight of the recession.

Only six of the displaced workers had been offered ‘possible’ jobs in other areas.

The Jetaway retrenchments follow the collapse of a freight division of TNT, Overnighter, in which 40 workers lost their jobs last week.”

Only recently in Bundaberg Massey-Ferguson announced that some 50 employees could lose their jobs. On 26 October a newspaper article headed “150 workers to lose jobs” stated—

“About 150 employees of Massey-Ferguson Limited will be retrenched on Friday.

The company is one of Australia’s manufacturers of agricultural machinery and equipment.

The Bundaberg branch manufacturing manager, Mr David Brinks, said yesterday that there would be about 80 retrenchments in Bundaberg, and a similar number in Sunshine, Victoria”

I have another article here headed, “80 jobless as big car dealer closes” The article stated—

“Eighty people lost their jobs yesterday when one of the State’s biggest Holden dealers closed.

Staff at Wayne Hill Holden, a new and used car dealer in Ipswich Road, Oxley, were told when they reported for work yesterday that the company had closed and gone into receivership.”

I could go on and on. Those articles referred only to the jobs of the workers, the more lowly paid people, the people about whom the Australian Labor Party is concerned. They are the people about whom the National and Liberal Parties could not give two hoots. We have heard speaker after speaker in this debate saying that the workers should work for lower wages or reduce their hours and be paid accordingly. Let the gentlemen on my left stand up and say that they are willing to work for a lower wage. They all accepted an increase in their pay recently. Tell me how many of them have more than one income—the chemists, the solicitors, the barristers, the farmers and the pastoralists. I am more concerned for the workers, and I am even more concerned for their families. What future is there for a family when the breadwinner loses his job? There is no future at all! All they can look forward to is continued worry and pressure. They have to tighten their belts, and that could cause their health to fail. I feel sorry for them. Shame on this Government for allowing the situation to continue.

But the rot does not stop there; it applies also to the big companies. I have here an article dated 5 September 1982 headed, “Viertel aims to axe 4 directors” The article stated—

“Multi-millionaire Charles Viertel yesterday announced his plan to topple four of Carricks Ltd’s six directors.

Mr Viertel said he controlled 26.45 percent of Carricks’ shares, but was confident that ‘a group of large shareholders’—whom he refused to name—would back his move.

He accused the chairman, Sir Roderick Proctor, and directors, Mr I. G. Cameron, Mr A. F. Luya and General Sir Arthur MacDonald, of bad management.”

We know who those people are. We know Sir Roderick Proctor, and we know whose friend he is. That is only one of the big companies. I have here another article headed, “CRA axes top jobs”. Then there is another article headed, “Rural downturn slashes Austral”. The article stated—

“Drought and a depressed sugar industry slashed tractor sales and sent interest costs surging and profits plunging for the Brisbane-based Austral Group Ltd.”

I have another article headed, “Going, but not gone”. The article stated—

“One of Queensland’s best-known music stores—Palings, in Queen Street, Brisbane, is closing. But the Palings name will not disappear.”

The company has gone, but the new company will trade on under the old name.

We also read that Comalco, one of Queensland's largest companies, is in trouble. Then we see another headline, "Barry & Roberts plunge by 40 p.c.". Then another headline, "Maryborough Sugar result slumps in line with prices" The article stated—

"Maryborough Sugar Factory Ltd reported a 47.8 per cent slump in net profit "

Next I come to the depression in the aluminium industry. I have here another article which stated—

"Comalco Ltd., which has one of the biggest turnovers of any company operating principally in Queensland, has joined other metal and mineral producers with a large profit fall."

So we are concerned not only about the workers but also about the big companies. After all, those big companies have been big employers. I am particularly concerned about Comalco because it is a big employer in my electorate, as is Queensland Alumina Ltd. Workers have lost their jobs because of the slump in the industry, the recession throughout the world and the attitude of the State and Federal Governments. Many of the workers will face severe troubles because they will no longer receive the overtime benefits that they have been receiving for years.

The Minister for Transport made a very garbled speech outlining his attitude to Queensland-made goods. His speech contained the greatest lot of humbug I have ever listened to. Ministers continually ask people to buy Queensland-made goods, but in this instance the tender was let to a New Zealand company. The Minister for Transport said that New Zealand is a friend of Australia and New Zealand is a close neighbour. It seems to me that the Government considers the workers of Queensland to be second-rate people. The Government does not give them any special consideration. Every word spoken by the honourable member for Lytton was true. His words came from the bottom of his heart. He is one man who, at all times, supports the workers.

Mr Mackenroth: The Minister is in step with what you are saying. You realise that he is about to lose his job.

Mr PREST: I feel sorry for him. The Minister should feel sorry for the workers who will be losing their jobs. Unlike the Minister, the workers who will lose their jobs will not receive a financial bonanza. I do not think the Minister will have to face the problems that unemployed Queensland workers will have to face.

The Minister may grin as much as he wishes. I have a great respect for him as a man, but it is shameful that he should sit there grinning when I am talking about unemployment and people who will be losing their jobs.

Mr SULLIVAN: I rise to a point of order. I do not accept that criticism from the honourable member. I was speaking to the honourable member for Isis (Mr Powell) about another matter. I do have a sense of humour and I grinned at what the honourable member said. Why doesn't the honourable member be a little fairer?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member for Port Curtis to accept the Minister's explanation.

Mr PREST: I accept it.

Opposition members are concerned about the 12.3 per cent increase in the consumer price index. Government members can only say that it is caused by the high wages paid to workers. That is not the reason for the large increase. It has been caused by the Government's attitudes and policies. The increased petrol prices and the increased medical and hospital charges are causing the workers to dread the next CPI figures. They will prove that the Federal Government's sales tax policy has caused a further major increase.

(Time expired.)

Mr PRENTICE (Toowong) (8.13 p.m.): I rise to speak in this debate because it is of particular importance to all Queenslanders.

I suggest first that honourable members sit back and review what the member for Port Curtis said in his speech. Those members who were listening to him and watching him saw that he, like many other members of the ALP, came here with a sheaf of Press reports. I suspect that, under instructions from the honourable member for Port Curtis, or whoever gives him instructions, someone in the ALP has been looking through

newspapers covering the last few months and digging out every bit of bad news about Queensland. Let us consider what the honourable member for Port Curtis did. He recited everything bad that he could find.

I do not deny that there are areas of real concern in this State about the way in which the economy is working. What I say to the honourable member for Port Curtis—and I say it to Opposition members generally—is that there comes a time when Opposition members not only have to criticise but also have to voice some alternative viewpoints, and the Committee heard none from the honourable member. All that honourable members heard was criticism, statements running people down and attempts at point-scoring. There was not one attempt to give this Parliament an alternative viewpoint. There was not one attempt at saying what the honourable member for Port Curtis would do if he faced the difficulties confronting the Government.

In the last gasp of his speech, the honourable member recognised that economic problems generally exist throughout the world and that those problems do have an impact on Australia. That is true. It was probably his most significant comment.

Mr Mackenroth: The people in the gallery are leaving.

Mr PRENTICE: I can assure the honourable member that there will always be more people in the gallery than Opposition members in the Chamber.

The honourable member for Port Curtis gave many instances but did not say what he would do. It is interesting to look at the situation in other States. This has been raised on many other occasions, so I do not intend to go through all the details of the appalling state of the New South Wales and Victorian economies or the way in which the Governments in those States are raiding funds in an attempt to keep their charges down. New South Wales has no funds left. It is best summed up by an advertisement in today's "Courier-Mail" which reads—

"Auction Brisbane
New South Wales House
Corner Queen and Edward Streets

Under instructions from the Government of N.S.W., Richard Ellis Ray White are pleased to offer this prime 'Commercial A' free-hold opportunity right in the heart of Brisbane's commercial business district."

The New South Wales Government is strapped for cash, is experiencing enormous problems and has to flog off its assets.

What would the Opposition do? To find that out I should read from the Australian Labor Party Queensland Branch State Policy. It is important that business in this State be made aware of the alternatives that the ALP will not mention in this Parliament and that the honourable member for Port Curtis was not game to raise because he knew what the reaction would be.

The objectives of the Australian Labor Party are "redistribution of political and economical power; establishment and development of public enterprises, based upon Federal, State and other forms of social ownership, in appropriate sectors of the economy," and "democratic control and strategic social ownership of Australian national resources." What the Australian Labor Party proposes, let me point out for the benefit of the people who are interested in the way in which the alternative Government should be seen, is massive Government intervention and Government interference on a scale that small business could not possibly survive.

It is all very well for the Labor Party to try to pick off examples. It should be prepared to go out and sell its own policy. It should be prepared, in this Parliament, to say, "This is our policy. This is what we would do." I wager that, come election-time, we will get the glossy pamphlets from the ALP and we will get all the information from the ALP, but I wonder how much resemblance the points that they push will bear to its stated policy and how much of it will be hidden in the background in an attempt to keep it from the public.

The ALP talks about not dealing with New Zealand and other countries. However, its own policy says that it should co-operate with other countries to ensure that it has the opportunity to participate at that level.

The Labor Party has a responsibility to cast a critical eye on the operations of the Government. It has a responsibility to put forward its alternatives. In times of economic

difficulty, the Opposition also has a responsibility to do what it can to promote this State as one of the few States that are probably best surviving the world economic downturn. We have a State that is better than any other State in Australia. It is probably providing one of the last buffers against that economic downturn. The Labor Party could actually do something to ensure that that situation lasts as long as possible. Notwithstanding the difficulties around the world, if we can work as one State and as one team, and hopefully on occasions as one Parliament, we might be able to achieve a lot more than if we just have a Parliament in which there is nothing but criticism, no constructive suggestions and merely people attempting to score political points.

The Minister said that Australia and Queensland cannot insulate themselves from that world-wide downturn to which I have already referred. He honestly admitted in this Chamber that there have been factory closures and receiverships in the last 12 months. At this time of difficulty I would hope that the Minister's department would be doing what it can to ensure that business has the best advice available on how it should insulate its operations from the world-wide downturn. I am referring not only to the two and three-man small business operations, but also to larger small businesses. I am quite sure that that advice is available. I hope that at this time it would be extended as far as possible. It is important that we hold on to what operations we have to maximise the benefits of being in the State of Queensland. That is an area to which the department could well look to increase its efforts.

Mr Gygar interjected.

Mr PRENTICE: The Opposition Leader seems to have that well under control.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr PRENTICE: It has been said that the Leader of the Opposition is attempting to lay his hands on the whole of the Opposition at once to try to create some sort of political miracle.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Powell): Order! The honourable member will return to his speech.

Mr PRENTICE: Can I say that it is unlikely that anything would come of it.

In the area of international competitiveness it is time that Governments at the State and Federal levels looked seriously at the question of protection and how far any nation can afford to protect its own industries. There is no doubt that protection, if it is handled properly, can provide an important role in ensuring that Australia's major and strategic industries are kept viable so that in the future they will always be available to us in times of need. There is also a great danger that if we are too willing to offer protection we will end up in a situation in which we are feather-bedding the operations of a number of companies in this country that may well be better off with some open and honest competition in the market-place. The Federal Government must face that problem when it examines the steel industry. It can be said, "Give them no further assistance, no further protection", because the cost of protection would add too much to the cost of steel products in this country, and it would then flow on into other sectors such as engineering works and those enterprises related to the steel industry. The alternative is the cost to the individuals who work in the industry.

What the Government must be looking for is maximising competitiveness. That means that on all occasions it must restrict the protection that it gives to local industries in order to ensure that they operate as effectively and as efficiently as possible. That should be borne in mind at both a State and a Federal level.

In difficult times the Government must be prepared to ensure that there is wide-ranging consultation not only on a political level, as I have suggested, but also on the shop floor in individual industries and enterprises. By working together we can ensure that industries not only survive but also grow and improve their participation in the market-place in this great State.

Opposition members have commented on the Government's "We make it great in the Sunshine State" and "Buy Queensland made" campaigns. I congratulate the Minister on continuing those campaigns. They have worked remarkably well. They struck a chord with the people of Queensland, who have shown their willingness to support Queensland-made goods. I seek the Minister's assurance that the campaigns will be continued. Their continuation will benefit all local enterprises.

Earlier I heard criticism of the Minister for Transport concerning a contract let recently by the Railway Department to a New Zealand company. I do not know all the details of the contract, but having listened to the Minister, I return to the matter of protection and say that it is important that, wherever possible, a Queensland Government should buy Queensland-made products. However, if a Government were to do that at any cost, it would be a foolish Government indeed. If it did that, Queensland enterprises and operations would no longer be competitive on the Australian market, because they would be able to sell their products in this State at artificially high prices.

Any Government has to make an assessment of tenders on the basis of the best interests of all Queenslanders. A Government must look at the cost and it might on occasions accept that it is worth while paying additional money for Queensland-made products. However, it has to make an assessment in the overall interests of the State and the overall interest of reasonable and economic Government operations.

Certainly the Government must look at employment results, but there comes a time when the cost may be too high and when the Government has to say, "As much as we would like to buy Queensland made and as much as we would bend over backwards to do it, no reasonable or responsible Government could be prepared to shell out extra money purely to achieve that one aim." There are competing needs, and a Government must be prepared to strike a balance between those needs.

Mr Davis: What about small businesses? Have you sold them out again?

Mr PRENTICE: I thank the honourable member for that interjection. On the matter of shopping centre leases and small businesses, results are beginning to be seen. It will take a while before a solution acceptable to all is reached, but as one who is prepared to express a critical point of view in this Chamber and who, as the Minister is aware, has been prepared to criticise him over this issue in the past, I suggest that finally we are getting somewhere. With the number of people from the Minister's department, the Government parties and other areas working together on the problem, we should see an end result that will be to the benefit of all the people concerned.

Mr Shaw: What about free enterprise?

Mr PRENTICE: I believe that the end result will not be incompatible with the operation of free enterprise and that it will ensure that small business will be given an opportunity to compete openly and fairly in the market-place.

Mr Davis: Would it be fair to say that all the others have gone broke waiting for you to do something?

Mr PRENTICE: That is not true. Some people have moved from those shopping centres, but many of them are back in business in different areas. The Government has a responsibility to ensure that it does not rush into these matters willy-nilly and that, when action is taken, it is taken responsibly and in the right way.

I shall make two other points in this debate. On many occasions, I have referred to the first point, which is that at all times government must be aware of the need to deregulate and remove the controls of government and ensure that private enterprise has the maximum freedom in the market-place. The department, and in particular the Small Business Development Corporation, should have a watching brief on the cost of Government regulations, rules, laws and statutes and ensure that the Minister and the Parliament are aware of the areas in which those regulations, rules, laws and statutes can be repealed to allow greater freedom and to reduce the cost of small business.

Every member will have found that if there is one thing of which small businessmen are sick and tired it is the red tape—the forms, forms and more forms. They have to comply with regulations that do nothing other than cost them money. I think that any Government has a responsibility to try to restrict that sort of interference to a minimum.

The second, and final, point is to pay a tribute to the work done by John Bensted, the former head of the department. In my short time here while he was head of the department, I always found him to be of great assistance. He did a remarkable job and should be congratulated.

I await with interest the comments of the next Opposition speaker, to see whether he is going to provide some constructive suggestions instead of merely running down the Government and not providing any alternatives.

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (8.32 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to speak to these Estimates. During the time that I have been a member of this Assembly, I have always found the Minister to be very courteous. It is pleasing to see him sitting with his good friend and colleague the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs (Mr Tomkins). I do not know what they are discussing, but they look like those two old-fashioned girls Ada and Elsie, and they are probably talking about the future.

I speak in this debate not only as a member of Parliament but also as a former small business operator.

Mrs Nelson: Very former.

Mr DAVIS: I was not only a small business operator but also a very successful one. I say that in all modesty.

Ever since my re-election to this Assembly in 1977, I have been inundated by calls from small business operators, who have said to me, "Mr Davis, can you assist us, because there is no way in the world we can do any good with the Minister or with those phonies on the Liberal side of the House." The Leader of the Opposition (Mr Wright) is known throughout Queensland as the friend of small business, and next year the Labor Party will receive the vote of small business people because it is the only party that is doing something for them.

Mr Austin: You put them out of business in New South Wales.

Mr DAVIS: I get tired of listening to Government members who are too stupid to comprehend what is being said.

Mr Prentice: What has the Labor Party done for small business?

Mr DAVIS: If "Perry Mason" will wait his turn, I will tell him what the Labor Party will do for small business.

