

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 1984

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Mr SPEAKER (Hon. J. H. Warner, Toowoomba South) read prayers and took the chair at 11 a.m.

ASSENT TO BILL

Assent to the Transplantation and Anatomy Act Amendment Bill reported by Mr Speaker.

PAPERS

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

Report of the Townsville Harbour Board for the year ended 30 June 1984.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Orders in Council under—

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

Agricultural Bank (Loans) Act 1959-1981

Agricultural Bank (Loans) Act 1959-1981 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982

City of Brisbane Market Act 1960-1982 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982

Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1984

Stock Act 1915-1984

Swine Compensation Fund Act 1962-1975

Regulations under—

Professional Engineers Act 1929-1975

Electricity Act 1976-1982

Hospitals Act 1926-1983

Physiotherapists Act 1964-1981

Diseases in Plants Act 1929-1972

Meat Industry Act 1965-1983

By-laws under—

Dental Act 1971-1973

Harbours Act 1955-1982.

PETITION

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petition—

Redundancy Notices, Maryborough and Gympie Railway Workshops

From Mr Alison (4 721 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will withdraw redundancy notices served on employees at Maryborough and Gympie railway workshops.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I bring to the attention of honourable members that question-time is not a time for debate. If members continually interject during question-time, the result is a consequent loss of opportunity for their colleagues to participate. Continued

interjections will, when carried to their logical conclusion, attract disciplinary action under Standing Orders No. 123A and No. 124. I ask all honourable members to co-operate, or I will deal with them accordingly.

Opposition Members: What about Government members?

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Burns: It is about time the rules were applied to both sides of the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Questions submitted on notice were answered as follows—

1. Dredging and Earthworks, Moggill Creek

Mr LICKISS asked the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services—

With reference to my question on 15 November (No. 8) to the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing and that Minister's answer thereto in relation to alleged dredging in Moggill Creek—

(1) Is he aware that there exists a great deal of concern in relation to the dredging and earthworks being undertaken on what appears to be Crown land adjoining Moggill Creek and from the bed and banks of Moggill Creek downstream from the traffic bridge on Moggill Road?

(2) Have permits for this activity been issued and thus approval given by the authority or authorities concerned—that is, Brisbane City Council and/or Water Resources Commission or Harbours and Marine Department?

(3) Are the bed and banks of Moggill Creek or any adjacent Crown land in fact being used for extractive industry purposes and has any soil, gravel or sand been disposed of by sale, or otherwise, and to whom and on what authority?

(4) Are any royalties applicable?

(5) As considerable damage appears to have been done to the environment of the area and to the bed and banks of the creek, has an environmental impact study been undertaken and, if so, with what results?

(6) Have all necessary procedures and approvals been followed and given, as required by law?

(7) Was public advertisement duly made and were objections invited in relation to the project, or was such action required by law?

(8) Will he, in the interests of sound planning and administration, have all the relevant matters investigated to ensure that all relative interests are considered?

Answer—

(1 to 8) As the honourable member will be aware from the reply given by the Honourable the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing, the Brisbane City Council has given no approvals in respect of the development of a country club and recreation area. However, the owner of the land in question has produced evidence to my department that he has received permission in writing from the Brisbane City Council department of works to relocate the interim regulation line for Moggill Creek downstream of Moggill with channel works to be stabilised to the satisfaction of that department. The work being undertaken has predominantly been carried out on private property so the question of royalties does not arise. My department would expect the Brisbane City Council to ensure that its requirements within the terms of its permit are met.

2. Fire-safety Measures, Rural Areas

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

With reference to widespread potential for bush fires in most areas of the south west, and in particular to the very dangerous situation that could develop in rural subdivisions and hobby farm areas—

What measures have been taken by the Rural Fires Board to ensure that adequate fire protection is available and land-holders are acquainted with safety measures in such areas?

Answer—

I thank the honourable member for Balonne for his very sensible question. It is unlike those asked by the Opposition—the socialists over on the other side of the Chamber who support the unions and the permanent firemen at all times.

The bush fire potential in south-west Queensland, and indeed in most of Queensland, is very high this summer, and the Rural Fires Board has been active in its role of organising the volunteer bush fire brigade network. The south-western district of the State now has 180 volunteer bush fire brigades.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr TENNI: Opposition members ought to listen to this. They have a lot to learn about voluntary fire brigades.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Lytton under Standing Order No. 123A.

Answer (continued)—

Some of the volunteer bush fire brigades in the south west were put to the test last week fighting a massive fire on a 30-km front in the Wyandra area.

The Rural Fires Board has been in contact with all shire councils advising them of the potential threat and has been receiving valuable support from the councils by way of hazard reduction on council lands and the distribution of hazard reduction reminders with rate notices. Over the past 12 months, \$72,000 was spent in south-west Queensland on bush fire fighting equipment, and a further \$10,000 was spent on communications equipment. The board has provided a library of bush fire training videotapes at the inspector's office in Roma and has conducted district co-ordination meetings in Augathella and Tambo in recent months.

The board is currently carrying out discussions with local government with a view to closer co-operation and involvement between councils and the bush fire brigades, while board planning has commenced as part of its five-year development program on an emergency equipment pool so that equipment can be transported to the scene of a bush fire by air, if necessary. Mutual aid planning, public education and rural residential developer education have been commenced with a view to making the hundreds of rural/residential developments very much aware of the dangers of fire and to incorporating fire planning in the developments. Training courses for chief fire wardens have commenced, and fire warden training will commence in December, with the first training days being scheduled for Yuleba and Injune.

The board has an ongoing program of community education, which is supported by the self-sufficient self-help bush fire brigade network—something honourable members opposite do not appreciate. This State has a bush fire fighting force of over 34 000 volunteer members—and I emphasise that—in 1 550 bush fire brigades. That is a fine example of community self-help that is supported by State and local government, but unfortunately not by the socialists on the other side.

3. Alleged Offences by Police Officer

Mr GOSS asked the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police—

With reference to previous questions on 14 and 15 November regarding a police officer who has been the subject of rumours in relation to alleged offences against morality—

(1) Did the management of a television station seek an assurance approximately 12 months ago from the Police Commissioner that reports in relation to this officer were incorrect?

(2) Did the Police Commissioner give that television station to understand that there was no foundation for the reports and that the police officer had a “clean bill of health”?

Answer—

(1 & 2) The commissioner, deputy commissioner and assistant commissioners have no recollection of any such contact. However, if the member for Salisbury will provide the name of the official of the television station and the date of the alleged contact, a check will be made of departmental records.