I wish to comment on some of the inane remarks of some members opposite. Time and time again the member for Southport has come into this Chamber and tried to mislead the Assembly in some inane way by producing fictitious logs of claims. I thought the honourable member, who came from Victoria under a cloud, was one who should know something about industrial logs of claims. As a former businessman he should know that in the Federal jurisdiction an ambit log of claims is issued. The two parties must be in dispute before the matter is heard under the Federal jurisdiction. He is well and truly aware of that yet he tries to deliberately mislead the Chamber.

My friend and colleague, a very eminent former union official, Mr Vaughan, time and time again has tried to get through to him, but obviously he does not understand.

Mr Frawley: Who wrote that rubbish for you, anyway?

Mr DAVIS: I do not have to write speeches; I just rely on natural ability.

Mr Prentice: If I could spring to your defence, may I say it is quite obvious you wrote it.

Mr DAVIS: I have told the member for Toowong that if he waits I will tell him the policy of the Australian Labor Party, even though he has gone to the Parliamentary Library and breached the copyright on the party's publication, instead of going down to Labor House and paying \$2 for it.

During this debate Government member after Government member has said that he actually believes some of the drivel that is put out by the Minister's department.

Mr Sullivan: Your colleagues have been saying what a wonderful department it is.

Mr DAVIS: I do not care what my colleagues have been saying; I am trying to tell the Minister that if half the money spent on these publications went to assist the unemployed, the Government would be doing a much better job.

For the benefit of honourable members who have entered this place only in the last couple of years, I should tell them that when the "Buy Queensland made" campaign was introduced, the stickers were manufactured in Holland.

Mr Tomkins: That was the previous Minister.

Mr DAVIS: I know that, but that is the sort of thing this Government does. The Minister knows that that campaign has been a failure, as the member for Lytton and others have pointed out. The Government has been shown up for what it is—a fraud!

I shall now present documentation that cannot be faulted or doubted, namely, figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. I am sure everybody would agree that that department does not engage in political ploys.

Mr Austin: That is not what your Federal colleagues are saying.

Mr DAVIS: These figures are 100 per cent accurate, and I do not care what my Federal colleagues say. Even though members opposite may not like these figures, I have a responsibility to read them into "Hansard"

Mr Frawley: I will not have to go to church to do penance; I am doing it here listening to your speech.

Mr DAVIS: I know that the clown from Caboolture—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Powell): Order! The honourable member will refer to other members by their correct title.

Mr DAVIS: I apologise for using an unparliamentary phrase. I should have referred to Mr Frawley as the member for Caboolture. I am sorry that next year the member for Caboolture will retire from politics and therefore will no longer be in the Chamber. I am glad that he has accepted the offer from the Ashton brothers.

I will use the number of unemployed persons as an example. The latest figures show that 67 000 people are unemployed in Queensland, which is an increase of 15.4 per cent over last year. Time and time again I have referred to the false documents. I will not lay the blame on the Minister's department because I believe the document I am about to refer to is published by the State Public Relations Bureau.

Mr Vaughan: A very costly department.

Mr DAVIS: Yes, but this document is published by the Premier under the guise of "Queensland Development". It is a nice document. It refers to developmental projects worth millions of dollars and includes projects such as the Julia Creek oil-shale development, which was first mooted in 1959 and has been mentioned during every election campaign since then. The document goes on and on—it lists every private house! It includes work carried out by the Main Roads Department and even features Brisbane's electric trains. It lists housing, education and water-supply projects. Every city and shire council project in the State is listed. Works projects of the Brisbane City Council, including water supply, are listed. All those projects have been bundled together and the proclamation is made, "This is what the Government does for the community." Have you ever seen such a charade, Mr Powell?

Today the honourable member for Lytton referred to the great work that this Government has done promoting Queensland-made products!

My next point should interest the member for Burnett because he is a well-known producer of citrus fruits.

Mr Prest: Why should he be in the four who have to go?

Mr DAVIS: I am glad that the honourable member raised that. If I had my choice, I can assure Mr Wharton that I would allow him to stay. But it is three and the Bird who have to go.

I now want to quote some figures from the "Queensland Year Book" for 1982, because it is another publication that cannot be doubted. First I want to refer to butter, cheese and eggs. Do members know that this great development Government of ours in 1979-80 imported \$862,000 worth of butter, cheese and eggs from overseas?

Mr FRAWLEY: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is talking about primary industries.

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

Mr DAVIS: This great development Government imported \$31,362,000 worth of butter, cheese and eggs from other States. It also imported \$13,371,000 worth of fish and fish preparations from overseas and \$10,860,000 worth from other States. Then we come to a really good one. Later in the night we will discuss the Sugar Acquisition Act Amendment Bill which deals with the State's major product. When he was Minister for Primary Industries, Mr Sullivan told us what a great Minister he had been for primary industry and what a great co-ordinator he was.

Mr Sullivan: No; other people said that.

Mr DAVIS: The Minister mentioned that to me on a couple of occasions. I agreed with him.

From overseas Queensland imported honey, sugar and sugar confectionary to the value of \$346,000. From the other States, Queensland imported honey, sugar and sugar confectionary to the value of \$43,849,000. In spite of that, the Government boasts about manufacturing raw products. If Queensland was manufacturing those goods, I would say that the Minister for Commerce and Industry has done a great deal for the State. The Government has made much ado about manufacturing raw materials. In fact Queensland is exporting its raw products to the other States and importing them as finished goods.

Mrs Nelson: Will you be honest and tell the committee that most of that is tied up in chocolates made in Tasmania and Victoria and brought up here because the chocolate industry cannot be established satisfactorily in a tropical climate?

Mr DAVIS: I have dealt with the imports of sugar and—

Mrs Nelson: Will you tell the committee that?

Mr DAVIS: I should not reply to the honourable member for Aspley. I intended to ignore her comment. She was elected fairly recently, she does not read the right books and she simply concentrates on sex discrimination. I have pointed out to her that she has done nothing constructive about that since coming here. Just so that the 'Hansard' record will be straight, I repeat that I referred to honey, sugar and sugar confectionary. That does not include chocolate. For the information and benefit of the honourable member for Aspley, I point out that chocolate, chocolate confectionary, cocoa and others are under a separate heading. I will give the import figures for them. From overseas, Queensland imported \$121,000 worth; from other States, which would include Tasmania, imports were to the value of \$43,592,000. The figures I gave for sugar are completely different.

Mrs Nelson: That is the same amount of money that you referred to a few minutes ago. You can do anything with figures.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr Frawley: You were caught out.

Mr DAVIS: I have not been caught out. I will repeat the figures. It is now a matter of principle, because my honour is at stake. For the benefit of honourable members, I point out that overseas imports of honey, sugar and sugar confectionary—is the member for Aspley taking this down?—were worth \$346,000, and interstate imports were worth \$43,849,000. That is a completely different figure.

Mr Gygar interjected.

Mr DAVIS: It is all very well for members such as the Charlie Chaplin from Stafford to laugh his head off.

Mr Gygar: I cannot help it.

Mr DAVIS: I am quite accustomed to the honourable member for Stafford getting up time and again to ridicule people who try to present fair dinkum figures. Those are the facts, and I am willing to table the Year Book containing the figures.

I shall now deal with a problem in which I was involved and about which the Minister has not done anything. It will raise its ugly head again, because the oil companies are applying pressure to the service station proprietors. As honourable members know,

I was a service station proprietor a number of years ago. The problem will recur because the Government has not done anything to assist the service station proprietors. The Federal Government has ignored them.

There is only one way to overcome the problem. The Government, in co-operation with the service station proprietors and the oil companies, should ensure that the wholesale price applies to everybody and that the retail price applies to everybody. That is the scheme that was introduced in New Zealand in 1933. It was introduced by a National Party Government—a Conservative, Tory Government—similar to the Queensland Government. There has not been any problem with it; it has worked satisfactorily.

The situation in this State is ridiculous. Service station proprietors can buy petrol more cheaply from jobbers because the jobbers can buy their supplies from the oil refinery more cheaply. Service station proprietors cannot get the same deal as that given to the jobbers. The Government should do something about that.

Mrs NELSON (Aspley) (8.52 p.m.): I shall address myself this evening to a couple of matters raised by the Minister in his speech. I shall deal first with the Small Business Development Corporation. I pay a tribute to the corporation for the work that it has done in my area during the past 12 months. Secondly, I shall deal with the hypermarket.

It has become fashionable for members of the Opposition, particularly the honourable member for Brisbane Central, to talk about ridicule. That is all that Opposition members are capable of; they never offer anything positive. The exception is the honourable member for Wolston, who, on odd occasions, has offered constructive comments. I know that he is in the Chamber and, to be fair, I had to make that point. During the debate nothing objective has come from the Opposition. The people of Queensland are entitled to know of some of the good work done by this Minister's department. The role of the Small Business Development Corporation is to co-ordinate the functions of small business, to develop and promote small business and to counsel small business in Queensland. The corporation handles over 200 calls a month from all over the State for counselling. It makes an officer available in provincial cities and towns on a regular basis throughout the year. About 60 per cent of the counselling calls deal with the retailing sector as opposed to the manufacturing sector, with retailers going to the corporation for advice. The other 40 per cent is made up of requests from the manufacturing sector, the professional area and the semi-professional area.

It is important to remember that professional people such as solicitors, accountants and doctors have small businesses and are subject to the same changes in the economy as any other business. They have the same need to establish their businesses properly or they could fail in the same way that any other small business could fail. The Small Business Development Corporation plays a vital role in ensuring that they, as well as people in the manufacturing and retailing sectors, are assisted.

The corporation does not encourage people to seek advice on implementing or establishing programs for new businesses. It prefers to encourage small business people to go to existing professional agencies, such as their solicitor, to draw up contracts.

There has been a lot of talk about leasing arrangements. There is no doubt that the corporation has done great work in patching up and attempting to patch up those problems. Many small business people get into trouble because they do their own legal work, or try to do it, instead of taking competent legal advice before signing binding, legal contracts.

The same applies to small business people establishing a new service, whether they are selling goods, offering a service or operating in a specialist area. Quite often they have good ideas and good products to sell or services to offer, but they do not get the business set up properly by an accountant and they founder in the first nine months, not because the idea or the product was not good, but because they did not know what was good in business terms. Although a person may have been an inventor, an entrepreneur or a creative individual, he is not an accountant or a solicitor and he ought to use those existing professional advisory services because by using them his business has a greater chance of survival.

For those people who have done that and still find themselves in trouble, the Small Business Development Corporation provides a counselling service. I wish to comment on some facets of the corporation's role that I found to be helpful. In doing so, I would like to comment on the hypermarket debate that raged in this State for nine months.

One of the things I found amusing in the last couple of weeks was to see the newly appointed Leader of the Opposition and one other unnamed character running around not in the electorate of Aspley—I would advise them to stay out of that electorate with the nonsense they have been spruiking—but on the periphery of that electorate trying to tell the people of Petrie and Strathpine that they somehow can magically stop the hypermarket development at Aspley. I would ask both those gentlemen who have made visits in the area: where were they when they were needed? Neither of them had anything to say nine months ago when a few people were fighting a very lonely battle to prevent that centre being established. Notwithstanding their absence, we had great success in having the centre made much smaller and being made to comply with the court rezoning decision. If that particular gentleman thinks he is going to win the seat of Fisher by talking about a hypermarket shopping centre at Aspley, he does not know much about politics, and I suspect that his primary vote will be very low.

There is another facet of small business in which caution needs to be exercised, and that is the rush to computerise. A significant number of small companies are selling all sorts of equipment and offering all sorts of deals to business. A number of editions of "The Courier-Mail" recently carried an advertisement about computers. One would really think it was the Second Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians in terms of what this computer program and package could offer the small businessman. Small business people ought to exercise great caution before they buy equipment that they may not need for their type of operation. If they decide that it is to their benefit—and again they should obtain the good professional advice that is available—they should exercise great caution in the choice of equipment that they purchase, how great a range of equipment they need to buy and what sort of arrangements they come to in financing it.

I pay a tribute to the Minister for the role he has played with the development of pioneering industries in this State. Nearly \$16m has been spent in that area. The Opposition never likes to talk about the real figures. However, \$16m has been spent in establishing pioneering industries in the State. Creative people who live in this State and who have a good idea and a good product sometimes do not have the resources to get them off the ground if it is a new industry. The Small Business Development Corporation has encouraged people with the same sort of good ideas who cannot obtain support in their own State to come to Queensland. In my own electorate I know that a particular gentleman was able to be helped. He has a first-class product that is not available in Queensland. He is one of the few people in Australia who can manufacture that product. He invented and designed it himself. The department is assisting him to establish his industry and helping him with financing. I pay a tribute to the department for the wide-ranging assistance offered to that particular man. I know that he is typical of the many people in Queensland who have been assisted.

The other point that needs to be made about this type of Government activity is that not only does it help people to become established but also the Government publishes journals that are circulated internationally and promote and publicise new inventions, new ideas and new services that operate in Queensland. I have received comments from people in States governed by socialist Governments to the effect that they are now looking at the possibility of emulating the Queensland Government's action of promoting new ideas and publicising goods and services. Queensland leads the nation in this field.

Mr Davis: Why do you make up things? You know that it is a fairy tale.

Mrs NELSON: The honourable member for Brisbane Central is the only person in the Chamber who is an expert on fairy tales.

I turn now to a matter in relation to which there is a considerable lack of action by this Government and, furthermore, by all Governments in Australia. A certain gentleman who is an acknowledged expert in housing research moved from the Northern Territory to my electorate. No Government in Australia provides any real financial assistance for housing research, so I ask the Minister and his department to examine ways in which people with new ideas in housing research can be assisted.

I cite what happened to this man. He has a very sound idea for reducing the cost of the structural work involved in house-building. His idea revolves around the way in which walls are put together and erected. He had reached a certain level in his research, at considerable cost to himself. He had spent an enormous amount of money and could not afford to spend any more.

The Federal Government had given some assistance under an earlier scheme, one that the building industry itself is now helping to keep afloat. However, unfortunately it was one of the targets of the so-called razor gang.

This man came to Queensland because it is the State in which there is the greatest development and he wanted to do some work here. I sent him to private enterprise and to various Government departments. Everybody, including private enterprise, said, "When you have a model that you can show us, when you have built a house, come back and see us. If we think it is a good idea we might be able to put some money into it."

The whole point is that this man needed the money at that stage so that he could construct a model. I cannot see any reason why either the Department of Works and Housing, the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development or any other department could not have assisted a man who will change the face of Australian housing. Eventually his idea will be adopted. It has been patented internationally and accepted by the National Standards Association. It is a very good idea and it will reduce the cost of housing by up to 25 per cent.

Mr Davis: Ah!

Mrs NELSON: If the honourable member for Brisbane Central does not know anything about it, I am quite happy to bring the gentleman in so that he can speak to the honourable member. His invention is an outstanding one.

I should like the State Government to look at this area because it is one that is lacking financial assistance. Admittedly Queensland has a difficult climate in which to establish good-quality housing cheaply. We are faced with rising housing costs. Young people are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain good-quality housing at a reasonable price. This area of housing research is one in which the State Government could lead the nation.

In the time remaining I revert to the matter of the hypermarket. I want to comment on the apparent inability of the three levels of government in Australia to co-ordinate their functions to the extent of enabling good ideas to be hurried through and bad ideas to be stopped. This aspect has concerned me for some time, because more than this particular development is involved. My concern is bound up with the manner in which court decisions are applied and accepted.

The land in question was the subject of a court application in 1977. In 1979 the court's decision was handed down. Even by then it was out of date. It is certainly out of date now. However, because the matter went to an appeal court and because the rezoning has been allowed, there appears to be no way in which the local authority, the State Government or the Federal Government—certainly the local authority and the State Government—can stop what is not a good development for the area concerned.

I cannot understand why the most overgoverned nation in the world cannot have a system whereby developments of that sort have to be accepted and approved at the date of application for approval to construct. I do not think it matters a jot that there is a rezoning decision on land if it applies from 1979 to 1982, as this one did, and was extended. When somebody sells land he should give away the rights to develop it. The previous rights ought to be cancelled and the person who purchases the land should reapproach the local authority and/or the State Government for approval to proceed with a similar project.

Since 1977, the northern suburbs area has become the most overserviced retailing area in the metropolitan area. It is about 40 per cent overserviced for the population in the district. If we are seriously concerned about employment for unskilled youth, which is something in which the Labor Party theoretically is interested—it is certainly something in which I am interested—we should be carefully examining the role of computerised major developments such as super-supermarkets and hypermarkets because they emphasise low numbers of employees and fast turnover—everything big except staff.

This is one area of retailing in which unskilled and semi-skilled youth have been able to find employment.