4. Electricity Tariff Rebates and Discounts, Age Pensioners

Mr WHITE asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to the great difficulty many age pensioners and low-income families have in coping with the rising cost of living and, in particular, the cost of electricity—

(1) Does the Government have any plans under review to assist pensioners and low-income families with electricity charges?

(2) If not, will he give consideration to the needs of age pensioners and low-income families by introducing a system of electricity rebates or discounts along the lines of the pensioner rate remission scheme?

Answer—

(1 & 2) The matter of pensions and their adequacy to meet normal living costs is clearly and firmly one belonging to the Federal Government in Canberra.

It would be improper for this State's Government to usurp that responsibility and unfair to ask Queensland's electricity consumers to meet the cost of subsidies which, in effect, would constitute a supplement to the pension system.

5. Union Coercion and Secondary Boycotts, Building Industry

Mr WHITE asked the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs—

With reference to the ongoing problems in the building industry and, in particular, to the illegal actions of the Building Workers Industrial Union—

(1) Is he aware that the BWIU has formed a deed of agreement under which it is attempting to set minimum rates for subcontractors such as bricklayers at the rate of \$310 per thousand?

(2) Is he also aware that the BWIU is still using standover tactics by coercing builders to sign an agreement which is clearly illegal, as builders and subcontractors are employers, not employees?

(3) If so, what action does the Government intend to take to preserve the cost-effectiveness of the housing industry and protect the right of individual operators in the building industry to exercise their freedom to carry out their job efficiently without the heavy hand of union coercion and secondary boycotts?

Answer—

(1) I am aware that the Building Workers Industrial Union has proposed the setting up of an industry tribunal to regulate rates between contractors and subcontractors in the housing industry construction field.

(2) In general terms, subcontractors are not employees. They are therefore not entitled to be members of any industrial union of employees. Any genuine subcontractor who is subjected to stand-over tactics may seek the protection of the police. There is adequate protection under the Criminal Code.

(3) I have introduced the Industrial (Commercial Practices) Bill into this House to give further protection against secondary boycotts. I know the honourable member will support this measure, and I look forward to his support.

6. Assets Test

Mr BOOTH asked the Premier and Treasurer—

With reference to the frequent claims made by the Prime Minister in regard to the assets test, that there will be no inspection of pensioners' homes—

Will this be so, and, if so, how can the assets of a pensioner be valued without an inspection?

Answer—

The Prime Minister, in his policy speech last week, stated that pensioners will never see social security inspectors in their homes. I hope honourable members noted those words very carefully. What the Prime Minister did not say was that qualified public servants from other Commonwealth departments could carry out the valuations of pensioners' assets for the Social Security Department.

Are pensioners to really believe that their assessments of the values of property are going to be accepted without verification? How many pensioners could testify that they have been visited by Commonwealth officers over the years to check their income levels?

We already have had the Social Security Minister (Senator Grimes) confirm that all pensioners whose assets valuations are within \$20,000 of the assets test threshold will have the value of certain assets automatically checked by the Taxation Department—and that includes chooks in pens and yards.

From the day he was elected in 1983, the Prime Minister has been breaking promises. Let me remind honourable members of some of them. We were told that there would be no more early elections. Here we are with one after only 19 months, costing the public of Australia \$32m. We were promised tax cuts. Instead, taxation has been increased by 23 per cent. Why has nothing been done, as promised, to remove sales tax on freight for goods going to north Queensland? My friends in north Queensland have been asking that question. Why was the Ben Lomond uranium venture stopped? Why was the Bicentennial Water Resources Program scrapped? Why has coastal surveillance been downgraded in north Queensland?

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have already warned the honourable member this morning. I will not allow question-time to be turned into a debate.

Mr VAUGHAN: A point of order—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will answer the question in his own way.

Mr GUNN: I can imagine that it hurts honourable members opposite very much, Mr Speaker. They should sit back, because I have a little more to say. Where are the grants to the tourist industry? I ask honourable members opposite to tell me that.

Mr Burns: Do you want me to answer the question?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have already warned the honourable member for Lytton under Standing Order No. 123A. That is his second warning, and I will not warn him again.

Answer (continued)—

Where is the tropical medicine research centre that was to be established in Townsville? The Labor mayor of Townsville is asking that question.

I issue a warning to the people of this country that the promise by the Prime Minister to keep inspectors out of pensioners' homes will also be broken, and very quickly indeed.

I have said it before, and I say it again: The assets test represents the greatest invasion of personal privacy and community victimisation ever seen in Australia. I urge all pensioners to speak out against the Federal Government's action and, at the forthcoming Federal election, continue their protests against the assets test by voting this present Government out of office.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Superannuation Trust Funds (Protection of Employee Entitlements) Act

Mr WARBURTON: In asking a question of the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer, I refer to the fact that the Life Insurance Federation of Australia has described the Government's recent superannuation legislation aimed at the building industry as unnecessary, potentially costly, administratively disastrous and prone to affect the viability of the superannuation business of life insurance companies' investments in Queensland. I ask: In view of the strong criticism of the Act by Australian life insurance groups, will the Minister heed the call by the Life Insurance Federation and other financial institutions to repeal that legislation?

Mr GUNN: That is contrary to what I have been told. The life insurance companies saw me last week and said that they fully support the Government's action. I cannot understand where the honourable member obtained his information from, but I received a personal deputation from that group and they indicated their full support for the Government.

Superannuation Trust Funds (Protection of Employee Entitlements) Act

Mr WARBURTON: In view of that response, I ask a second question of the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer. I refer to a recent article in "The Courier-Mail" headed "Industry savages 'super' Act". In that article, the insurance groups made a scathing attack on the legislation. The article stated that some companies believed that the trustee requirements would force them to dismantle and restructure their entire personal superannuation business in Australia if they wanted to continue in business in Queensland. In addition, the same people said that that leads to the belief that the legislation could hurt new investment in Queensland in another way. I ask: What is the Government prepared to do? If it is not prepared to repeal the legislation, what steps will it take to overcome the severe problems to which I have referred?

Mr GUNN: The Government is not prepared to withdraw the legislation. I consider it to be very good legislation indeed. It was needed and wanted by the workers of Queensland. I can very much appreciate the position in which the Leader of the Opposition is placed. The BUS Scheme was the biggest abortion of a scheme ever offered to anyone in Australia. It would have meant that the unions would have obtained the biggest rip-off ever——

Mr Hinze: It is a rort.

Mr GUNN: That is right; the greatest rort of all time. What the Government did was correct in every detail, and I congratulate my colleague Mr Lester, who did an excellent job on that legislation. I was present at a number of deputations of subcontractors from various areas of the State, and they left no doubt in my mind as to what was required. The Quest Scheme will go ahead, and it will benefit this State. The Government makes no apologies for what it did on that occasion. I believe that the Government had the full support of every thinking worker in this State.

Wheat Board Payments

Mr NEAL: I ask the Minister for Primary Industries: Is he aware that the Australian Wheat Board is not paying the first payment on this season's wheat deliveries and that that non-payment is causing financial difficulties for some wheat-growers? Can he outline to the House why the payments are not being made?

Mr TURNER: I am aware that growers are not being paid. I share the concern of the honourable member and many growers in Queensland. It has happened as the result of the action taken by the Australian Wheat Board because Queensland does not have wheat-marketing legislation complementary to that of the Commonwealth. I make the point that the Australian Wheat Board has the money and the wheat, and it should be paying. I have made Queensland's position clear on the differences between the Commonwealth legislation and the Queensland legislation, and on maintaining growers' representation on the board, premium payments and permit sales.

Queensland is the only State with a State Wheat Board. Since receiving the Commonwealth legislation I have consulted with the State Wheat Board and the industry. There are some areas of concern which it is believed will disadvantage the State Wheat Board and the growers.

This morning I telexed Mr Kerin. I pointed out to him the situation that has arisen and drew to his attention section 2 of the Commonwealth Wheat Marketing Act, which empowers the Minister to direct the Australian Wheat Board to make payments to growers. I also drew his attention to section 26 of that Act, which provides that the Australian Wheat Board has adequate power to make payments to growers. I have requested Mr Kerin to take action to ensure that the growers are paid.

The Queensland Government will be putting its legislation through as soon as possible. It is presently in the hands of the Parliamentary Draftsman. Queensland's position has been made quite clear at meetings of the Australian Agricultural Council. This matter is of serious concern to all wheat-growers and to me. I hope to get some response from Mr Kerin today indicating that payments will proceed.

Adoption of Children by De Facto Couples

Mr NEAL: I ask the Minister for Welfare Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs: Is he aware that, under legislation introduced into the New South Wales Parliament, couples living in de facto relationships will be able to adopt children? What is the Queensland Government's position in this matter?

Mr MUNTZ: I am aware of the New South Wales legislation. I assure the honourable member and the House that under no circumstances will couples living in de facto relationships be allowed to adopt children. In this Year of the Family, the public is well aware of the Queensland Government's stand. The Government has given its wholehearted, unqualified support to the family unit, and it intends to maintain its stand. In adoption procedures, the fate of the child is of supreme concern. It is far too easy for couples living in de facto relationships to separate and go their own ways. In the long run, in such circumstances, the adopted children would be the ones to suffer. Marriage has a certain permanency that de facto relationships do not have.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr MUNTZ: My belief is completely different from the beliefs held by members of the Labor Party and their followers in the Left. I emphasise that the followers in the Left of the Labor Party are eroding family life-styles and are out to erode the monarchy and bring down the church.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr MUNTZ: I am talking about the travellers in the Left of the Labor Party. I do not care whether or not Opposition members care to link themselves with those people, who dictate to the Labor Party in the Federal and State areas. They are threatening the very foundations or core of society—marriage and family.

It will not be long before Mr Wran and his colleagues allow homosexuals and others living in unnatural life-styles to adopt children. That will be to the detriment of society. There is no way that the Queensland Government will allow couples living in de facto relationships to adopt children.

Inspection of Housing Commission Homes

Mr BURNS: I ask the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer: In view of his opposition this morning to inspectors visiting pensioners in their homes with regard to the assets test, is it true that Housing Commission inspectors visit pensioners in Housing Commission houses as early as 6.30 in the morning? I give as an example a raid on a Housing Commission house in New Farm in which the grandchild of the woman resident was staying. In view of the Minister's opposition this morning to inspectors visiting pensioners for the purpose of the assets test, will he order an end to this nefarious practice?

Mr GUNN: I am intrigued that the honourable member for Lytton should try to protect anyone who breaks the law. I do not know how many Housing Commission houses are in the honourable member's electorate, but in my electorate the Housing Commission has provided 300 or 400 welfare houses. I have received many complaints from neighbours to the effect that another family has shifted into a Housing Commission house.

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Wolston will withdraw that remark. I warn him under Standing Order No. 123A.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: What was the remark?

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable member will withdraw the remark without qualification.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I withdraw it.

Mr GUNN: If I were you, Mr Speaker, I would not take much notice of him. Everyone inside and outside this Chamber knows about him. I do not think that any honourable member has ever been held in less regard than the honourable member for Wolston. I have more respect for the honourable member for Lytton than the honourable member who sits to his left.

The Housing Commission has a job to do. However, this is a different situation. Does the honourable member for Lytton believe that pensioners should be visited by inspectors for the purposes of the assets test? They already have 92 questions to answer.

Mr Burns: I asked you to cancel this Queensland practice.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Lytton has asked a question and he will listen to the answer in silence.

Mr GUNN: This is only the first stage of the assets test; and it will cost \$54m to collect \$45m. If the Labor Government is returned to office, the next stage of the assets test will be introduced. However, I do not think that that Government will be re-elected.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr GUNN: I do not think so. Mr Hawke's albatross will be the Nuclear Disarmament Party. Before he came to power, Mr Hawke supported the policy that is now espoused by the Nuclear Disarmament Party. Now his chickens are coming home to roost. In New South Wales, the support for the Nuclear Disarmament Party is up to about 13 or 14 per cent and the Prime Minister is definitely worried about that party.

An Opposition Member: He is not worried about the National Party.

Mr GUNN: Well, he should be worried about the assets test, because it will rebound against him at the election; there is no doubt about that.

I do not think that the honourable member for Lytton should have asked his question, because it has not done him much good. He has no material to support his allegation. I have no recollection of the case that he mentioned, and I do not know whether he has mentioned it before in this place. The Housing Commission has a right to protect its houses. As the honourable member is aware, many people in Housing Commission accommodation receive welfare payments of about \$20 per week to enable them to live in those houses. However, this is a different situation altogether.