Mr Davis. Are you for free enterprise or not?

Mrs NELSON: I am for private enterprise, which a slightly different concept, and at some time in the future I shall explain the difference to the honourable member—if he can understand, and that might be a little difficult in his case. There is no such thing as free enterprise; there is either public enterprise or private enterprise.

To continue my argument—I ask the Committee and the Minister to investigate ways in which the State, without having to overturn court decisions, can ascertain in some way whether such a whole intrusion into the retailing system in Australia can be allowed to proceed because all three levels of government are apparently incapable at law to stop it. It seems somehow wrong in principle that something that is not necessary, that will not be good for the general community in the area, that will not help employment prospects for unskilled youth in the future and that will certainly have a significant and detrimental effect on small business in that general region, can be allowed to proceed with everybody at every level acting like Pontious Pilate. That is not acceptable. Australians go to the polls, on average, every nine months, and it seems wrong that no level of government can stop something which is essentially not a good idea.

Mr Davis: You want private enterprise one time, but when there is another sort of private enterprise you don't want it. You either support private enterprise or you don't.

Mrs NELSON: That sounds like one of those laissez faire conservatives of about 1767. I thought that the honourable member was in a party that did not represent that sort of attitude.

Mr Davis: That is what you said.

Mrs NELSON: That is what the honourable member is saying; I am not saying that at all. It is nonsense to say that one is either all for nothing or nothing for all. That is ridiculous. That is not the way in which good private enterprise works. If the honourable member knew anything about liberalism, he would know that it believes in private enterprise, development and progress, but not at the expense of exploiting other people.

Mr Davis: There is no such thing as liberalism.

Mrs NELSON: Of course there is, and obviously the honourable member is in grave need of a lesson on the subject. It is quite different from 17th century conservatism which, unfortunately, is what the Labor Party in this State preaches. It is very sad to see one of Labor's senior spokesmen unable to understand the difference between the philosophies of the various parties in this State.

Mr Gygar: He is one of their most talented members.

Mrs NELSON: He is apparently one of Labor's most talented members and would be Leader of the House in the event of a Labor Government being elected to office, which is a frightening thought.

In closing, I pay a tribute to the department and its operations and thank, in particular, the officers of the Small Business Development Corporation for their assistance in my electorate during the past 12 months. Although the prophets of doom and gloom would like to drive us into a recession or depression, positive actions and positive statements of trust and confidence will maintain Queensland as the leading State in the nation, and the activities of this department will help.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (9.10 p.m.): At the outset I pay a tribute to the Minister. This morning those on the Opposition benches sniped at him. Throughout the time I have known him he has always been approachable and he has played an important part in the Government and the development of Queensland. He has always been on the job and has given his very best for Queensland. I say a word of thanks to him in that regard.

In the debate today the Opposition has given its most disappointing and dismal performance in its history. The party claimed to have a new look and had a new spokesman on this portfolio. We listened eagerly today to see if he had anything to tell us of any general concept of the ALP and what it would do for business if it had the opportunity,

or to regenerate business as it has claimed that at the moment it is in the doldrums. Members of the Opposition were the prophets of gloom and doom but throughout the day they offered not one constructive thought.

Mr Sullivan: The Opposition spokesman has not been here all day.

Mr BOOTH: That is right; he has not seen fit to even listen to the debate. So it is quite obvious that the ALP has never been weaker and that the changes that have been made can hardly be said to have been for the better, especially if what we heard today was any criterion.

In opening his attack—if that is what it was—on the Estimates the new spokesman ridiculed the Minister for linking primary industry with secondary industry. If the State is to continue to make great headway—that is certainly what has happened in past years—the linking of those two sections of industry—one complements the other—has been one of the highlights of the Government and one of the things that has made the State go on to greater and better things. Secondary industry, particularly in the sugar industry, is complementary to primary industry because the processing of sugar-cane, as was pointed out, is still one of the State's biggest secondary industries, yet through all the coastal regions of the State it relies completely on primary industry. That is also true of the grain industry, with which I am more conversant. Unless there is a strong secondary component the dairy industry is always in the doldrums. So any attempts to knock the Government and to continue to knock Queensland over the Minister's attitude in that regard are quite foolish. The opening remarks of the spokesman for the ALP were nothing more than a continual knocking.

If there was one lesson to be learnt from the debate today it was that unless the State has the ability to continue to compete internationally, it will be in trouble. It is for that reason that some Government members are concerned that some enterprises are being priced out of business. Government members are not attempting in any way to denigrate the workers of the State, because all of us know that the workmen can do a job and do it well. I am sure that is appreciated by anyone with any experience, but it is possible, because of the wage structure, for a person to be priced out of business. That is what worries some Government members, and I am sure it would worry any Government if it found that, because of the general wage structure, its industries could not compete.

The drought that has spread throughout Australia, and from which we are still suffering, is aggravating the problem of unemployment in primary industry. For instance, some of the companies that have been mentioned today as having laid off staff included a machinery company in Bundaberg. Most of its machinery is sold to primary industry. A number of companies in the Dalby area are fairly closely tied to primary industry, and the drought in that area has caused them difficulties.

One of the worst things any person can do is try to destroy business confidence, and yet today we heard from the Opposition benches nothing but words designed to knock confidence and prevent people investing money. It is difficult to describe what confidence is, but it has to be engendered by somebody. People will not invest unless they have something substantial on which to hang their hats.

I cannot say that all Governments are free of blame. Perhaps some things should not have been done by Governments, but other events have occurred that have been outside their control. One of the greatest deterrents to progress and modernisation in industry through the use of available technology is high interest rates. Equipment is costly, and in the situation in which most companies find themselves today, the cost of a piece of equipment, coupled with high interest rates, means that over a seven-year period its price is virtually doubled. That happens in primary and secondary industry. In my opinion, interest rates must come down quickly. Even if the Government has to bring them down artificially, that is still the best way to improve business confidence.

Small business was mentioned a lot in the debate today, and I have had a bit to do with it. Small businesses can sometimes be led astray by economic advisers. From my reading of Press reports over the last six weeks, it appears that there has been a marked drop in the expected turnover of a number of companies; in other words, there was a difference between what they expected to sell and what they in fact sold. That even applies to the beef industry.

It seems to me that the economic advisers churned out by our institutions of learning are very often told something to this effect: "Every year you advise a company to anticipate that its throughput will increase by about 10 per cent." That is all right when there are good and valid reasons to believe that such an increase will occur; but when a company director cannot see any reason why throughput will increase, surely it is folly to go ahead with plans to increase it. Economic advisers have a role to play, but company managers should be careful to insist that their advice is based on good and valid reasons. Let us look at the history of the meat industry. When most meatworks were perhaps half as big as they are now, they did not have a problem with throughput. Production was fairly regular. There may have been times when there was difficulty in handling all the stock in the yards, but meatworks did not have the problem that they appear to face now—that is, have a large stocking capacity but are not able to carry on because they do not have sufficient throughput. As I said, all company directors should ask their economic advisers who suggest an increase in capacity on what grounds the proposal is based.

I pay tribute to the Minister and his staff on the establishment of industrial estates. Some members who have industrial estates in their electorates are a little disappointed by the lack of takers. When excellent industrial land is available some industries usually go there and there is always the hope that more will follow. The industrial estates have been well managed. They have been good for Queensland and beneficial to all. The Ministers officers have been tolerant in their approach. On occasions they have not been able to meet all of the needs, but they have been helpful and ready to give advice and support wherever possible. The people in the electorate of Warwick are very happy with the Ministers officers. They have been very courteous and have given all possible advice.

I rose tonight firstly to say a few words in support of the Minister and his staff, and secondly to sound a note of warning that economic advisers are good, in their place, but we should be careful about the grounds on which their advice is based.

Mr VAUGHAN (Nudgee) (9.21 p.m.): I listened carefully to what has been said by members today. I find several statements need to be corrected. The honourable member for Brisbane Central touched briefly on what was said by the member for Southport, but further clarification is needed of the statements relating to the log of claims served on the mining industry. It is obvious that the honourable member did not understand what was going on.

The fact of the matter is that when a union is serving a log of claims on an industry in the Federal arena, it has to lodge an ambit claim, which has to be served on everyone in the industry. That is a very costly business. That is why claims are made for wages of over a \$1,000 a week, and why the claim has different parts relating to hours, meal breaks and so on. A dispute has to be over a long period to become an ongoing one so that the union will not have to again go through the lengthy, costly procedure of serving another log of claims.

It is unfortunate that Government members do not understand exactly how the Federal and State arbitration systems work. A clear understanding of the operations of the systems would be of great assistance to them when they are dealing with industry. That is a very important part of the industrial set-up in Australia. It is unfortunate that members can make such irresponsible statements.

I want to highlight the difference in attitude adopted by various Government members to industrial disputes. The member for Southport castigated the people in the mining industry for allegedly doing certain things, but in today's "Telegraph", on page 5, the Deputy Premier and Treasurer praised the mining unions for their decision to settle for a 2 per cent pay rise over the next 12 months. On the one hand, the National Party member for Southport said that there were terrible people in that industry but, on the other hand, the Deputy Premier and Treasurer gave them high praise.

Recently, the miners at Utah, because of the situation facing the coal-mining industry in Queensland—I am extremely concerned about it because we appear to be heading for a really torrid time, although the Government seems to be completely oblivious to it—put a plan to the management to work short shifts to offset the cut-back in imports by Japan. So it goes against the grain when I hear National Party members criticising the miners.

The honourable member for Peak Downs mentioned country bread manufacturers. It amazes me when I hear the honourable member for Peak Downs and the honourable member for Aspley supposedly advocating the free enterprise system but, at the same time, advocating restraint when it suits them.

The honourable member for Aspley referred to the hypermarket. I do not disagree with her stand, because a hypermarket would do untold damage to businesses in Geebung, Beams Road and Boondall in my electorate. It should not be built. As the honourable member for Aspley pointed out, the Government seems to be loath to make any serious attempt to prevent the hypermarket being built.

The honourable member for Peak Downs referred to bread manufacturing. He said it was terrible when the large bread manufacturers took over the country bakeries. But Government members were silent when the large bread manufacturers took over the small Brisbane bakeries some years ago. A small bakery in St Vincents Road, Nudgee, was taken over, and nobody said anything about that. That was all right because it affected city people. As soon as something affects country people, Government members find something wrong with it.

I take the honourable member for Peak Downs to task for saying that country bakers deliver bread. My home town is Richmond in Western Queensland. The baker in Richmond stopped delivering bread many years ago. I am pointing out the different attitudes adopted by country members when something affects their electorates as opposed to when something affects city electorates.

I shall digress for a moment. The honourable member for Mt Isa said that the Government had better stop the proposed rental scheme for Housing Commission accommodation until it was learned how it would affect the rural community. Nobody on that side of the Chamber worries about how it will affect city people.

The hypermarket will be a disaster. A new shopping centre has been established in Beams Road. It will cause a lot of problems in the Boondall area and in other parts of my electorate. It is time that shopping centre development in general was curtailed.

Imagine how a small businessman must feel when, having moved into a shopping complex and having established a viable business, he finds suddenly that another large complex will be built down the road from him. A number of shops are duplicated in the large shopping centres. The Government has made attempts to help the tenants in large shopping complexes in regard to their rents, but it has not done enough to help the small business people. They are being ripped off.

In the metropolitan area SEQEB sells electricity in bulk to the complexes which retail the electricity to the tenants. No check is made on how much is being charged for the electricity. Under the provisions of the Electricity Act, under certain circumstances the amount charged for electricity supplied by shopping complexes shall not be more than the amount that the authorities charge. Possibly because of the way in which the electricity is distributed there is a small loophole and the tenants have to pay whatever the landlord demands. This matter has been raised by the honourable member for Rockhampton. Small shop owners are being ripped off in the rents that they are required to pay, particularly when the rent is tied to turnover. They are also being ripped off in high electricity charges.

Mr. Prest: They get ripped off in goodwill.

Mr VAUGHAN: That is tied up with rent being determined on the basis of turnover.

During the Budget debate, I pointed out that the Government introduces Housing Commission rents based on the income coming into a particular household and, at the same time, puts out a booklet dealing with shop leases in which it warns the shopkeeper to beware of having his rent determined on turnover. I do not see much difference between those charges. On the one hand, the Government is determining the rent on a Housing Commission house on the basis of the income, or the turnover, of that particular household; on the other hand, it is advocating that the rent of a shop in a shopping centre should not be based on the turnover of the particular business.

In my opinion, the Government is convinced by its own well-oiled and costly propaganda machine. Around election-time the Government refers to the industries that are coming to this State. Recently honourable members have been bombarded with propa-

ganda from the Government and in the Press about the number of people flocking to Queensland from the southern States. I heard one member make a reference to 1 000 people each month; another member quoted a figure of 60 000 people each year. Last Wednesday evening, the Treasurer addressed the Queensland Coal Owners Association dinner. He said that between 1 200 and 1 600 people were coming to Queensland each week. The fact of the matter is that there is no real way of determining how many of those people are coming here to stay. Of course, that is good propaganda for the Government.

The member for Brisbane Central pointed out that the Government recently published a booklet that stated that \$31 billion worth of industry was coming to Queensland. Tied in with that industry coming to Queensland was the establishment of a coal-to-oil plant at Millmerran and a coal-to-oil plant at Wandoan. Earlier this year, I asked a question and was told that, after two years, the 15 000 tonnes of coal still had not been sent to the Sasol plant in South Africa for testing to see whether the particular type of plant would be suitable for the type of coal at Millmerran.

On Friday, 9 July this year, the Minister for Mines and Energy said that the coal-to-oil plant proposed to be established at Wandoan, which was to be the second coal-to-oil plant in this State, was too big and that Queensland could not go ahead with it. The multi-million-dollar programs listed in that booklet have never eventuated.

In 1980, the Rundle Oil Shale Agreement was introduced. There was to be a great development of shale-oil at Rundle. At that time, I raised the question of the way in which the share market was influenced. From December 1977, the shares of the company involved in that project went from 70c to \$62 in a couple of years because of the Government's propaganda. That does not help the ordinary people in the community. They are influenced by that propaganda. They say, "If the Government promotes it, it must be good." They invest in the project, only to find that it is another Poseidon and the project collapses.

Since 1970, reference has been made to a uranium enrichment plant. I am not influenced by the propaganda; it is a figment of the Government's imagination. I cannot see a uranium enrichment plant being established. If it were established, it would be a tragedy. That is an example of how the Government is influenced by its own propaganda.

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Commerce and Industry) (9.35 p.m.): I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate on the Commerce and Industry Estimates. A total of 21 members participated in the debate. I shall not reply in detail to every point that was raised by them, but I assure them that the matters raised will be taken into consideration by my officers, who have been here all day, and by me.

I am somewhat amazed that the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Wright, did not attend the Committee for part of the debate. I would have expected him to participate in the debate because over the years he has been a spokesman for small business and he has been very critical of the Government. He may offer the excuse that he has other responsibilities. However, honourable members have known for many weeks that the Estimates debate would commence today and that my Estimates would be the first to be debated. I wonder why the Leader of the Opposition is not here. Has he turned his back on small business and on the commercial and industrial sector now that he has become Leader of the Opposition? However, it is for him to answer that question for the benefit of the people.

The first speaker for the Opposition was its spokesman on commercial and industrial matters, Mr Milliner. Five minutes before his time expired, I drew his attention to the fact that he had not talked on any matter other than the hypermarket. I thought that he would talk on other matters. However, he continued to play out time on the hypermarket. A lot of things other than the development of a hypermarket are happening in the industrial and commercial sectors in Queensland; yet the honourable member for Everton was not present for the whole of the debate.

Mr Davis: I have been here for the whole of the debate.

Mr SULLIVAN: Yes, the honourable member for Brisbane Central has been very attentive. He made a contribution to the debate, and he even introduced a little bit of humour into it—for which I thank him.

The honourable member for Everton mentioned the shopping centre that is proposed for Aspley. It is often referred to as a hypermarket. As the honourable member knows, some years ago, as a result of an appeal to the Local Government Court, the land was zoned for shopping centre use. The only way in which the proposal could be stopped was for the Federal Government not to allow foreign funds to come into Australia to build it. I have had a number of discussions with the Federal Treasurer on the matter. After a delay of some months, the Federal Government has allowed the funds to come in.

Included in my submission to the Federal Treasurer was a report to me by the Small Business Development Corporation. That report set out the impact on local retailers if the hypermarket was built. I think it was the honourable member for Everton who asked whether that report could be made available to him. It cannot; it was a report to me and one that I as Minister asked for.