Bridge to North Stradbroke Island

Mr BURNS: In directing a question to the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing, I refer to the third or fourth preferred option for the bridge to North Stradbroke Island. Cabinet announced—after it waited for the Minister to attend a Cabinet meeting—that this option was the best for the residents in the area and for the future development of the area. I ask: Which residents of Victoria Point, Macleay Island or Karragarra Island supported such a proposal and what were the submissions received in support of it before a decision was made?

Mr HINZE: For some time the Government has been committed to building a bridge to Stradbroke Island. Discussions have taken place with various interested bodies, and three routes have been given consideration—via Russell Island, via Peel Island, and via Macleay Island, which was referred to by the honourable member.

The honourable member asked which organised bodies or groups of bodies had been consulted. All I say at this time is that, for economic and other reasons, the Government decided that the preferred route would be via Macleay Island. As the honourable member knows, discussions will take place over the next few weeks with various bodies. The local progress association rang the honourable member for the area, the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services (Mr Goleby). I have received telephone calls about this matter. In fact, just before I came into the House this morning, I received a telephone call commending the Government's decision. As happened when the Government indicated that one possible route was via Peel Island, arguments both for and against will be advanced. As the honourable member knows, people called on me in relation to the Peel Island route indicating that thousands of boating people would be opposed to a route via Peel Island. All these matters are taken into consideration.

Mr Burns: Are you firm on your route?

Mr HINZE: The Government is saying that it prefers that route. "Prefers" means exactly that. That is the present state of affairs.

Mr Burns: It will change again.

Mr HINZE: I do not think it will change again. As at this time, it would appear that the Government believes that this is the preferred route.

Applications for Dole by Cane-growers' Wives

Mr MENZEL: I ask the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer: Is he aware that during a recent visit to Cairns the Prime Minister advised cane-growers' wives to apply for the dole, even though it is well known that that is against the provisions of the Act? Is he aware that at a meeting in Babinda the secretary of the Federal member for Leichhardt privately advised cane-growers' wives to lie when filling in social security forms so that they could get the dole? Will the Deputy Premier investigate the matter and have the police determine whether criminal charges should be laid against the Federal member and his staff?

Mr GUNN: I have been made aware of the matters raised by the honourable member. I received several telephone calls from women in that region. That gives some indication of the absolute desperation of Mr Gayler, who knows that he does not have long to go as a member of Federal Parliament. He will be done like a duck dinner. He has never served that area to any extent. He is held in very low esteem by the local people, just as is the honourable member for Wolston in his electorate. There is no doubt that Mr Gayler is the greatest coward of all time. He was prepared to send his secretary to advise these people—

A Government Member: He is history.

Mr GUNN: He is history, all right. He sent his secretary along. That is absolutely intolerable. He did not have the intestinal fortitude to do it himself, so he asked his secretary to go alone and advise those ladies to cheat and lie. Something must be done about this. I call on the Federal Government to take action against Mr Gayler straight away.

Mr Randell: Shame on him!

Mr GUNN: Shame, indeed! I have never heard of anything like it.

Mr Fouras interjected.

Mr GUNN: He is the greatest coward of all time.

Mr Fouras interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for South Brisbane under Standing Order No. 123A.

Mr GUNN: Fancy a member getting his secretary to do that! That is typical of a Labor person, particularly the Federal member for Leichhardt. I will certainly get in touch with the Federal Government and I will want to know very quickly what it intends to do about this matter.

Sugar Industry Assistance

Mr MENZEL: I ask the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer: Is he aware that, although the Federal Government has flatly refused to give direct assistance to the sugar industry through an underwriting scheme or loans to increase the No. 1 Pool price—even though it promised to do that prior to the last Federal election—it is having a new sugar-mill built in a factory in Victoria, at a cost up to \$100m, and intends to donate that mill to Bangladesh to help that nation expand its sugar industry, in spite of the fact that world stocks of sugar are at record high levels and cane-growers are marching to Brisbane to highlight their plight?

Mr GUNN: The Opposition should remain very quiet on this matter, because it is very, very serious indeed. Mr Kerin went all round north Queensland saying everything that he thought that the people wanted to hear. I would say to the people of north Queensland—I hope that the honourable member for Mulgrave takes this back to them—that Mr Kerin is not even in the inner Cabinet. The Federal Government thinks so little of primary industry that Mr Kerin is not even in the inner Cabinet.

Mr Vaughan: Neither are you.

Mr GUNN: The Queensland Government has not made any error about that.

The Queensland Government is very familiar with the situation outlined by the honourable member for Mulgrave. I am intrigued about the building of that factory. The Federal Government should confirm or deny very quickly—

Mr FOURAS: I rise to a point of order. The Minister is misleading the House. Mr Kerin is a member of the Cabinet, and the Minister should know better than that.

Mr GUNN: The inner Cabinet?

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr FOURAS: He is a member of the inner Cabinet, and the Minister should know better.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The point is taken.

Mr GUNN: He would have as much power in the outer Ministry as Opposition members have in the Queensland Government. That is all there is to it.

The Federal Government should confirm or deny whether it is allowing the construction in Victoria, not in Queensland, of a sugar-mill to assist the sugar industry in Bangladesh. The Federal Government should tell the Queensland Government as soon as possible.

Mr CASEY: I rise to a point of order. The House should be made aware that Bangladesh is not and has never been an importer of sugar from Australia. People in Bangladesh are starving. Its industries need our support and assistance. If we do not help them, God help us! We should be Christian people.

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

Mr GUNN: Charity begins at home. The honourable member has failed to help Queensland.

Mr Campbell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mackay.

Mr GUNN: He has failed to help the Queensland sugar industry, which put \$1 billion into the economy of Australia. That cannot be denied. As much as 96 per cent of that revenue is produced in Queensland. That cannot be denied.

Mr Casey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Mackay.

Mr GUNN: The Labor Government stands condemned. The honourable member for Bundaberg is grinning like a Cheshire cat. Let him go back to the people of Bundaberg. He wrote me a letter asking that industry be taken to Bundaberg.

Mr Campbell: What did you do? Nothing!

Mr GUNN: If Mr Hawke is to be so generous with tax-payers' money as to build a sugar-mill for Bangladesh, why is it not built in Bundaberg? Why has the honourable member not asked him that? No sugar-mill should be in Victoria for Bangladesh, yet that is what has happened. The Opposition has to wear that.