The honourable member for Carnarvon made a very good contribution and I thank him for it. Some of the conditions in retail shopping leases are very onerous on tenants. The Government is looking at ways of ensuring fairer conditions instead of the onerous ones in leases. I shall refer the honourable member's suggestion regarding guarantees to private industry to build industrial estates and the saving in funds used for decentralisation incentives to my departmental officers for discussion. His suggestion has something to commend it.

I thank the honourable member for Windsor for his support. He was here for almost the whole of the debate. I agree that the Government and the Public Service should not be the pace-setters in the salary and wages stakes.

The honourable member for Bulimba commented on the decline in Australia of a number of Australian manufacturing industries such as the tyre industry.

I am concerned at the loss of international competitiveness of Australian industry. The cost of building large industrial complexes in Australia at present in terms of per unit of production is higher than in countries such as the United States and Japan, and it is increasing at a faster rate. These costs flow into the price of the product. Our high wage rates and shorter working weeks also flow into the price. If we lose our international competitiveness, we lose the ability to compete with imports and to export.

I am not blaming the unions alone. It is time that owners, managers and unions got together to ensure that Australia gets a more competitive cost structure. If we do not get a better cost structure, when this recession ends we will not generate all the jobs that we are capable of generating.

The police boat ordered in Hong Kong has been received in Queensland and is at present awaiting certification by Lloyds before being handed over to the Police Department. I am advised that only a few minor matters have to be rectified.

I thank the honourable member for Southport for his contribution. Earlier, I mentioned the need for competitiveness in price. To attain that, industry has to be cost effective, and it has to be able to make a reasonable profit after all costs are paid.

I was very pleased to hear from the honourable member for Peak Downs that officers of the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development have been very helpful to him. I agree that one of the major problems facing small business is the lack of support that it receives from lending institutions.

The honourable member for Cooroora dealt with the need to decentralise industry. Resources are developed where they occur. The department is looking into its incentives at present, and one of the matters under investigation is decentralisation incentives. Overall, the honourable member for Cooroora made a very good contribution.

The honourable member for Maryborough also mentioned a number of declining industries. Part of the problem is the low tariffs placed on imported goods from developing countries in an effort to assist the economic development of those countries. As I mentioned earlier, part of the problem is the failure of manufacturing industry to contain its costs.

One of the problems with the present trade agreement with New Zealand is the export subsidies paid by the New Zealand Government. On many occasions, the Queensland Government has put its views to the Federal Government that New Zealand, in the long term, should remove its export subsidies under the proposed CER agreement. The renegotiations taking place now on CER are perhaps a hopeful sign.

The honourable member for Maryborough also mentioned the financial guarantees given by the Government. Since 1963 when the department was established, the Government has financially assisted industry by way of guarantee on an amount of about \$69m. To date, the total amount that has not been obtained from the very few companies which failed—and South Queensland Meats Pty Ltd is one of them—is less than \$500,000. It is unlikely that the full \$30,000 will be recouped from South Queensland Meats. In the case of Meggitts, the receivers appointed by the Bank of New South Wales paid out the guarantee on the sale of a number of Meggitts' plants. The Queensland Graingrowers Association and the Cotton Marketing Board have not asked for a guarantee.

The honourable member for Surfers Paradise raised some interesting matters about industrial estates. At present, the department is looking into the utilisation of estate land to see if ways can be found to get development started on the blocks earlier. The honourable member referred to some Press clippings from Singapore, a country which he visited last week, which showed the interest that there is in investment in Queensland as a result of the visit to this State last week by the Prime Minister of Singapore.

The honourable member for Townsville West asked questions about overruns in funds last year and the reason for the large increase this year. Last year's overruns were due to the pay-out of Hartley's Computer Application's guarantee of \$1.4m, an increase in interest payments on loans of \$245,608 and the purchase of land for \$750,000. The big increase in the appropriation this year is due to a payment of \$4.81m on the guarantee plus interest to Silchester Holdings (White Trucks), an increase in loan repayments of \$1,371,000 plus a general increase to cover inflation, insolvencies, etc.

I thank the honourable member for Isis for his contribution. He gave a very good run-down on what the department is doing to assist industry in his area and in other parts of Queensland. He expressed concern at the proposed location of a Du Pont plant in the Toowoomba city area. I assure members that at present an environmental impact study is taking place and is shortly due for completion. Du Pont has indicated that that will be made readily available for study to all interested people. As a result of that a decision will be taken whether to establish the plant at the company site or in some other place. An important consideration is the supply of gas, and that is the reason for choosing that location.

The honourable member for Lytton discussed at length the contract recently awarded to a New Zealand firm for refrigerated containers. I believe my colleague the Honourable Minister for Transport adequately answered him when he entered the debate, and I thank him for that.

The honourable member for Port Curtis raised the matter of the increase in this year's appropriations which I dealt with earlier. Departmental officers, especially those providing technical advice to industry, do a lot of travelling. In addition, the Cooper investigation into small business leases travelled within the State and interstate. The department keeps a close watch on travelling expenses to see that there is no waste. Industrial estates provide developed, appropriately zoned land to manufacturing industry. Demolition is not a manufacturing industry.

The honourable member for Toowong suggested that the department should broaden the area of its advice. I would point out that the Small Business Development Corporation counsels small business. The department gives advice to manufacturing industry, whether it is small business or not. I have mentioned earlier the need for international competitiveness.

I disagree with the honourable member for Brisbane Central. The printed material of the department is thoroughly researched and professionally written. It is in great demand in industry and in teaching institutions. All "Queensland made" stickers and point-of-sale material are produced and printed in Queensland.

Mr Davis: They used not to be.

Mr SULLIVAN: The debate is on the Estimates of the department for 1982-83. What used to be is none of my responsibility.

A number of honourable members have commented upon the responsibilities of the Small Business Development Corporation. I thank the honourable member for Redlands for his consistent support of the corporation. I am sure everybody would agree that the chairman, Mr Bill Lamond, is doing an excellent job, which I know the people of Queensland appreciate.

The honourable member for Mt Isa has raised the matter of certain conditions in shopping leases. The parliamentary committee of the Honourable the Minister for Justice and my parliamentary committee are considering the most appropriate way to deal with the problem. Model leases are only one of the matters under consideration. It will be some time yet before the shopping lease problem is resolved. The Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and his parliamentary committee and I and my parliamentary committee, as well as other members, have met on, I think, three occasions to try to come up with some proposals on how to handle the matter. Some conclusions have been reached, but there is still more work to be done; so I can assure any members who are concerned about the problems that tenants have with landlords that the matter is being investigated thoroughly.

The debate improved as time went on. I pay tribute to the honourable members for Aspley and Warwick for their contributions. The honourable member for Aspley referred to the problems associated with hypermarkets. I thank the honourable member for Warwick for the kind things that he said about me. His remarks show that he is a man of great wisdom and experience.

I also thank the honourable member for Nudgee for his contribution. All in all, it has been a very interesting debate. As I said earlier, I thank the 21 honourable members who took part in it for the many points of interest that they raised.

At 9.51 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN: Order! By agreement, under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 21 October, I shall now put the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for Commerce and Industry.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to—

Commerce and Industry—

	\$
Chief Office, Department of Commercial and Industrial Development	14,058,900
Balance of Vote, Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds, and Loan Fund Account	25,674,306

Progress reported.

AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS DISTRIBUTION CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966-1978 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Ahern, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) (9.54 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

The Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act was last amended in 1978 when amendments were made to generally facilitate the operation of the Act. Since that time there have been further developments and discussions with industry, and the presently proposed amendments, which are largely of an administrative nature, are further developments of some aspects of previous changes.

In the first instance it is proposed by this Bill to obtain greater uniformity of terms with other similar Queensland legislation. To this end the definition of “standards officer” and “officer” are made consistent with similar definitions in the Standards Act. This has to be the case so that the two Acts are, to a large extent, divergent developments of the same matters.

The proposed amendment also allows both the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Board and the standards officer to delegate their powers. That will facilitate procedures, particularly in the case of the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Board.

One of the major changes to the Act made by this Bill is the introduction of the concept of the aerial distribution contractor. Since the Act was initially introduced there has been difficulty in reconciling the term "owner of the equipment" with the person actually carrying out aerial spraying.

Given the financial arrangements and hiring arrangements now quite common in the aircraft industry, it could no longer be said that the owner of an aircraft was a person even remotely associated with the aerial application of agricultural chemicals. Consequently the term "aerial distribution contractor" has been introduced and the responsibilities under the Act attributed to that person.

One exception has been the area of insurance where insurance companies require the property damage insurance to be accompanied by what is referred to as "hull insurance", and as a consequence property damage insurance remains with the legal owner of the aircraft.

The Bill provides for the issuance of licences to aerial distribution contractors together with procedures for renewal. Whereas previously licences were issued on an anniversary basis, all licences will now be operative from 1 July of each year.

A further significant change introduced by this Bill deals with the suspension of licences. Introduced for the first time will be the ability to have a licence suspended for a breach of the regulations made under the Health Act whereby poisons, in the terms of that Act, are discharged onto a road, a water-way or another person's property.

While dealing with the spraying of another person's property, it would be appropriate to mention that these present amendments will now allow a landholder to spray adjoining Crown land, reserve or road with the approval of the particular controlling authority. Strictly speaking, such spraying is not within the law but the amendment will permit those landholders who are so inclined to spray adjoining Crown lands, reserves or roads.

The Bill provides for two further matters which will considerably facilitate administrative procedures. Whereas the present Act requires details of all aerial spraying to be supplied to the standards officer the present amendments will require aerial distribution contractors to record, keep and maintain records but supply them only on demand. It is felt that this arrangement will be far more practical than the present requirements of the Act

The second change of this nature will end the procedures whereby each aerial spray unit is required to be registered. The present amendment will allow any aerial distribution contractor to use any equipment provided that the type of equipment is approved. Since most aerial-spraying aircraft now have integrated spraying units which are generally designed on a standard form, it is felt that the requirement for individual registration is no longer necessary.

It is considered that these two changes will considerably reduce the administrative procedures associated with the implementation of the Act.

In addition to these changes penalties have been increased. Penalties have not been increased since the Act was first introduced in 1966, and the present increases are in line with money value changes. As I previously indicated, most of these presently proposed changes are of an administrative nature. None seriously alters the direction of the principal Act and, on this basis, I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Kruger, adjourned.

SUGAR ACQUISITION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 22 September (see p. 1105) on Mr Ahern's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr KRUGER (Murrumba) (10 p.m.): Let me point out at the commencement of my remarks that the Act being amended has existed for some time. The Opposition feels that it has been adequate to the extent that so many people have, for a long

period, enjoyed solid and sound agricultural practices in Queensland. The passing of the Sugar Acquisition Act of 1915 was a major step for the Government to take. I think that all honourable members would agree with that. It has certainly proved to be the case.

At that time the Act met the approval of all concerned in the industry. The Bill has not, at this stage, been accepted by all aspects of the industry, and that is what is worrying the Opposition.

Needless to say, when a country is at war, sensible legislation comes forward and all political parties align themselves for the benefit of the country and its people. This Act was no exception. The Government had obtained opinions from growers, millers, and all other people who could offer assistance.

Judging by the debate on the Bill, I can only conclude that Opposition members felt that nothing but good could come from the legislation. The Opposition members to whom I refer were of a different political colour from the present Opposition members. At that time the Labor Party was in power and that is why the legislation was so powerful and has withstood the test of time.

The only opposition seemed to come from the people who had allowed the industry to decline. I can understand that the opposition was raised only to justify that corrective methods had not been taken by the previous Government. Other factors contributing to the introduction of the Act were the failure of the Queensland crop owing to drought conditions and the need to import sugar to meet the shortfall until the next season's harvest began. A major point to be remembered is that, although negotiations took place between the State and Federal Governments, the interests of the industry in Queensland were given the necessary consideration to consolidate and protect the industry.

In the debate in 1915 the honourable member for Mirani, Mr Swayne, said—

“It reminds me of an official interpretation of the Labour platform and their policy that was issued from the ‘Worker’ office, and which stated that no matter what measure was introduced, no matter what they called it, and no matter what its ostensible object was, it had one end in view, and that was the attainment of their socialistic objective”

That socialistic objective has stood the test of time for 67 years. The Government's attitude recently has been the same old knocking. As I said, that socialistic objective was gained for this industry.

Mr Swayne also said—

“ . . . and it seems to me that this Bill is a rung in the ladder”

In 1915 Opposition members were complaining about socialistic views, an obsession that still exists on the other side of the Chamber. An important part of all of this is that the sugar industry proposed the stand that was taken in 1915, and the Bill is the first move to have it changed. I repeat that the Act has stood the test of time, and it is difficult for the Opposition to understand the need for the change unless some further information is forthcoming. I believe that some amendments will be moved.

Before leaving the history of this matter, let me quote the remarks of the then Premier—

“What this Government has done is to secure to the sugargrowers in Queensland a fair price for the whole of the season of 1915, and they have also secured stability for the industry, and have inspired confidence in the Southern States that Queensland will supply the whole of Australia when the imported sugar is exhausted. In other words, they have made for the stability of the industry and for keeping the duty on in order to keep the industry going in Queensland.”

The Act has remained unchanged for 67 years, with the industry basically enjoying a good standard on both the production and milling sides. Weather conditions, oversupply, unsure markets and increased production of other sweeteners have created anxious days. Nobody will deny that the sugar industry has been through some tough times.

However, in general, this controlled industry has been the most stable and economically sound of all over those years. The Bill before the House seems destined to weaken that

base. The problem is accelerated by the continued threat of the Ord River project on an over-supplied market. Sir Charles Court, who, as we all know, has been closely aligned to the Premier over the years, said—

“Western Australia was eager to join Queensland in the sugar industry and had no intention of ‘rocking the boat’. It is in the best interests of both States for us to co-operate.”

Of course, Sir Charles Court would say that because his State is in a different situation to that which exists in Queensland. He continued—

“I see it as something that’ll be grafted onto the industry rather than splitting it down the middle.”

We are not quite sure whether it will be split down the middle or whether it will be grafted to the production side of things. That is something that is not spelt out in the Bill. It is something that Opposition speakers will try to define. Western Australia still has not decided whether Ord cane would be used for production of sugar crystals or ethanol, or both. Ethanol is a synthetic fuel which can be mixed with petrol to power motor vehicles. We are not quite sure what Sir Charles Court meant by his statements. Is he trying to get a part of the crystal sugar industry? I believe that that is the situation. He also said that the current world oil prices did not make ethanol a particularly economic and attractive proposition at this stage.

Although Western Australia did not wish to rule out any option, Mr Bjelke-Petersen said after lengthy discussions with Sir Charles Court that he was confident that the two Governments could reach “a very happy, mutually satisfactory arrangement”. That is typical of the comments made by the Premier of this State because of his alignment with Sir Charles Court. I believe that everybody in this State, including the Premier, should be backing our industry to the hilt and not taking so much interest in the Ord River scheme at this stage. It would appear that Western Australia is all out to take a part of the crystal sugar market, as I mentioned earlier. That cannot be justified at this time.

Surely it would be ridiculous to start a new area until such time as the world market improves. I am sure that everybody is aware of the failing situation in the world market for sugar. Cane growers in this State are facing a gloomy period with the world price for sugar around \$204 per tonne, the lowest for three years, and the gloom is worsening with this legislation. Before getting too deeply involved in my contribution, let me point out that I am not a cane grower, but I have certainly been involved in primary production. There is a similar situation in all rural industries. In this case the Minister is setting out to prove, as has always been the case under his style of government, that he believes that the farmer should be the first to suffer any hardships. The Government further believes that industry should improve before farmers benefit. I say that because I feel quite sure that the Bill is not designed to assist the cane farmers in the State of Queensland.

Let me point out that under good legislation the sugar industry has in the past greatly avoided this problem because the agreement on percentage of payments to producer and miller has been catered for. Mills cannot operate without cane, nor can sugar be made without mills; hence each needs the other, and all that is needed to keep the industry viable is favourable weather conditions and a sound world demand with suitable long-term agreements.

The Federal Government has let us down as far as world agreements are concerned. That has not been helpful. It is up to the Government to provide our growers with markets. The Queensland Government should be pushing the Federal Government to make sure that our agreements are long-term and stable.

I want to tell the House about some of the statements that have been made during recent months which show the problems facing our most stable industry. In a recent issue of the Queensland Canegrowers Council bulletin, the world price of sugar was shown as the lowest in nearly three years at \$204 a tonne, according to industry sources. The bulletin painted a gloomy outlook for the Queensland sugar industry with a world record output of more than 6 million tonnes above the estimated consumption. That is the problem with any form of production. If there is overproduction and no sale is available, problems

start to set in. The imposition of United States quotas on imports, the planned Ord River industry and sugar substitutes in the USA are added threats. The substitutes in the United States are not small any more. The Sugar Board chairman, Mr Camm, said, "The outlook for growers is bleak." The QCC bulletin said that the steady erosion in world sugar prices since the start of the year gathered pace as traders began to accept the implications of the massive build-up in global stocks.

The London daily price was marked down by \$27 to close the week on \$204 a tonne. On 2 August the price fell by a similar amount, to finish on \$224 a tonne, which was the lowest since the northern hemisphere autumn of 1979. The London merchant C. Czarnikow helped the downward push on prices with a report raising its estimate of the carry-over in stocks for the 1981-82 season by 1 000 000 tonnes to 6 000 000 tonnes.

A Government Member: Why don't you talk about the Bill?

Mr KRUGER: This is to do with the Bill. I am dealing with the problems confronting the sugar industry.

As I was saying, that put the total of world stocks at nearly 31 000 000 tonnes by autumn, against a forecast consumption of 90.5 million tonnes. Traditionally, low prices tend to boost consumption, but this can no longer be taken for granted. Recession has a much more direct effect on demand in the Third World countries, and the health-conscious citizens in the Western economies are consuming less.

Let me quote from "The Cairns Post". Under the headline "Canegrowers distressed at Ord River Sugar Scheme", this appeared—

"A combined meeting of the Mossman Cane Growers Executive and the Mossman mill directors yesterday billed as distressing, news that the Western Australian Government was to push ahead with the Ord River sugar development.

The meeting was told that a deal had been struck between the Western Australian and South Korean Governments, the manager of the Mossman Mill, Mr Scott Grimley, said in a statement released last night."

Government Members interjected.

Mr KRUGER: This is a very serious matter for the sugar producers of Queensland. Government members can rant and rave all they like, but they are not concerned for the primary producers of Queensland.

The report stated—

"Mr Grimley said that the Ord River scheme was causing great concern to the sugar producers in the Far North."

I believe it is causing great concern. Next the report said—

"The meeting was told it was believed in return for the right to establish a 200 000 tonne per year sugar industry in the Ord the South Koreans were prepared to build a very large power station for the Western Australian Government, the statement said.

This was well in excess of the previously mooted 160 000 tonne industry. The Queensland industry presently supplied South Korea with approximately 270 000 tonnes, the majority of which was under long-term contracts.

The loss of contracts would represent a devastating blow to the marketing of the Queensland crop. This tonnage was supported by a quota under the International Sugar Agreement—to which the Australian Government was a signatory, it said.

The statement said the reports clearly indicated Western Australia's intentions of proceeding with a crystal sugar industry in spite of strong opposition from Queensland in a time when sugar prices were the most severely depressed for many years because of a significant glut of sugar on world markets.

The sugar industry has had to continue expanding in order to keep in front of inflation."

Government Members interjected.

Mr KRUGER: I suggest that those Government members who are not interested in the sugar industry leave the Chamber. The Act has not been changed for 67 years, yet Government members are prepared to sit back and ridicule. Half of the Government members who are complaining come from sugar-growing areas. They ought to be ashamed of themselves.

Mrs Kyburz: We can't understand you.

Mr KRUGER: The honourable member for Salisbury ought to be at home looking after her child if she does not want to hear something about the sugar industry.

At the same time, the high fructose corn syrup industry in the US is proving a dynamic competitor for sugar in the manufacture of food and drink. As in previous years, the European Economic Community is seen as the villain.

The president of the Australian Sugar Producers Association, Mr Don Watson, has further emphasised the seriousness of the industry's position. The only possible avenue for early relief is an interim increase in the domestic price of sugar.

I have seen no attempts to increase the price of sugar. Mr Watson is well known in the sugar industry. The ASPA and all industry organisations, including the Queensland Cane Growers Council, are seeking such an increase as a matter of urgency. I am asking that such an increase be considered. I am trying to point out the problems that the industry in this State is facing and, as the leading spokesman for the Opposition in this debate, perhaps I will be the only Opposition member who will have the opportunity to spell out those problems in full.

Those organisations are urging a revision of the formula used to adjust the domestic price. That is overdue because, under the existing formula, the domestic price has failed to keep up with the consumer price index. Those are the facts as I have read them in the Press, and they have not been refuted. Therefore, something certainly should be done.

However, the domestic price is only part of the sugar marketing structure. With continuing world surpluses, the London daily price has slipped to alarmingly low levels. Whereas long-term contracts once incorporated guaranteed prices, they now guarantee no more than access, and the London daily price is the figure that largely influences the price received for export sugar.

Meanwhile, the EEC continues to disadvantage other sugar nations by producing without restraint and sustaining sales by heavily subsidising farmers. Some North Queensland producers are worse off than others. In some Far North areas, a combination of markets, price, drought and cane quality has reduced the price being received by farmers to one even below the cost of production. As farmers try to cut back on costs, they tend to use less fertiliser and reduce cultivation.

Equipment suppliers are in a serious position, as witnessed by the failure of the International Harvester Company. The cane industry has been so large, prosperous and viable over the years that so many other industries rely on it for their well-being.

Mr Tenni: You are not supposed to read your speech.

Mr KRUGER: I have one advantage over the member for Barron River; he can't read.

I refer to an article in "The North Queensland Register" of 15 October 1982, which reads—

"A Bill currently before State Parliament will mean 'ultimate ruin' for many canegrowers, according to the former chairman of the Queensland Canegrowers Council, Sir Joseph McAvoy."

I would think that Sir Joseph McAvoy is well recognised by all members of the House, particularly those from North Queensland who seem to be ridiculing my contribution to the debate tonight. The article continues—

"He refers to a Bill to amend the Sugar Acquisition Act of 1915. The Minister for Primary Industries, Mr Ahern, has moved the second reading of the Bill.

Sir Joseph said the amendments depart from the long-standing object, spirit and intention of the Sugar Acquisition Act.

Under the Act, the Government, by proclamations, acquires sugar, the product of the cane crop, and guarantees to pay the proceeds from the sale of such sugar to the owners, after meeting all cost of refining, treating, transporting and selling."

Let me look at that in detail. Over the years, much has been done in the production and marketing side of the industry, and anybody with any knowledge of the sugar industry would realise that the funds have been fairly evenly distributed. The article continues—

“Sir Joseph said he had to intervene to try to avert a situation arising in the sugar industry which would cause division, strife, hardship and ultimate ruin to many canegrowers.”

When a man of Sir Joseph's standing in the community says that the industry faces ultimate ruin, then that is worthy of consideration. The article continues—

“He said North Queensland growers particularly would be affected as cane price was, already low, and further reduced ‘by the diversion of sugar industry funds to certain sugar millowners’ enterprises.’

“The amending Bill empowers the Minister for Primary Industries to authorise payments, from the proceeds of sugar sales, to millowners and others, thereby reducing the money rightfully destined for canegrowers,” he said.

“As the chairman of the Queensland Cane Growers' Council over recent years, I have been in the position of a spoilsport to sectional interest in the councils of the industry where I was one canegrower amid many mill owner interests.

“Confidentiality, industry unity and consensus prevailed until my tenth three-year term expired and I did not renominate.

“Freed from these constraints, I recently drew attention to mill owner influence.

“I was amazed by the savagery of the reaction by a certain milling company.

“Sub-section two of the proposed new section four will provide for the continuation of the multi-counting of millowner interests through the expression of views of all the voluntary associations representing in total one third of the industry equity.’”

In his second-reading speech the Minister said that he felt that the time was appropriate to undertake a complete review of the sugar industry legislation. That is the ultimate in response to mill-owner moves over recent years to break through the stability of the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act to the further detriment of the economy of Queensland cane growers.

Although Sir Joseph was a cane grower I still feel that his comments are well worth noting. Sir Joseph also said that the Bill before Parliament had not been sighted by council members until after the Minister's second-reading speech. The Minister said that the industry certainly knew what was going on; Sir Joseph McAvoy said that the industry was not advised and had not been given a chance to comment.

In spelling out the problems of the Bill, I must consider some of the Minister's comments. He said that in the 75 years duration of the Act the industry had gone from one based on local markets to one dependent on overseas markets. He also said that there have been changes in production and harvesting as well as in milling and marketing. I am sure that honourable members and the industry are well aware of those dangers.

The legislation before the House is not needed. Some of the changes mentioned by the Minister in his second-reading speech were irrigation and mechanical harvesting. Those things have been the sole cause of greater output per hectare, which has resulted in better economy. However, because of world markets, the economy of the sugar industry has slipped. Weed control and better methods of fertilisation have also improved production. These improvements have meant that producers have had the capacity to grow larger areas when the market demand increased, but the market is not there and so growers have exercised restraint. Producers know how to grow the cane but the Government has to ensure that markets are readily available. All of those things, with good management, have improved the industry up to a point, but even though the industry has improved over the years, the Government has now decided to make changes to legislation that has been in force for 67 years.

Problems that are outside the Act have resulted in the industry being forced into a near state of collapse, but all the Government wants to do is to amend the Act, which will not overcome the problems I have mentioned. That will weaken even further the area that has maintained stability.

The Minister admitted that it is in the field of marketing where most modification is necessary to ensure that acquisition and marketing of sugar proceeds in the most efficient manner. To me, that is the basis of what has to be done. But what has to be decided is who the funds will come from for the research on marketing and for the research on production. I will discuss that further at the Committee stage. It seems quite clear to me that the intent of the Bill is to assist marketing more than production.

In his remarks to justify amending the Act the Minister said that it is desirable to establish and maintain a reputation for reliability of supply of a high quality product. Everybody agrees that a high quality product is needed and it would seem to me that the mills, which have always looked after that side of things, ought to continue to do so.

Government Members interjected.

Mr KRUGER: They are a lot of fools over there. Obviously they are not interested in what is one of the most important pieces of legislation that has been introduced in many years.

The growers have been trying to achieve the highest tonnages of cane with the greatest sugar content while mills have been obtaining the best sugar quality possible. That sort of principle has been accepted by the industry and has proved to be a success.

With the allocation of funds on a 50/50 basis from the production and marketing sectors, based on the actual value of the crop, the industry has been able to carry out the research needed to make it viable. The Minister is really trying to achieve a situation where the millers can take a greater share of the industry's income and offset their costs of research. That is a serious move, and we will look at it more closely when we discuss the validating clause. This action will reduce the grower's income, although research is still needed in that area. The millers have a responsibility to carry out research, as do producers, but for 67 years the payment percentage has been satisfactory. I pointed that out before, but it is worthy of repetition. In 1982 the Minister wants to do a reshuffle to assist the millers and the other big people in the industry. It is quite clear to me that that is what this Bill is all about, and a great many people in the industry also believe that that is what it is all about.

Again, we must not lose sight of the fact that with milling technology as it is today, what are really needed are farming practices giving maximum production to satisfy market demands. The quota system has allowed for overproduction of cane, with sugar production suitable to meet demands, plus an acceptable amount maintained in storage to meet possible needs. At present too much surplus is on hand, and this Bill will not alter that fact; rather it will possibly worsen it. The speculation is that with the industry controls being transferred from the Treasurer to the Minister for Primary Industries, the Minister will now have governing control over the conduct of the industry.

Mr Ahern: That happened in 1947.

Mr KRUGER: I will be mentioning that, of course, but this is the first time it has been spelt out in legislation. There is also some doubt about the correct appropriation of proper funds from the Consolidated Revenue Fund being guaranteed. I realise that the Minister will again say that that has been happening for some time. It has, and that is one of the reasons for the validating section of the legislation.

Mr Ahern: It was quite lawful under the Officials in Parliament Act.

Mr KRUGER: Let us have a look at what a former member of this Parliament had to say on that score in a letter to the editor, apparently written in reply to something said by the present member for Mourilyan. It seems to smack of sour grapes, but the facts are correct. Mrs Kippen stated—

“I have every confidence that the sugar industry organisations are quite capable of looking after the affairs of their respective members.

During my years as parliamentary representative for Mourilyan, I always was guided by their elected representatives in respect to sugar issues.”

That is a statement by a former National Party member of this House. She said she was guided by the needs of the industry. But suddenly things have changed and Government members do not now want to be guided by the industry. I believe that at a number of meetings held in North Queensland the Minister has not had the easiest of rides and has

been challenged on a number of counts about the legislation before the House. Mrs Kippen went on to say—

“The facts are that duties for administering the Sugar Acquisition Act were first transferred from the Treasurer to the Premier on December 10, 1942.

This authority later was revoked and transferred to the Minister for Agriculture and Stock, now DPI, to perform and exercise all such duties and powers.”

Mr Lane: Is this a speech, or are you just reading your mail from yesterday?

Mr KRUGER: I think it would be better if the Minister for Transport tried to get some of the logs off the railway lines. Being the log that he is, he ought to look after the Transport ministry and not interfere with a primary industries Bill about which he knows very little or nothing.

Those comments of Mrs Kippen certainly show that a number of things have to be done. Although the Minister has pointed out that some of those powers were actually handed over much earlier, they have still not been spelt out in an Act of this Parliament. This is the first time the Act has been amended since 1915.

As I said, there is far too much surplus sugar and we ought to be looking at the problem and making sure we can sell the surplus. I do not think we need to alter the legislation to lower production, nor do we need to alter it to allow research to be carried out, because research has been carried out quite satisfactorily. I want to ask a number of questions: Are there problems in the industry? Has there been some covering up? Why is this Bill being introduced? I believe that something has gone wrong and the Government has suddenly decided that it wants to correct it.

This is not the first time that validating legislation has been introduced in my five years in Parliament. It is a quite common practice. I call on the Government to set up a judicial inquiry into certain aspects of the sugar industry relating to the misuse of funds for research and other unauthorised purposes .

The Sugar Acquisition Act Amendment Bill that honourable members are debating is providing a legislative cover-up for the past misuse of funds, and it will make such misuse more likely in the future. I firmly believe that certain provisions in the Bill—possibly honourable members will be debating them tomorrow afternoon—prove quite clearly that the Government has introduced the legislation as a cover-up of past misuse of funds, and they will allow the misuse of funds to become a problem in the future.

In the past, both growers and millers have contributed moneys for further research into the industry. It seems that, because of a lack of accountability, funds rightly belonging to growers could have been misused, through the research fund, to prop up borrowings by certain millers. The proposed amendments fail to correct the weaknesses in the operation of the research funds that have allowed the abuses to occur. They appear to give them the legislative green light of approval. This legislation should not come into operation until the expenditure of research moneys has been fully investigated by a team with judicial powers.

It is of paramount importance that, in the future, the research fund, in common with others of its kind, should have proper public accountability of its spending as part of its charter. Secondly, the proportion of moneys to be paid by each group should be clearly defined. The fact that those proportions are not clearly set out in the legislation contributes quite clearly to the kind of abuses and uncertainties that have surrounded the spending of the moneys in the past.

I am sure that when the clauses are dealt with tomorrow, and when other Opposition members discuss the Bill in detail, it will be clear that problems have arisen in the areas that I have mentioned. If there had not been any problems, there would be no need to change an Act that has been so successful for so long.

The Minister has circulated amendments. If they do not provide the answers that the Opposition wants, the numbers in the House being as they are, and because of the idiocy of some honourable members who will not give the Bill honest consideration, members on this side of the Chamber can only go away knowing that the Bill has been passed without their knowing the true facts. If the amendments circulated by the Minister cover those matters, I will be very pleased; if they do not the Minister can be assured that the Opposition will oppose the Bill.

As I said at the outset, in 1915 there was no real opposition to the introduction of the Bill, because at that time the Opposition was quite sure that the measure being introduced by the Ryan Government was for the betterment of the producers and the millers of Queensland. Suddenly, 67 years later, the Government wants to cover up some of the things that have been happening. If the amendments circulated deal with those matters, I thank the Minister for them.

However, certain facets of the Bill presented to honourable members are not in the best interests of the industry. The Opposition will certainly be probing the legislation throughout this debate and at the Committee stage to sort out what must be done for the betterment of the industry.

Mr MENZEL (Mulgrave) (10.34 p.m.): I am very concerned about the proposed Bill. In fact, together with other honourable members, I oppose most aspects of it.