I ask the honourable member for Mulgrave (Mr Menzel) to relate those matters to the people of north Queensland. The Queensland Government has offered and will

continue to offer another \$10m at 4 per cent interest, if the Federal Government will match it. It has refused to do that.

Federal Government Assistance to Steel Industry, Car Industry, Ship-building Industry and Sugar Industry

Mr RANDELL: I ask the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology: How much Federal aid has been given to—(1) the steel industry, (2) the car industry and (3) the ship-building industry, in recent days? How does such assistance compare with Commonwealth help given to the sugar industry?

I also ask: Is the Minister aware that cane-farmers throughout Queensland are so frustrated and fed up with broken promises and the Federal Government's failure to take any positive action to assist that great industry that the Queensland Cane Growers Council has hired a train to bring thousands of farmers to Brisbane in an attempt to put their case to him to obtain some positive action?

Mr Casey: A National Party stunt.

Mr RANDELL: Why does the honourable member not get up and support us instead of—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mackay.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! That was the second warning given to the honourable member for Mackay. I now warn him under Standing Order No. 123A.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I also warn the honourable member for Ipswich West under Standing Order No. 123A.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Everton under Standing Order No. 123A.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I assure honourable members that it will be no laughing matter when they are asked to leave the Chamber.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Unbelievable!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! For the second time, I warn the honourable member for Wolston under Standing Order No. 123A.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: What for?

Mr SPEAKER: That is the finish.

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, I bring to your attention that you have warned at least 10 members of the Australian Labor Party. I point out to you that you did not warn the honourable member for Mirani under Standing Order No. 123A. What is the difference?

Mr AHERN: In reply to the honourable member—the Federal Government has recently very substantially increased aid to the Australian steel industry. It has announced that a bounty not to exceed \$71.6m per year will be made available to the industry. That is on top of a \$100m package made available to the industry to assist in creating jobs in steel industry towns. The Federal Government yesterday announced a substantial package which will further increase protection for the Australian steel industry against

developing countries. That is in addition to a substantial amount of assistance already given to it.

I turn now to the car industry. Traditionally, much assistance has been given to that industry. It is estimated that it amounts to about \$25,000 per employee. Added to that, \$150m has recently been made available to the Australian car industry by way of general assistance. In addition, a subsidy of \$46.35 a week per employee on top of the dole has been provided for a retraining scheme for workers in that industry.

The Federal Government has also announced an assistance package to the ship-building industry. At this stage I am not aware of what that assistance will add up to in million-dollar terms. However, it will certainly be big, because that industry has also traditionally been one of the most protected industries in Australia's history.

The honourable member asks me to compare the very substantial direct tax-payer assistance given to those two industries—about \$250m—with the Federal Government's assistance to the sugar industry. I am happy to make the comparison, because in recent times the Federal Government's assistance to the Australian sugar industry has been nought. That is the true situation. The Federal Government has offered some assistance only to cane-growers who are going broke. That has added up to a few million dollars. The Australian cane-growers are right to ask the Prime Minister, on his visit to Brisbane, "Why is it that we are being treated as second-class Australians?", because that is clearly the case.

Why is it that the Federal Government gives assistance to some industries but, when it comes to the sugar industry, the answer is, "No. Go and plant cabbages and carrots, or something else."? The Federal Government has treated cane-growers very shabbily. They are right to be angry. They are right to march on Brisbane and to demand that they be given treatment equal to that given to other workers. In Queensland 7 000 farmers, their wives and their dependants are involved in the sugar industry, which has approximately 30 sugar-mills. They are right to be angry. They are right to be critical of Federal members of Parliament, particularly the member for Leichhardt who is bleating so loudly at the present time. They should be asking the member for Leichhardt, who claims to represent the Australian sugar industry, why that Federal Government is not prepared to give cane-growers treatment equal to that given to workers in the car industry, the steel industry and the ship-building industry for that matter. No reasonable answer will be forthcoming.

Mr KRUGER: I rise to a point of order. As the television camera covering the National Party in the House is the only one working, does that indicate that it is there to cover this mad, ridiculous National Party stunt that we are witnessing this morning?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! That is a frivolous point of order.

Cost of Electioneering by Premier and Treasurer

Mr VEIVERS: I ask the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer: Will he inform the House and the people of Queensland whether the National Party or the people of Queensland met the cost of the recent electioneering trip by the Premier and Treasurer to Western Australia and South Australia?

Mr GUNN: The Premier and Treasurer is entitled to travel round Australia if he so desires, just as the honourable member is entitled to a certain number of airline tickets paid for by the tax-payers of Queensland. It was a very successful trip. The Premier is away today on another very successful trip. The further he goes—

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr GUNN: I appreciate the concern of honourable members opposite. If the Prime Minister made one mistake, it was to have a long campaign. As a result of that grave mistake, the chickens are coming home to roost. The longer the campaign goes, the

worse it gets for him. The Premier is away today helping someone—I do not know who it is—but I advise the Premier to go as often as he can, all over Australia. He had a very successful trip to Western Australia and South Australia. He will be travelling to the other States before the election.

Detention of Julie Cashman in Men's Hospital, Brisbane Prison Complex

Mr VEIVERS: I do not know what the Deputy Premier's idea of success has to do with costs. However, I direct another question without notice, this time to the Minister for Welfare Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs: Is it true that Julie Cashman is being held in the men's hospital at the Brisbane Prison Complex because of inadequate secure accommodation in the women's section?

Mr MUNTZ: I am not aware of the facts relative to Julie Cashman. To my knowledge, that is not so. I am not sure of the details about the person to whom the member for Ashgrove refers. If he desires to place the question on notice, I will answer it tomorrow.

Mr VEIVERS: I do so accordingly.

Diesel Fuel Subsidy, Offshore Islands

Mr ALISON: I ask the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts: With reference to the Federal Government's diesel fuel subsidy for offshore island operators in Queensland—

- (1) Who administers the scheme?
- (2) What criteria are used to determine which islands are subsidised?
- (3) Why are Fraser Island operators excluded?

Mr McKECHNIE: I thank the honourable member not only for his question but also for his interest in the tourist industry in his electorate. In its 1983 Budget, the present Federal Government decided on a section 96 grant to subsidise the cost of diesel fuel for Barrier Reef islands not connected to mainland electricity. I point out that that was in lieu of a general subsidy given by the previous Federal Government.