For many years, the Sugar Acquisition Act has worked well and served the sugar industry well. I see no reason for the drastic changes now proposed. Everyone in the sugar industry has had protection. Each individual grower, each individual unit and the industry as a whole have been protected by the rule of law. Everyone has been afforded protection by the law. In my view, the proposals in the Bill and the amendments circulated by the Minister take away the inbuilt protection that has existed and that has allowed the sugar industry to prosper in security over the years. If the Bill is passed, those things will be thrown overboard. Therefore I cannot accept it. It is a simple, short Bill but, as the honourable member for Murrumba said, we are considering the protection that every individual has enjoyed.

There is something behind this move. A lot of pressures have been applied to change the Act. I have attended Central Sugar Cane Prices Board hearings. Unfortunately, the attitude that has been advocated is that the majority rules. I do not go along with that. Every individual unit, whether it is part of the minority or the majority, should have protection. Pushes have been made for expansion. Look at where we are now. The industry is on its knees. Those who exerted pressures for expansion, and I believe that they have been outside the provisions of the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act, have been proved wrong.

Mr Eaton: Don't you believe that the Sugar Board has become a secret society and that a lot of things have not been uncovered yet?

Mr MENZEL: If the honourable member is patient he might learn a few things because I intend to make a few comments on that subject later on.

The co-operative sugar millers and the Queensland Cane Growers Council are not happy with the Bill. They have suggested amendments to the Minister. From what I can see, the Minister has not accepted all of their suggestions. I know for sure that the co-operative mills ask for the complete deletion of new section 4A (2) which gives the Sugar Board corporate powers. That is very dangerous. Although the amendments circulated by the Minister spell out that it is to operate only in Queensland, once a body becomes a corporate body it could get round the new section. The Bill is the greatest threat to the industry since the Act was introduced 67 years ago. For that reason alone I oppose it.

Another provision covers consultation with the Minister before any money can be spent on research. In my view consultation does not mean a thing. It depends on the Minister. He may be a busy man. I am not saying that my remarks apply to the present Minister. He has given assurances and, while he is the Minister, everything might be OK but, to a new Minister, all the assurances given by a previous Minister do not mean a thing.

In any case, most Ministers rely on their departmental heads or, in this case, the Sugar Board. It will be on its recommendation that research takes place and that funds be deducted from sugar moneys for it. In my opinion that is not good enough, even if a majority of the Queensland Cane Growers Council agree to it. What about the minority? Their money will be spent to research sugar quality problems that do not apply to them. The northern section of the industry incorporates 10 mills from Ingham to Mossman. That is one-third of the industry. The North, with its good-quality sugar, has been subsidising the rest of the industry for years. The North has been supplying the high-priced, overseas market.

Mr Powell: You are exaggerating.

Mr MENZEL: I am not exaggerating. If the honourable member keeps interjecting I might say a few other things that could prove embarrassing to his area.

The North has had sugar quality problems and has had to provide the finance to overcome them. It has cost the mills millions of dollars to try to eliminate the filterability problem. I was the chairman of directors of Babinda Mill when the Sugar Board was chaired by Lloyd Harris.

A Government Member: He was a good chairman.

Mr MENZEL: He was. He visited all northern areas. He said, in effect, "If you do not raise your level of filterability, if you do not get rid of low filterability in the sugar, we will pay you \$1 a ton for it." In other words, the product would not be accepted.

I know that just about every mill has at some time recycled sugar. It has made sugar with a bad filterability level and it has been recycled. I know that that has been done in Babinda and other mills to keep up the standard. It has been done at great cost. It has been recycled through the system after it has gone up the conveyor into the bin. It has cost co-operative mills large sums of money. South Johnstone mill has spent millions of dollars to eliminate its filterability problem, and it has achieved results. By the same token, the Sugar Board has not spent money to find out, when continuous heavy rain is received in an area, how to overcome filterability problems. We have had to lump that and have often had to recycle sugar that has been produced during wet weather from stale cane. The Sugar Board has never said, "We will give you a few million dollars to investigate that problem." The North is outvoted at industry conferences and meetings. The rule of might is taking over the sugar industry. The amendments to the Act have been demanded to make that legal. That is a terrible thing as far as I am concerned.

Someone asked me for a few facts. The sum of \$12.58m unlawfully advanced by CSR Limited to certain sugar milling companies in the Mackay area were moneys which belonged to the State Government and were destined to be divided amongst all the cane growers and sugar millers of Queensland. Part of that sum, \$6.77m, is said to have been loaned to the sugar milling companies of North Eaton, Farleigh, Proserpine and Amalgamated Sugar Mills, a satellite company of CSR Limited, a company which, as agents of the Queensland Government, purported to make the loan of State Government sugar funds to its own subsidiary company. That is what has been going on. Not only were these loans unlawful, but the hasty amendment to the Sugar Acquisition Act will not enable the Government to get the money back that was loaned. I cannot see that in the Bill.

Of all the things that the Bill purports to do, it fails to do one thing, that is to secure repayment to the Government's sugar industry funds of the outstanding sum of \$6.77m. From what I can see, no such provision is contained in the Bill. The Bill makes legal what was done in the past so that those actions can be continued. As a result of that there has been an uproar in the industry.

The Bill proposes to validate everything unlawfully done in the past but fails to do the one thing that it should be doing in the interests of the sugar industry, that is to make proper provision for the recovery of moneys loaned to the mills. One looks in vain through the whole of the Bill for any mention of recovery of moneys unlawfully loaned, and that is why amongst many other good reasons the proposed amendments to the Act are opposed.

I intend to move amendments to the Bill to cover what I have mentioned. I foreshadow that I will do that tomorrow when the Bill is passing through the Committee stage. The proposed amendments circulated by the Minister do not remove the anomalies that have been created. They do not plug the hole in the dyke. The Bill contains provision for validation of the making of the loans, but a requirement that the loans be properly paid back is missing from the Bill, and that is necessary if the moneys are to be recovered. For months I have heard about proposed legislation to amend the Sugar Acquisition Act. The original intention was to validate certain action that the Sugar Board had taken in regard to research into the sugar-quality problems to which I have just referred, in the belief that it was lawful.

Mr Ahern: That is not the intention of the legislation. The repayment of those capital loans has never been in question.

Mr MENZEL: I think the Minister has forgotten to put something in the Bill. Those loans are in question.

Mr Ahern: They are being repaid now.

Mr MENZEL: My information is that they cannot be repaid until this legislation goes through, because they never should have been made in the first place. Is it not a fact that the borrowers are paying 10 per cent interest over 10 or 15 year terms?

Mr Eaton: They are going to make up the difference by subsidising the interest.

Mr MENZEL: That is for sure. That is a disgrace. That is where we see this so-called majority rule in an industry, and it is totally wrong.

People will claim that the Queensland Cane Growers Council had a special meeting to discuss the amendments to the Act and, except for certain amendments, the council agreed to it. I totally disagree. In my opinion, a lot of members of the Queensland Cane Growers Council were rail roaded into accepting it. They were left with no choice but to try to water down the Bill at best. All they could do was try to water down some of the terrible provisions in the Bill.

I do not believe that proper consultation has taken place. If the president of the QCGC came from Mackay, he would regard the Bill as an attractive Bill, but if the president came from North Queensland, he would find it very unattractive. The legislation contains too many ifs and buts.

Reference is made to the Minister's authorising investigations into materials used in the manufacture of sugar. It would be setting a dangerous precedent if growers were penalised or held responsible for the low quality of raw sugar; yet that is what will happen. The industry is faced with all sorts of quality problems. A problem is looming now south of Mackay. I shall not state whether it is in the area represented by the honourable member for Isis. A sugar quality problem was objected to by a certain country a few years ago at an industry conference. My information from somebody who was present is that one of the milling interests said, "As far as we are concerned, that is a growers' problem and the growers should have to pay for it." That is what was said, and that is the idea.

It is unfortunate that this Bill has come before Parliament. I do not know on whose recommendation it is being brought forward. The Minister might say that a good deal of consultation occurred. Perhaps it did—but with the wrong people, people with vested interests.

The Bill is detrimental to the interests of the cane growers. Whether a grower is growing cane in Mackay or in North Queensland, sooner or later the provisions in the Bill will be used against him and every other cane grower.

Research is one thing; the corporate powers of the Sugar Board are another. I do not accept that the amendment proposed by the Minister to limit in Queensland or New South Wales, whichever it is, is sufficient. I do not accept that at all.

CSR and Bundaberg Sugar have been investigating whether to go into the Ord scheme. I believe that the scheme will go ahead because a political decision will be made. When it goes ahead, CSR and Bundaberg Sugar will not be able to afford not to go to the Ord. Why should a Bill as loosely worded as this be interpreted as meaning that the Ord River scheme, if it produces invert sugar, be subsidised by the No. 1 Pool of all growers in Queensland, not just those in the North? I am speaking in this instance of all growers in Queensland.

Why should they have to subsidise the price of invert sugar or an ethanol plant established by a so-called industry from Queensland? As I read the Bill, its provisions can be used to do those things. The Minister may shake his head and say, "No, that is impossible." I do not accept that, and many other people do not accept it.

The Bill is far too wide. The whole of proposed new section 4A (2) should be scrapped. It is unnecessary. It refers to the "acquiring, holding and disposing of land and other property". No doubt the Minister will argue that that provision is necessary to enable another terminal to be built in Queensland. By the same token, if there is any difficulty in acquiring land, section 9 of the Harbours Act can be used, as it has been used for the past 25 years, to acquire land on which to build bulk sugar terminals in Queensland.

If that excuse is used for retaining the provision, why cannot a special Bill be passed by the Parliament to enable the acquisition of land at the Valuer General's figure, as was done in the case of the land on the other side of the Brisbane River owned by the gravel company? If section 9 of the Harbours Act is not applicable in that instance,

a special Bill should be introduced. Legislation should not include provisions that will be there after we have gone and which can be misused in the future to exploit growers and millers and take away their livelihood.

Things are bad in the sugar industry at present, and it is a matter of every man for himself. Some areas that have not been affected previously are feeling the pinch and believe that they can get some benefit from this legislation. People in the industry have always had the protection of the rule of law, not the rule of might, which this Bill allows.

The Queensland Cane Growers Council is not happy with the provision in proposed new section 4 (4) (a), which refers to the setting of standards of quality of raw sugar. The council wants in that provision reference only to the setting of standards of quality of raw sugar. It wants the remainder deleted. However, I understand that the Minister will not accept that proposition.

A whole range of provisions give too much power to a central body. The outcome will depend on the people appointed to the Sugar Board and whether they understand all the problems or whether they favour a particular area of the sugar industry. Who is to say that the same thing that happened recently in northern New South Wales will not happen in Queensland? Three small mills became unprofitable to the CSR and it said to the growers, "You either buy the mills or you don't have any place to have your cane crushed." The growers were forced to take over the unprofitable CSR mills in northern New South Wales.

Something similar could happen with the refineries in Australia owned by the CSR. As it becomes harder and harder to make ends meet, the CSR could say to the industry, "Look, we can't afford to keep these refineries going. We are just going to close them down." The industry would be forced to take over those refineries. All the growers in Queensland would have to contribute towards the cost of buying those refineries. If a gun is held at a person's head, what else can he do? After all, the CSR has done that before. I suppose that it has been trying to do its best for its shareholders.

The fact is that inbuilt protection should be provided in the law. If the law was adhered to, all would be well in the sugar industry. It is just unfortunate that some people think they are above the law.

Consultation with the Minister does not mean a thing. As I pointed out, it is a case of majority rule. The Bill provides that the Minister will have to be consulted before money is spent on research. That is fair enough; but it is the same as my taking a gun and going up to somebody and saying, "I am going to shoot you." I might as well shoot the person and not tell him; at least that would save him the agony, because there would be nothing he could do. The position in the sugar industry is similar. Because the majority rules, the gun is held at the heads of those in the industry. That is wrong, and that has never been the spirit or the intention of the Act. Unfortunately, in recent years a strong lobby has crept in to make the majority rule. In my view, it is wrong.

Mr BLAKE (Bundaberg) (10.56 p.m.): I was very interested to hear the Minister tell the member for Mulgrave that there was no question of the loans referred to not being repaid. That is absolutely contrary to what I have been told. I will not divulge my source of information but, to use a figure of speech, it was right from the horse's mouth. I was told that the loans will be repaid when the Bill is passed and the Act is assented to and not before. If what the Minister has just told the House is correct, it appears that a section of the industry is pulling a very fast confidence trick to bring about a state of affairs that will enable it to get benefit, under the proposed amendments to the Act, benefits of which the industry as a whole has not been told and of which it has not been given a clear preview.

The proposed amendments to the Sugar Acquisition Act of 1915 are being introduced because of shortcomings in the Act. They have been inspired by legally questionable departures from the 1915 Act by the Sugar Board in recent years. I go further and say that if the Sugar Board's actions need validation, they were not only legally questionable but in fact illegal departures from the provisions of the 1915 Act. They have resulted in sugar moneys belonging to the industry as a whole—that is, millers and growers—being reduced by moneys being advanced to certain sections of the industry, thus relieving them of the responsibility of financing parts of their own particular enterprises.

The Opposition stands by the present Act, as has already been indicated by the Opposition spokesman. It provides for the Queensland Government to acquire or commandeer the sugar produced from the cane crop, pay for it and, after all costs incurred in the handling, selling, marketing, etc., of that sugar have been taken from the proceeds of its sale, disburse the proceeds to the original owners—with equity, I might say. In other words, the Government, having appropriated sugar to itself, guarantees to pay the previous owners thereof the full value of such sugar after its sale. That is not what has happened in recent times under actions taken by the Sugar Board. If there have been any complications as a result of any departure from the spirit of the Act, they have been the responsibility of nobody but the Sugar Board.

The Opposition's opinion is that the Government should abide by the 1915 Act, which has served the industry well and has till recently, maintained, in the view of industry, a fairer and more just basis for both grower and miller for the acquisition of and payment for such acquired sugar than is provided under the Bill.

That is a plain statement of fact, whether the Government likes it or not. As the member for Mulgrave said, I am talking about justice, not might or predominance—justice to all sections of the industry and to the areas within the industry.

Under the existing Act it is not the function of the Sugar Board to authorise the transfer of sugar funds rightly the property of all mills and cane growers to certain regions or to certain millers for the purpose of meeting interest on loans, to compensate for manufacturing losses or for the provision of equipment for mills. Nor is it the Sugar Board's function under the existing Act to fund research in mill or field to produce acceptable sugar, such research having approximately two-thirds of its funding paid from moneys otherwise destined to be paid to cane growers.

The Bill appears to provide for payments to be made to mill owners out of raw sugar proceeds, which payments may be separate from and additional to the prices for sugar specified in a proclamation made under the Act. This amendment provides for the Sugar Board to authorise any agent of the Government of the State of Queensland to pay to mill owners out of such moneys in the hands of the agent in respect of raw sugar acquired such sums as the Sugar Board recommends be paid from time to time.

A lot of people believe and hope that that simply means progressive payments to the millers for the sugar as it is acquired by the board. Even if that were so, that lends itself to giving advantages to the millers, and I hope the Minister will comment on whether it does allow payments of other kinds at the discretion of the Sugar Board. Such a section enables the present legal practices of funding mill owner's production by payment carried two-thirds by cane growers and, of course, if the periods of the advances are not fair and reasonable there is a gain to the milling section there as well. It allows, in my view anyway, additional payments to mills to the detriment of the sugar proceeds which determine the sugar value or price to be declared by proclamation. It thus reduces the cane price to cane growers, which is established through the cane prices formula in the awards of the Sugar Cane Prices Board.

Mr Jones: It short changes the return to the grower.

Mr BLAKE: If it is manipulated, that puts it in a nutshell. If it is manipulated it can and would short change the payment to the grower.

This function, the division of sugar proceeds between millers and growers, is under present sugar industry legislation the responsibility of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board, and it should not be circumvented or undermined by this legislation or the Sugar Board. We believe it is not in the best interests of the industry that the Act be changed to permit those functions to be taken over and performed by a board subject to the possibility of political appointment and pressures indirectly or directly, and I draw attention to the composition of the Sugar Board—Government-appointed members—as opposed to the constitution of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board which is composed of elected members.

Any intrusion on or erosion of those powers lends itself to political pressures, paternalism, or whatever it may be called. I am talking about other Governments, as well as this

Government. The present Government has been in office for 25 years. If it does not have some of its cronies in power, it could be described as foolish. We all know that it has. The idea that this function can be transferred to people who are—

An Opposition Member: Who have a pecuniary interest.

Mr BLAKE: I suppose that term could be used, but I do not mean it in a direct sense. I am talking about people who either have political leanings or who apply direct or indirect political pressures.

The functions I am talking about can be carried out in the fullest and fairest interests of the industry without altering the Sugar Acquisition Act of 1915.