The subsidy is administered by the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation. However, very firm guide-lines have been laid down by the Federal Labor Government. Payment may be made only in accordance with those guide-lines. I have made repeated representations to the Federal Government, pointing out that it is not only the Barrier Reef islands that have a problem. Of course, Fraser Island has a problem. However, the Federal Government will not recognise that. The Queensland Government cannot pay the subsidy because it is Federal Government money and Queensland is bound by its guide-lines.

Mr Powell: What about excise?

Mr McKECHNIE: Yes. The Federal Government obtains so much revenue from excise and all sorts of other avenues that it should be doing a jolly sight more for all islands.

Mr Scott: Why can't you do it?

Mr McKECHNIE: What a typical interjection from the Opposition! The tax-payers of Australia, through the previous Federal Government, gave some help. The Federal colleagues of the member for Cook took it away. They reinstated it to Great Barrier Reef islands only. Because of that action, he now wants the tax-payers of Queensland to accept responsibility. That is patently unfair. The Federal Government has taken the subsidy away. There is no reason why the subsidy cannot be reinstated across the board, instead of to a few selected islands. The Queensland Government has made repeated representations.

I congratulate the honourable member for Maryborough on the concern he has for tourism in his area.

Projects Under Community Employment Program

Mr McPHIE: I ask the Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs: Could he advise the House whether isolated towns in north Queensland, which desperately need reliable water supplies, will receive relief through the Community Employment Program? If not, why not, considering the frivolous nature of projects under this program in southern, Labor-controlled States that have received financial assistance?

Mr KATTER: I am fully aware of the plight of towns such as Proserpine, Charters Towers, Cloncurry and Karumba. Those towns have a desperate shortage of water supply. As a matter of fact, for a fair proportion of last year, people who live at Karumba were restricted to five litres of water per day for household use.

The Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, promised that the Commonwealth Government would jointly fund the construction of a water supply pipeline to Karumba. I have a copy of the telegram. Now he has refused point blank to provide the Commonwealth's share of the funds.

Mr Scott interjected.

Mr KATTER: I am happy to answer interjections.

Mr Scott: What the Minister has said is not true.

Mr KATTER: As I said, I am only too happy to take any interjections. The honourable member for Cook said that what I said is not true. I say to him that I can quote verbatim from the telegram, and Don Puttock, the council clerk at Normanton, can provide the honourable member with a copy of it.

The reason why CEP funding is not available is that the Federal Government abolished the funding component that had previously been allocated to urban water supply. The money was put into a common pool and expended upon items that formed part of the usual CEP. I noted from a broadcast of State news this morning that eligibility for CEP funds was based on the employment of 50 per cent women and 50 per cent Aborigines. Unfortunately, in the community that required the funds, there were no Aborigines and there were no women who wished to dig up the roads. The result was that the project would not have got off the ground.

When CEP was launched, specific projects were mentioned. I have a copy of the program with me. It sets out that it was designed to provide 70 000 jobs for frivolous purposes, such as weeding lawns or painting goal-posts. It is fortunate that I have this document so that I can answer the honourable member's question. I would like to inform the House of 11 items to which CEP funding has been allocated. Hon members will notice that they are very important to the efficient running of the nation's economy—

Congress for International Co-operation and Disarmament, \$47,568;

Pax Christi—to provide meaningful and permanent employment by educating the community in peace, justice, development and disarmament, \$71,000;

Coalition against Poverty and Unemployment, \$155,975;

International Development Action—to collect information on issues affecting Pacific women and prepare publications on independence issues, \$41,000;

Australian Union of Students—and they would be a hard-working group—\$31,000;

Tourist Railway Board, \$184,000;

Steam rail advancement project from Newport, \$138,000;

High schools for social development and other projects, \$319,000;

Cremorne Garden Residents Action Group, \$35,000;

Richmond Employment Group—to be trained as viable ongoing community theatre group, \$166,000; and

YWCA—Migrant Women Developmental Research and Resource Centre Co-operative, \$689,000.

They are the meaningful projects that will help the Australian economy to get onto its feet. The money is not being spent on frivolous projects such as weeding lawns and painting goal-posts. The money that should have been provided for desperately needed water supplies in north Queensland towns has been diverted to those projects. As far as Queensland is concerned, consensus means that there is no "sense" or "us", but there is a damned big "con".

Mr PREST proceeding to give notice of a question—

Mr PRICE: I rise to a point of order. I believe that it is my turn to ask a question.

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

Labor State Governments

Mr JENNINGS: I ask the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer: Is he aware that this is the first time since 1947 that the Commonwealth and a majority of States have had Labor Governments? If he is aware of that alarming situation, will he advise the people how vitally important it is for them to take it into consideration on 1 December because of the Federal Labor Government's intention to throw law and order out the window by the introduction of a so-called Bill of Rights and its attempt to wipe out the basic rights and powers of the States?

Mr GUNN: I appreciate the honourable member's concern. Most people will consider that 1 December is crisis day for Australia, and I hope that they do so when they cast a vote. I share the honourable member's concern for the fact that the majority of State governments are now Labor controlled. But let me outline the performance of those Governments. Corruption is rife in the New South Wales Government, and the stains are now seeping through to the Federal Government and the other Labor State Governments. People are starting to think very hard about that. I have great confidence in the common sense of the people of Australia and hope that on 1 December they will vote accordingly.

At 12 noon,

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

SUPPLY

Fifteenth Allotted Day—Reception of Resolutions

The Resolutions reported from Committee of Supply on 15 November were presented and, on motion of Mr Gunn, received.

Adoption of Resolutions

The Resolutions being taken as read—

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer): I move—

“That the Resolutions be now agreed to.”

Motion agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS

Opening of Committee

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer): I move—

- “(a) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1984-1985, a further sum not exceeding \$2,476,563,047 be granted from the the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland.
- (b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1984-1985, a further sum not exceeding \$3,097,105,548 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.
- (c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1984-1985, a further sum not exceeding \$149,014,549 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.
- (d) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1983-1984, a supplementary sum not exceeding \$157,850,624 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland.
- (e) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1983-1984, a supplementary sum not exceeding \$270,699,245 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.
- (f) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1983-1984, a supplementary sum not exceeding \$8,212,237 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.
- (g) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1985-1986, a sum not exceeding \$820,000,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland.
- (h) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1985-1986, a sum not exceeding \$1,000,000,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.
- (i) That, towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1985-1986, a sum not exceeding \$70,000,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.”

Motion agreed to.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I ask honourable members to resume their seats. The Chamber will come to order.