Mr Smith: They don't have to account to anybody, because they are appointed. It is like the House of Lords; one stops there until one dies.

Mr BLAKE: That is fair comment. I learnt quite a few figures from the member for Mulgrave tonight. We were not privy to that information. Sir Joseph McAvooy said that the Queensland Cane Growers Council was not privy to that information until very recently, or at worst until it was supplied by the honourable member for Mulgrave tonight.

The member for Mourilyan had a point when he referred to the members of the Sugar Board as a sort of secret society in that they have not been a mine of information for the industry which, if it does not appoint them, supports them.

As I said, these functions can be carried out in the fullest and fairest interests of the industry without altering the Act. Part of the Bill aims at validating all the past unlawful conduct—and I say that advisedly because the conduct would not have to be validated if it was not unlawful—of the Sugar Board under the present Act, without the Minister's providing any details of the amounts of money that are involved.

On the legal advice I have received, I do not believe that it is necessary to amend the Act to allow the board to set standards of sugar quality and apply penalty or bonus payments for those respective standards of quality. Legal opinion says that the board can do nothing about the sugar until it acquires it.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr BLAKE: Perhaps the board can do nothing about it directly before it acquires the sugar but it has the power to pay differing prices for sugar of differing quality. The miller would soon get the message if he got an unprofitable price for an unsaleable product. I believe the power is there by proclamation to set standards of quality and to pay differing prices for it. It is desirable and necessary in a highly competitive sugar market that the Sugar Board should set standards of quality and, to obtain the desired quality, that it should apply incentives and disincentives by way of bonus and penalty payments.

I repeat that the Act provides clearly for the payment of various prices for sugar, having regard to differing qualities. One section of the Act is quite specific. It relates to the payment of differing prices for differing qualities of sugar. Surely bonus payments or penalties are nothing more than a plus or minus payment for sugar of differing quality.

If the board does not have the power to set the standard of unacceptable sugar, as is claimed in legal opinion, the suppliers would soon get the message when the board, under the Act, paid them differing prices for differing qualities and paid them an unprofitable price for an unacceptable product.

Mr Menzel: They tell you they won't take the sugar unless it is up to a certain standard.

Mr BLAKE: That has happened before and it will happen again.

The Act provides for that now, but it does not provide for the use by the Sugar Board of acquired sugar moneys for research, equipment, or equipment loans for millers, whether they be co-operative or proprietary or, for that matter, for growers finance either. The payment of differing prices for differing qualities or standards of sugar, whether by way of bonuses, penalties or otherwise, is valid under the Act, but the Act does not provide for the use by the Sugar Board of acquired sugar moneys for research, equipment or equipment loans. That is what we are facing today.

The use by the Sugar Board of sugar moneys for research or loans is a departure from the Act. I do not see why the Act should be altered when the Sugar Board can get back onto the rails that it should never have got off. It seems to me that the Government's argument that we need to validate the practice of setting sugar quality standards and bonus and penalty payments is false because the board has at its disposal means to do so without the Bill.

Probably that argument has been put forward to the industry as well as to growers and mill suppliers committees and executives to confuse them and to elicit support for the proposal to validate the major departures by the Sugar Board from the Act. There is no doubt that if a sugar organisation that is representing growers is told, "We cannot give bonus payments, we cannot set sugar quality standards and we cannot apply penalties", it is in an excellent frame of mind to think that it is most desirable and most necessary in the competitive sugar markets today to make a change, so it had better go along with it. Perhaps that is the purpose of the Bill.

Mr Jones: Do you think that is how it is done?

Mr BLAKE: That is probably how it is done. It is certainly a possibility worth considering.

The Opposition believes that the Act has served and will serve the industry admirably, and that it has served the industry impartially and will continue to do so if it is administered in accordance with its intentions and provisions.

Quite obviously the validating sections of the Bill and the Minister's second-reading speech indicate that the Government accepts that the pay-out by the Sugar Board of sugar moneys for research and milling equipment is contrary to the Act, or that would not need to be validated. It is only the aspect that the payment of that money is contrary to the Act and with that the Opposition agrees. It does not agree that this invalid practice should be validated. Even if it is considered desirable to validate previous departures from the Act by the Sugar Board for the sake of convenience, I am not in favour of validating them for the future. If it is considered, despite the conflicting advice that I have received from people in the industry and from the comments of the Minister, that there is a need to validate what has been done, recoup the money that has gone out—the millions of dollars referred to by the honourable member for Mourilyan—perhaps there is some merit in validating what has been done and returning to the original Act. I imagine that it is quite possible to do that and leave the Act as it is. Everyone would then know that a departure from the Act would not be tolerated again.

Mr Menzel: I indicated that I would be moving an amendment at a later stage.

Mr BLAKE: I am pleased to hear that.

I cannot speak for the Opposition, but I expect that the Opposition would support such an amendment. If we validated it and allowed the validation to operate in the future, it would be opening up a real Pandora's box. The intention of the existing Act to acquire and sell sugar and fairly disperse the proceeds would be destroyed, and I say "destroyed" advisedly. It would be open to manipulation and favouritism. The proceeds of the sugar harvest would be wide open to political patronage and paternalism by any Government towards the sectors or parties of its choice. No-one argues the need for extensive research in the sugar industry; it takes place now in the research avenues outside the Sugar Board, financed by levies on growers and millers. No-one argues that research in some instances is not well defined as a grower benefit, and no-one can argue that research in some areas or some instances is not for the benefit of millers. In some instances, it is for the benefit of both. Even where the line of demarcation of benefit or responsibility between the grower and miller is not well defined, the necessary research can still be carried out in the existing sugar industry research organisations outside the Sugar Board. I have been told that it is normal practice for the Sugar Board to identify sugar industry problems regarding quality. However, once the quality problems are identified by the Sugar Board, they can be referred to the industry's research organisations for resolution. It is not necessary for the Sugar Board to use the proceeds of the acquired sugar for such purposes, nor is it its function to do so.

It must be realised that the division of sugar moneys traditionally is one-third to the millers and two-thirds to the growers. One area of objection is that financing of research into sugar-quality matters out of Sugar Board funds has meant that cane growers are paying two-thirds of the cost and millers one-third, whereas if the research

was done in the normal way by the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations, it would be paid for on a 50/50 basis. No-one except a miller would think that fair and valid. Why the grower should bear two-thirds of the cost compared with the miller's one-third, and why significant sections of cane growers would think it fair and valid, I would not know. Perhaps they have been misled. Even in mill areas with sugar-quality problems, it is hard to understand why growers support the proposition that has been put forward. Those growers are paying for two-thirds of the research, even if it is to benefit their area. I can understand why growers in co-operative mill areas tend to accept it, although I do not approve of their support.

Because I come from a co-operative mill area and I am a co-operative cane grower and have served on a cane growers' executive in a co-operative mill area, I know that if a contentious matter of money and the division of the spoils or anything that has a very close financial benefit arises, the common attitude of growers is to shrug their shoulders and say, "Don't fight the mill for it. If it takes it out of this pocket, we are the shareholders and it will come back into the other pocket as profits."

Therefore, I can understand why in many co-operative mill areas a large number of growers would go along with the proposition that is being put forward tonight. I always argue that, when a mill or any other enterprise has the right to seek efficiency and to have pride in its results, I in conducting my farm have the right to take a pride in my business and to show results of my enterprise.

No-one should willingly give away something that belongs to him. That is why I say that the growers particularly should stick with the Act. Why should they pay two-thirds of the research moneys when they should be funding research only on a 50/50 basis?

I realise that various mill area committees agree to the provisions that will validate the actions of the Sugar Board in acting on behalf of the total sugar industry to overcome specific problems in individual areas. Why growers would agree to a 2 to 1 cost against themselves, when the same result could be achieved with a 50/50 grower/miller basis, could only be because they operate in a problem area and hope to solve their problems at the expense of someone else by receiving money from the sugar pool.

That might make sense to some, but it certainly does not represent justice to anybody. Justice is guaranteed under the Act. Justice and equity are what the Act is all about; the abuse of justice and equity is what the Bill is all about. The validation of existing departures from the Act by the Sugar Board in certain particulars would be validation of future injustices and inequities. Also, the Bill will provide the opportunity for future injustices and inequities.

I was interested to read a newspaper report of an assurance given by the Minister in Mourilyan that amendments to the Sugar Acquisition Act would not be used to finance the development of a sugar industry on the Ord River and perhaps elsewhere. I am concerned that they will, as the Bill now stands. If it permits the use of the board sugar moneys for research and for loans for equipment in the existing industry, it could be used, and probably would be used, for purposes outside Queensland if any other sugar development is integrated with the present organisation. It is the official objective of the Queensland industry that any such project be integrated with the Queensland industry.

On Tuesday, 31 August this year, in answer to a question that I asked the Minister for Primary Industries, he stated—

"In subsequent discussions which the Premier and I have had with Sir Charles Court and Mr Old, the Western Australian Minister for Agriculture, we stressed all the reasons why we felt the existing industries could meet any growth in the market in the foreseeable future. Sugar production on the Ord would be far more costly than equivalent expansion in the existing industry in view of all the infrastructure required for milling, transport and port facilities in this remote region."

I could not agree more. The Minister's answer continued—

"The Western Australian gentlemen have always maintained that they wished to proceed with sugar on the Ord and the only understanding has been that, if the Western Australian Government was determined to proceed, a formula for co-operation should be explored under the existing orderly marketing arrangements."

I could not agree more with those sentiments.

The Bill leaves the position quite open. If it becomes law, it will be possible to use sugar moneys to develop the sugar industry in Western Australia, or anywhere else. If what has happened in the past is any criterion of what will happen in the future, again two-thirds of the money would be taken from the pool to finance that development.

Mr Ahern: Have you read the amendments that have been circulated, which will make that completely impossible and unlawful?

Mr BLAKE: I am only speaking about the Bill from my study of it. If the Minister has some amendments, I will be pleased to see them.

No change of major significance has ever been made to sugar industry legislation unless it was subjected to the keen scrutiny of a judicial inquiry. It appears that, under the Bill, the members of the Sugar Board are to be the great shoguns of the industry. It says that the Minister will request, not direct, the Sugar Board to do certain things.

(Time expired.)

Mr TENNI (Barron River) (11.26 p.m.): I have pleasure in debating the amendments to the Sugar Acquisition Act. Firstly, I make it quite clear that the honourable member for Mulgrave, in his contribution tonight, was spot on—there are no two ways about that—and I fully support what he said. I make it quite clear to the Chamber that I will second the amendments that he has foreshadowed for tomorrow because I believe that they are correct and represent the views of cane farmers.

The amendments to the Sugar Acquisition Act are simply designed to legalise the unlawful advance of \$12.58m by the CSR Limited through the Sugar Board to certain sugar-mills in the Mackay area when those moneys should have been divided amongst the cane growers and sugar-millers of Queensland. Of that sum, \$6.77m is said to have been loaned to sugar-millers in the following amounts: \$320,000 to the North Eton mill, \$1m to the Farleigh mill, \$3,080,000 to the Proserpine mill and \$2,370,000 to the Amalgamated Sugar Mill, which is a company owned by the CSR Limited. The loans were all unlawful, and no repayments have been made on them. I believe that there was no written agreement for those loans; there was only a verbal agreement. In fact, I believe that no agreement can be written and no moneys can be repaid until this Bill becomes an Act.

The Bill proposes to validate everything unlawfully done in the past but fails to make proper provision for moneys loaned to those mills. I agree that the Minister for Primary Industries inherited a real problem, and something has to be done about it. Something can be done about it up to today, but it should not be continued for ever. The board should not be given power to spend growers' money in any way it sees fit. To me, that is out, and I am sure that the majority of sensible members in this Chamber will support that principle.

The Bill also gives to the Sugar Board power to spend growers' money on research. That is completely unnecessary because already there are capable organisations, such as the Sugar Experiment Stations Board and the Sugar Research Institute, that have efficient and qualified staff to do the job. That power is absolutely unnecessary and will result in a waste of growers' money.

Personally, I thank the Minister for coming to North Queensland and endeavouring to explain to the growers the problems that he faces. However, some of his advisers must have had a night out, or something, because the advice given to him was not very sound. That puts him in an embarrassing position. I cannot accept or tolerate that view expressed by his advisers.

Once again it is a case of the North versus the South. In this instance it is the northern growers versus the Mackay growers. It is the needy versus the greedy. The greedy are the growers in the Mackay area and the needy are those in the northern area. It looks as though the needy will lose out again, which is typical and normal. The cost of a telephone call from Cairns to Brisbane is a damned sight more than a phone call from Mackay to Brisbane or from Bundaberg to Brisbane. Once again it is a matter of the needy missing out. The people of the North are sick of it. We are absolutely fed up with it and will not cop it any longer.

Mr Kruger interjected.

Mr TENNI: I have never heard such socialist hypocrisy and such mumbo-jumbo as I heard this evening from the honourable member for Murrumba. Members of the Labor Party call sugar-cane farmers "sugar barons" and "capitalists". However, the Opposition spokesman on primary industries went on with a lot of mumbo-jumbo and displayed his ignorance on the subject. He even had to have his finger on the line so that he would know what he was reading. He is certainly not worth listening to.

The sugar-cane farmers of this country are now in real financial trouble. It is just not on for the Government to now set about taking a few more bob off them—trying to touch their money, two-thirds of which is theirs—and will not be accepted by the growers. If the Government had chosen a time when the industry was reasonably well off, the reaction might have been different. Even though I might have a go at them, I have friends in the Mackay district and I know that even they consider themselves lucky to be clearing only \$4 or \$5 per tonne. If the Government gives these powers to the board and the growers have to contend with the increased cost of diesel, tyres and so on, they will soon be out of business. In two or three years' time the Government will be buying them tractors and giving them fuel to get them back on the land because the State needs primary industry and it needs sugar, which is one of the most important crops this country has had. The Government should be getting behind the producers and helping the individual farmer instead of the board, which has enough powers at present to help itself.

A judicial inquiry is needed into what has happened in the industry. Some strong recommendations that protect individual growers are needed. If the industry has any problems, the growers and the millers—perhaps with a subsidy from the State Government—will take care of them. It does not want the board to interfere in those things. The industry has the technical men and the infrastructure required. In the industry's opinion, the board can keep its nose out of these things.

I oppose the Bill in its present form. On the floor of the House tomorrow afternoon I will give 100 per cent support to the proposed amendments. I ask all honourable members who have any decency and any sense at all and who stand for the whole State and not just one section of it to support the amendments on the floor of the House tomorrow.

Debate, on motion of Mr Wharton, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House): I move—
"That the House do now adjourn."

Home Nursing Services

Mr FOURAS (South Brisbane) (11.35 p.m.): The Treasurer of this State makes great play of the ease with which he can balance the Budget. He says that Queensland is so much better off than other States because it has a balanced Budget. Unfortunately, this State balances its Budget by spending a lot less than other States on areas such as health, welfare and education.

The 1982 Grants Commission report stated quite unequivocally that in the areas of health, welfare and education this State spent nearly \$100 less per head than the Australian average. That means that in the year 1980-81, the last year for which figures are available, this State spent in excess of \$200m less than other States in these vital areas.

Tonight I will concentrate on one aspect, the lack of support for home nursing services in this State. The same Grants Commission report shows that in expenditure on the aged and infirm this Government had a per capita expenditure of \$3.77 as against a six-State Australian average of \$9.22. This Government's priorities are misguided. Although it skates about what a great job it is doing in providing infrastructure for developments, although it can buy a toy jet for the Premier to fly round the State at a cost of \$2m and although it will consider the construction of a bridge to North Stradbroke Island, it will not allocate funds to provide every Queenslanders with home nursing services when they are required. That ought to be a right and not a privilege.

This Government, in its uncaring, unjust and penny-pinching way, will not help the voluntary sector to do the job. The voluntary sector does a marvellous job because it fills in the gaps where Government services do not exist, and there are a lot of gaps in

the provision of Government services; but the voluntary sector providing home nursing services is close to breaking point. It gives hundreds of thousands of dollars of its own money, which is hard to raise, to provide home care services for the aged and infirm, but this Government refuses to subsidise its costs sufficiently. So we now have the result that, even with an increasingly ageing population, the Government refuses to allocate sufficient funds for home nursing services so that every Queenslander who requires those services can have them. That is a shocking indictment of the Government, and it is about time it got its priorities right. Any democratic Government that is concerned about serving the needs of the poor, the underprivileged, the aged, supporting parents, the Aborigines and the unemployed would consider minimising and mitigating those social disadvantages first.