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Wolston has already been warned under Standing Order No. 123A. I have asked for silence in the Chamber, and the honourable member has ignored my request completely. He will now leave the Chamber.

Whereupon the honourable member for Wolston withdrew from the Chamber.

Resolutions reported, received, and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

First Reading

A Bill, founded on the Resolutions reported from the Committee of Ways and Means, was presented and read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer) (12.8 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

This Bill is the second (and final) Appropriation Bill for the current financial year. It seeks parliamentary approval to cover expenditure included in the Budget Estimates for this year, unforeseen expenditure incurred during 1983-84 and expenditure for the first two months of the financial year 1985-86 to maintain Government activities until further Supply can be granted.

An amount of \$10,107.7m is provided for 1984-85 to cover anticipated expenditure for Supply services from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, Trust and Special Funds and the Loan Fund, and represents the total of Parts III, IV and V of the Schedule to this Bill.

It also incorporates the amount of \$1,720m for Supply services appropriated in the Appropriation Act 1983-84 (No. 3) and the further amount of \$2,665m appropriated in the Appropriation Act 1984-85 (No. 1), which was assented to on 24 August 1984.

Unforeseen expenditure for 1983-84 totalling \$436.8m is also incorporated in the Bill. This amount had executive authority, but now requires parliamentary approval. Full details of this amount are set out in Parts VI, VII and VIII of the Schedule to this Bill.

The Bill also provides for an amount of \$1,890m to provide Supply for the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund for the first two months of the financial year 1985-86. Adequate provision has been allowed to cover cost escalations in the interim period.

This Bill and its associated processes marks the end of the parliamentary cycle for this financial year during which—

The State Budget for the year is presented and debated;

The various departmental Estimates and accounts are scrutinised; and

Supply is granted to enable those proposed expenditures to be undertaken.

The Bill is a very important step in the process of Government. It effectively authorises Government expenditures for the year. These expenditures reflect the Government's policies and philosophies. It is also a blueprint against which the efficiency and effectiveness of the Government can be assessed and its financial management performance judged.

This Government's record of good, solid financial management over a long period is one of which it is justly proud. The Government's commitment to balanced Budgets has produced results which are the envy of every other State.

Queensland does not have high taxation. Its rates of taxation overall are among the lowest in Australia. Queensland does not have billions of dollars in unfunded superannuation commitments to its employees. Queensland's essential services such as hospitals, education and so on compare favourably overall with those of every other State.

I am often asked why Queensland has been able to achieve its present very sound financial position. The answer in simple—good responsible government; government that is committed to free enterprise principles; government that is positive in its policies to develop the State's resources, both physical and non-physical. That is why Queensland is in such a good position. Above all else, though, the Government practices good house-keeping. It lives within its means. It makes sure that every dollar authorised by Bills, such as this Appropriation Bill, is spent to give the best possible return to the State.

This Government, unlike some other Governments, does not borrow to pay for its everyday operational expenses. When the State borrows funds, it does so to fund capital

assets which, to the maximum extent possible, are self-funding. In other words, they pay for themselves. This point is well illustrated by the fact that less than 6 per cent of the State Consolidated Revenue Fund revenues are committed to public debt-servicing costs—a position that would no doubt not be found in most other States, or private companies. The percentage has, in fact, fallen in the past couple of years.

The position is in stark contrast to the situation in the Federal sphere, where debt-servicing costs in the Commonwealth Budget this year increased by a massive 29 per cent. Justifiable concern has been expressed from many quarters about the escalation in the Federal Budget deficit. This concern is very real. I think that the warnings sounded by the former Secretary to the Treasury about the Federal Government's deficit problems should be heeded. The size of the present Federal Budget deficit and the capacity of the Federal Government to eliminate that deficit are matters of great concern.

I believe that the Federal Government this year allowed a golden opportunity to pass by to exercise a little responsible economic and financial management for what can only be seen as short-term expediency measures, knowing full well that an election was planned for the end of the year. It is essential that these matters be placed in their proper perspective, particularly when the people of Queensland and Australia are being asked to place their trust in this Federal Government and its record.

Let the people of Queensland and Australia have no illusions about the present Federal Government in the very critical area of economic and financial management. There is no denying that in the past 18 months or so there has been a great turn-around in the Australian economy, which has occurred during the term of office of the present Federal Government. The upsurge in the economy has been welcome—but there is a long way to go. The recovery must be sustained and, if necessary, tough decisions taken to ensure that it is sustained. But let me make it clear to everyone in this House that the recovery is not the work of the Federal Government or its policies, the recovery has nothing to do with accords, summits or other such exercises. The two key factors in the recovery process were—

- (a) The quite significant upturn in the economies of those countries with which Australia trades, mainly the United States of America; and
- (b) The fact that it rained, breaking one of the worst droughts in memory.

The Federal Government did not make it rain, much as it might try to claim the credit. Also, the recovery in the United States economy had nothing to do with the Federal Government. In other words, the recovery in the Australia economy would have happened no matter which Government was in power in Canberra.

As might have been expected, the upturn in the Australian economy contributed largely to the expected \$8.6 billion, or 17.7 per cent, increase in Federal revenues for 1984-85. With revenues so buoyant, what a wonderful opportunity was presented to the Federal Government to reduce the Budget deficit to more manageable proportions. What a wonderful opportunity for the Federal Government to exercise sound financial and economic management.

It was an opportunity that a responsible Federal Government would not have let pass by. But what did the Federal Government do? Instead of containing expenditures, it allowed them to blow out, resulting in a \$5.6 billion or 14.8 per cent increase in expenditures from \$37.9 billion to \$43.5 billion.

Where did this massive increase in expenditures go? I can assure honourable members that it did not go to the States. The States were left to fend as best they could, with only a 9 per cent increase in overall payments from the Commonwealth.

General purpose grants, the bread and butter of the States' operations, increased by less than 6 per cent. Commonwealth departmental expenditures increased by a massive 17 per cent.

Not only did the Federal Government fail to contain its expenditures, but it also denied the States a rightful share of a reasonable proportion of the increased revenues

so that it might increase its own expenditures instead. Furthermore, massive commitments have been entered into as a result of the last Federal Budget, which will have to be funded next year. There will not be the great boost to revenues, which occurred this year, to save the Budget deficit.