Surely this rich and affluent State of ours can find sufficient funds to help provide home nursing services. If the Government does not want to do it from a humanitarian point of view, it ought to do it from a straight-out economic point of view. It is negative economics for this Government not to allocate the meagre resources required by the voluntary agencies that are providing home care services. There has been an increase in demand in the last year of something like 20 per cent, yet the Health Minister has refused a submission from the voluntary sector for extra funds. So what will happen? The queues for nursing homes will get longer. Although it costs hundreds of dollars a week to keep a person in a nursing home, the Government will not allocate the paltry sum of a few dollars a week which is required to provide home nursing services and other domiciliary services.

It is about time that programs for the aged were brought into line with other welfare services. For 20 years or so now it has been proven in many reports that there is a need for a change of attitude and a need to get away from providing large amounts for institutional care and move towards providing funds for domiciliary care programs such as home nursing services, Meals on Wheels, home housekeeping services and day centres for the aged. This Government does nothing to assist. The voluntary sector does the best it can with the meager resources it has, but it is very close to breaking point. It is an indictment of any democratic society and any democratic Government that there should be a refusal to find, out of a Budget of thousands of millions of dollars, the paltry amount required to make sure that every Queenslander who wants home nursing has that service provided as a right rather than a privilege. It is about time that the Treasurer decided to change his priorities and help the aged in our community by providing resources so that they can stay in their own homes, in the community which they know, near their doctors and friends and in a familiar environment instead of being forced to join the queue in a nursing home. Because the Treasurer has refused to supply them with home nursing services, people in Queensland right now are being forced to enter nursing homes. People who require home nursing are not receiving it, and it is an indictment of this Government that it continues to refuse to provide funds for such a program.

(Time expired.)

Manipulation of Interest Rates by Banks

Mr HARPER (Auburn) (11.40 p.m.): I make it quite clear at the outset that what I am about to embark on is not an attack on the Australian banking system or on any particular bank. I hope to bring to the attention of the public and the Government what I see as an illogical and counter-productive manipulation of what has been described to me by a banking officer as "the rules."

Last Friday, Mr Ron Cameron, accredited spokesman for the Australian Trading Banks, was reported to have called on the Federal Government to deregulate interest rates that may be charged by banks on borrowings of under \$100,000. Quite frankly, the banking community does very little to encourage confidence in what it would do if that plea was heeded. The banks already manipulate total borrowings to thwart the intent of protection for the smaller borrower from very high interest commitments.

I will quote a couple of cases affecting constituents in the Auburn electorate, without mentioning names. They are factual examples of what I mean by manipulation of the intent. Firstly, I take a family consisting of a father and three sons owning land. When I talk about owning land, I should put the word "owning" in inverted commas, because it is not always the effective ownership that people have in mind when they talk of owning things such as motor cars.

That family of three sons and the father own three properties between them. Two of them are completely divorced from the other in all respects, except that the parent provided a bank guarantee for them. With three separate properties run by the three sons and the father, the family has its interest rates calculated on the basis that the total aggregated debt of the family exceeds \$100,000, although the individual loans in respect of each member of the family or separate entity falls well below that critical figure. It suits the bank to lump the debts to have a family commitment in excess of \$100,000. The bank then charges interest at 18½ per cent rather than the 14½ per cent, or the 14.35 per cent, that logic would seem to dictate.

Another example relates to a landholder and his wife who have purchased an additional area to carry out development. These are ordinary, working landholders—people out to make a living on the land. They are bent on obtaining security for their way of life and on providing their own drought mitigation with a minimum of Government involvement. They acquired the additional area to do that.

The result of all this is that they have three separate loans with the one bank. The loans aggregate in excess of \$100,000, although each of them is well below that figure. The aggregation attracts the current interest rate of 18½ per cent.

Despite the fact that the repayment of any one of the loans will reduce the aggregate indebtedness to below the magical \$100,000, the bank will continue to charge 18½ per cent, not the 14.35 per cent currently applying to loans that have never reached the \$100,000 level. Does that make common sense?

If the banking system (and I include the Reserve Bank and the trading banks) expects to retain the respect of the community, it must demonstrate a degree of responsibility in co-operating with Government, which has the task of guiding the nation's overall fiscal policies. No-one on this side of the House would condone the nationalisation of the banking system, as would members of the Opposition, but, in return, we in the private-enterprise section of the Parliament, and we in private enterprise, should be entitled to expect meaningful co-operation, not manipulation—manipulation of the intent of the Federal Government to save the small businessman from excessively high interest rates.

Total Concept Homes; Eagle Lands

Dr LOCKWOOD (Toowoomba North) (11.45 p.m.): I wish to alert people in Toowoomba and on the Darling Downs to a rogue firm trading as Total Concept Homes. In Toowoomba, Total Concept Homes has extracted money from the public under false pretences. Frank Cooling, Brian Austin and Jim Sweeney promised to effect home renovations knowing full well that they could not do the work themselves and that they would not employ tradesmen as subcontractors.

I point out that the Brian Austin referred to is not the Minister for Health; neither is the Jim Sweeney referred to the radio and television personality so well known and well respected in the Toowoomba and Maryborough districts.

One of my constituents got in touch with Total Concept Homes. Jim Sweeney went to her house, measured her bathroom and gave her a quote for renovations. Mr Sweeney was unable to do the work himself, because he is a florist and nurseryman formerly from the Hooper Centre and now of Five Star Nursery, Hampton Estate. He promised to use only qualified tradesmen on the job. Mr Sweeney asked for and received a one-third deposit and one week later a second one-third of the price before commencing work.

What happened? Total Concept Homes sent a totally unqualified man, who did not have even basic handyman skills let alone trade training. It took him four days to put a few sheets of laminate on two walls of the bathroom. He did not know how to fit laminate round a vanity basin unit or into the corners.

Total Concept Homes sent another unskilled man to do the work of a licensed plumber. It is a breach of local government building regulations for unlicensed persons to interfere with plumbing and drainage. That man succeeded in wrecking the drainage and the bath-tub itself. The Toowoomba City Council has informed the householder that the work was illegal and also that the householder has to engage a licensed plumber to repair the damage done by Total Concept Homes.

Frank Cooling, James Sweeney and Brian Austin have no intention of providing tradesmen to do the carpentry, plumbing and electrical work on that job. They are frauds and crooks.

I was alarmed to discover that Total Concept Homes has launched proposals to presell retirement village units to aged people on the Darling Downs. I understand that it has not obtained from any council approval to build. I warn aged investors in Toowoomba, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Pittsworth, Cambooya and Goondiwindi, and in the shires of Jondaryan, Rosenthal, Toogoolawah, and, from today, Murweh, not to deposit money or invest with Total Concept Homes or Eagle Lands before their solicitors check with the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs. They could lose every cent of their life savings.

Total Concept Homes is a home wrecker and a fraud. Cooling, Sweeney and Austin have not demonstrated that they have the expertise necessary to build a doghouse. That being so, there is simply no way that they could supervise the building of a 60-unit retirement village that they are preselling at Warwick.

I also sound a note of warning about the retirement village proposed for Nelson and West Streets, Toowoomba, by Anthony Louis Stevens, presently calling himself Eagle Lands. Investors in his previous business ventures have complained to the police. I understand that he has been questioned in more than one State by detectives and has been charged in Queensland by the Fraud Squad. People should be made aware that Tony Stevens is once again being sued for money that he owes. There is no way that he can honestly raise the \$28m that he says he needs for this project.

I feel sorry for the innocent people associated with these swindlers. I urge them to contact the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs to see whether some of the 26 new officers appointed by the Minister for Justice can be allocated to investigate the business dealings of Stevens, Sweeney, Austin and Cooling.

Finally, let me say that the very mention of these people applying to councils in a broad sense for approval in principle to build has been the very foundation-stone on which they have built their proposals to swindle people. Let all councils in the area beware of these people. Many of the councils have been very circumspect in their dealings with them. I urge the councils and the people in this region and their solicitors to be extremely careful in dealing with these men.

Removal of Leaded Paint on Old Buildings

Mr HANSEN (Maryborough) (11.50 p.m.): I raise a matter that has placed one of my constituents in a dilemma. A couple of years ago he purchased a home that was built in the pre-war era. He has three young children, one of school age. He looked at the interior painting of the home and wondered whether he should seek an opinion from the Department of Health on the type of paint that had been used. He received an answer that it was leaded paint.

Because my constituent felt that the Health Department had done very little, apart from insisting that the paint be removed, he raised the matter with me. He has received regular calls to see what action he has taken. On 14 September 1982 I asked the Minister for Health what happened when leaded paints are detected on a house by officers of the Health Department. He informed me that the owner of the house is advised of the requirements of the Health Act in respect of leaded paints on houses, that painting over the lead paints is not acceptable and that new paint should not be applied until the affected area has been inspected by an officer of the Health Department. The Minister also said that the owner of the house is requested to take action to remove the leaded paints and asked about his intentions to remove the leaded paint. Re-inspections are carried out by departmental officers to check the progress of the removal of the leaded paint, but no assistance is available. I am aware of the problems of lead poisoning. At an early age, my cousin ran his finger along the railings after a shower of rain, collecting all the droplets, which are an attraction to children. He then put the water on his tongue. He suffered from lead poisoning. I have been informed by the member for Lytton that he experienced a similar problem. Fortunately my cousin's practice was stopped. Most of the cases in which lead poisoning has occurred have resulted from contact with exterior paint. I do not know of many instances of children licking interior walls.

Of course, some children might think that the walls inside this Chamber look similar to candy or cake. They may be attracted to them and be tempted to lick them. I do not know that the problem is very great.

Dr Lockwood: They used to lick the water hanging beneath the rails.

Mr HANSEN: That is right. That applies mostly to exterior paints. The problem to which I have referred involved interior paint.

My constituent asked me, "How do I remove the paint?" He was told, "You can burn it off." He said, "Do I take it up to the ceiling or do I take it up to the picture rail, which no child would be able to reach?" He was told that he would have to remove the paint up to the ceiling and that he could burn it off. My constituent asked, "What about the fumes?" He was told, "You will have to wear a mask." When he asked about the effect on his family, he was told that he could sand it off. However, if he sands off the paint, he has the problem of dust. Whichever way he removes the paint, he does not win.

In the meantime, interest rates are increasing and the money that he would have had available to paint the interior of his home is absorbed in rising interest charges. It is not a sad story; it is a normal position in which a young couple find themselves. Nobody could tell him how to remove the paint so that no harm would be caused to his family. However, officers of the Department of Health visit his premises every three or four weeks and ask him what action he has taken. He is told to contact professional painters to see what they think about it.

I do not know how it is possible to get rid of the paint. It is necessary to remove it. I estimate that 40 per cent of the homes built in the pre-war era would have leaded paint in them.

The Minister says that there is nothing to get excited about the small amount of radioactivity in mineral sands because it takes 20 years to affect anybody.

Mr Scott: The Minister was not very sympathetic, was he?

Mr HANSEN: No. At the same time, I think he might look at the lead problem.

Coronial Inquiries

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (11.55 p.m.): I draw the attention of the House to some of the problems that arise because of the interpretation placed by some magistrates on the Coroners Act. I make a call for either amendments to be made to the Act or a change to be made to certain practices followed under the Act.

One problem is that a coronial inquiry can be conducted in different courts, in different places and at different times. A coroner may decide to conduct an inquiry at a particular venue and adjourn the inquiry to another venue. He may even adjourn the inquiry to a third venue.

On 19 October, in answer to a question that I asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, he advised me that in the 12-month period ended 3 June 1982, 670 coronial inquiries were conducted in Queensland and of that number 253 were conducted in more than one court.

From time to time it may be necessary for a coronial inquiry to be conducted in more than one court. Section 36 of the Coroners Act provides in part that a coroner may adjourn an inquest from place to place and, whether or not it is adjourned from place to place, from time to time. He may adjourn it to a certain time and to a place to be fixed.

Mr Scott: You know that these adjournments could range from Cooktown right down to the Gold Coast?

Mr FITZGERALD: That is exactly what I am about to point out. I do not want to mention specific cases, because a coronial inquiry is a traumatic experience for anyone who is involved in a motor vehicle accident that gives rise to a coronial inquiry. Some people are forced to go through the heart-rending exercise of facing up to court after court.

Say a fatal accident occurred at Rockhampton. The coroner may commence his inquiry at Rockhampton and, because a witness lives at Wynnum, may decide to adjourn the inquiry to Wynnum. Next, because the police officer concerned has been transferred to Mt Isa, the coroner might decide to adjourn the inquiry to Mt Isa.

Because of section 32 of the Act, which relates to the examination of witnesses, a person involved in a coronial inquiry may require legal assistance or legal representation. If a person happens to be involved in a motor vehicle accident in which someone is killed, it is in his best interests to be represented by counsel. Great expense is involved in having counsel attend an inquiry conducted in two or three different courts.

The time is right for constituting, where possible, coronial inquiries in the one court at the one time. Surely it is cheaper to bring witnesses from all over the State to one venue than to have an inquiry conducted in two or three different venues. Bereaved relatives and witnesses would find it less traumatic to have to attend the one court.

I know of a coronial inquiry that has extended for more than 12 months. I do not have the figures, but the legal costs involved must be very high. I have been told by people involved that the inquiry has been conducted in many different courts.

Mr Scott: If you were the Minister would you change the system?

Mr FITZGERALD: I am calling on the Minister to examine the system. I am looking for an input from all members.

Many members of the public believe that they are not being represented fairly at coronial inquiries because they cannot afford the costs involved. The decision as to whether they will or will not be legally represented is a difficult one to have to arrive at. A person involved in a coronial inquiry may not know what evidence a police officer has given or what evidence another witness has given. Any person involved in a coronial inquiry has the right to have his legal representative cross-examine the witnesses. In the court, a member of the Police Force or any person assisting the coroner or representing a witness has the first say. Secondly, a person may be cross-examined by other representatives, and may be cross-examined or, as the case requires, re-examined by a member of the Police Force.

(Time expired.)

[Wednesday, 27 October 1982]

ALP Policy on Alternative Life-style

Mr GYGAR (Stafford) (12.1 a.m.): It is no wonder that the ALP polls so badly in this State. The wonder is that it polls so highly, particularly when one has regard to the woolly and fuzzy-headed thinking that comes from its so-called intellectual peers.

This week, the people of Queensland have been regaled by a particular example of the lunacy that one has come to expect from the Left Wing of the Australian Labor Party. I refer, in particular, to the reports published on Monday, 25 October last, of the words used by Senator Jones, who is an ALP senator from Queensland, regarding alternative life-styles.

Senator Jones has proposed that alternative communities should be supported by the Government because they are self-supporting, and because it is another way in which people can be removed from the rat race of unemployment and, indeed, employment. I do not care if people want to retire to the bush and live in bark huts, grow their own vegetables and all the rest. If that is their choice, then so be it. But it is arrant nonsense for Senator Jones and others like him to say that such people can be removed from society because they are self-supporting. If they are self-supporting, pay no taxes and grow their own vegetables, who is going to pay for the roads to their vegetable patches, the base hospitals that they demand within 10 or 15 miles so that they can receive intricate surgery, the ABC to broadcast all of the weird programs that some of those people delight in listening to, and the aircraft for crop protection measures and for the eradication of diseases that will eat their nice little cabbages and all the other vegetables out in the scrub? The answer is quite simple, Mr Speaker: it will be the mugs like you and me and the ordinary man in the street who pays his taxes and plays a useful role in society.

There is no such thing in this country as an alternative self-supporting life-style. The only people who are self-supporting may very well be a few tribal Aborigines in the Northern Territory who do not call upon the public communications network and the public health and other public welfare services that are available.

Whether people like it or not, our society is a bit more complex than the people at Nimbin would have one believe, and certainly a little bit more complex than Senator Jones, that intellectual giant, would have us believe. We cannot just drop out, tune out and forget about society, because we all have a part to play in it, even if our part is just the minor one of paying our share of the taxes to ensure that the facilities that we all need in a complex, post-industrial society are there when we want them.

That sort of lunacy from Senator Jones indicates how entirely detached from reality the alternative Government really is. Members of the ALP just cannot see what a complex society requires. They lack the intelligence and perception to see that we are all in the boat together and that pulling out and dropping out is no answer to any of the problems that society faces today. The only way to solve the problems is to pitch in and help. Perhaps if one day the members of the ALP recognise that fact and stop being critics and knockers and coming up with simplistic stupidity such as that to which I have referred, they might be able to look forward to being an alternative something in this State.

Motion (Mr Wharton) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 12.4 a.m. (Wednesday).