I do not need to tell this House or the people of Queensland what the inevitable answer will be when the Federal Government in the event that it should be re-elected on 1 December cannot deliver on its promises next year. That will be **nothing new**. It could cut expenditures to bring the deficit back to more manageable proportions. However, on past performance, there is no great enthusiasm for, or even acceptance of, the need for expenditure restraint. With additional expenditure commitments entered into already, there is little doubt in my mind that the Federal Government does not have that course of action in mind. The only alternative to reduce the deficit is a massive increase in taxation.

If the Federal Government could not reduce the deficit by more than \$1.2 billion this year out of an increase in revenues of \$8.6 billion, what chance does it have when revenue increases are nowhere near as large? Next year, Australia's national revenue will not be increasing as it did this year. Australia will not again be moving from drought to good seasons as it did this year when its farm income was increased by 40 per cent. The Australian Bureau of Agricultural Statistics shows that next year farm income will be reduced by a further 30 per cent. Australia will not again have an export trade resurgence by its international trading partners as it enjoyed this year. The opportunity to do something about the national deficit, which moved out because of drought and recession, has gone. Debt costs in servicing the deficits have gone up by 29 per cent and will continue to rise because the deficit remains.

Taxation is the issue, Mr Row, and, mark my words, if the Federal Government is returned to power, there will be taxation increases. Not only will there be taxation increases, but also, I have no doubt, capital gains taxes, death duties, gift duties and other similar taxes before we know it.

The Queensland Government stands on its record as being the first to abolish these abhorrent and iniquitous forms of taxation. These taxes will never return to Queensland as long as the Queensland Government is in power. But the same cannot be said of the Federal Labor Government—the big spender. No-one in that Government is prepared to say categorically that there will be no taxes of this nature, because they cannot give such undertakings.

I have taken a little time to elaborate on these matters, but I believe that the issue of economic and financial management is a critical one. The record of the Federal Labor Government is disastrous. It has missed the only opportunity that it is likely to get to bring its affairs into order and reduce its Budget deficit. If similar policies are permitted, the economic future of this nation is frightening. Compare this record and these prospects with the economic and financial management of the Queensland Government—balanced Budgets, low taxes, relatively small debt-servicing costs and sound financial management.

In his report on the departmental accounts subsidiary to the public accounts for the financial year ended 30 June 1984, the recently retired Auditor-General said—

“In the past, Treasury, by its conscientious oversighting, has been highly effective in ensuring that expenditures have been contained within the limits of revenues. This tight fiscal control has contributed to the State's healthy financial position.”

Mr Row, I think that that statement says it all.

The House can be assured that the expenditures authorised by this Bill will be subject to the same conscientious Treasury oversighting to ensure that Budgets are balanced and the Government's policies and principles of sound, responsible economic and financial management are carried out.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate—Leader of the Opposition) (12.20 p.m.): Those of us who have been members of Parliament for some time realise that in the run-up to a Federal election this House is used by the Government, to the best of its ability, to attack the Federal Labor Government. This morning a question was asked of the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology (Mr Ahern), to which he responded, about where the Federal Government should place priority in respect of the funding of industry. At the outset, I say that the Queensland Government ought to take a good look at its priorities. The sugar industry in Queensland is certainly ailing, and those people involved in the industry know why that has occurred.

As members of the Queensland Parliament, we have a responsibility to look seriously at the problems that are now confronting a number of sugar-growers and employees in the sugar industry. It is this Government's responsibility, as much as it is the Federal Government's responsibility, to do something about the problems facing the sugar industry.

I wonder about the priorities of this Government, because either tonight, tomorrow or Thursday a Bill will be debated concerning the simple matter of book-makers' turnover tax. Whether honourable members know it or not, contained in that Bill is a provision that will give the Racing Development Fund, which funds racecourse development in this State, an additional \$1.15m a year. That \$1.15m is on top of the \$4m rip-off from the TAB that has already gone into the Racing Development Fund over and above what it already receives by means of the Racing Act.

So this Government ought to get its priorities right. As \$5.1m can be raked off TAB profits to go into racecourse development at a time when industry in this State is in turmoil and an economic mess, I ask the people of Queensland to determine where, in fact, this Government's priorities lie.

Sir William Knox: Do you want Deagon taken out of the list?

Mr WARBURTON: That is the kind of irrelevant and immature statement that I would expect the honourable member for Nundah to make.

I will pursue this matter. I am telling honourable members that either today or tomorrow such legislation will be introduced. At that time, the honourable member for Nundah and his fellow Liberals will be able to decide whether they agree that an additional \$1.15m should go into the Racing Development Fund at this particular time.

Sir William Knox: I think it should.

Mr WARBURTON: The honourable member for Nundah is now on record in this House as saying that he thinks it should. He does not believe that it should go to the people in the ailing sugar industry.

The Queensland Budget for 1984-85 was presented by the Premier and Treasurer on 20 September 1984. The main features of that Budget, as announced by the Premier and Treasurer, were, firstly, that it was a balanced Budget, which the Premier and Treasurer described as a critical factor; secondly, that it provided for no increases in existing taxes, no new taxes and further taxation concessions in certain areas; and, thirdly, that it gave priority consideration to employment and industry through what was claimed to be a massive additional commitment of \$600m over the next 2½ years. That was labelled by the Premier and Treasurer as the Special Major Capital Works Program.

Today I will again canvass briefly various aspects of the Budget. It is important that the Opposition restate its views on this very important Budget, because the validity of its views has in no way been diminished. The legitimacy of the Opposition's analysis of the Budget stands.

The Budget's centre-piece, the fancily titled Special Major Capital Works Program, was perpetrated as a fraud, and it remains a fraud.

I will comment on the extreme fraudulence of that program later in my speech. First, however, I deal with the notion of "balanced Budget". Such a claim is a misrepresentation of the position of Queensland's public accounts. In saying that, I am being as kind as I can be. The Auditor-General defines "public accounts" as being the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the Trust and Special Funds and the Loan Fund. As every State Government has to do, the Queensland Government draws up the Consolidated Revenue Fund so that it balances. When the Opposition disputes the claim that the Budget is balanced, it does not dispute that the Consolidated Revenue Fund has been drawn up to balance. I make that very clear. I am referring to the overall result of the total Budget sector, which includes the operations of the Consolidated Revenue Fund taken in conjunction with the Trust and Special Funds and the Loan Fund.

A large proportion of Government activity has to be funded through borrowings. The gap between outlays and receipts is defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as the deficit. Last year Queensland's public sector deficit was calculated at \$1,740m. For the State Budget sector alone, Queensland had to borrow \$835m in 1983-84 in order to balance the books. It is the national accounting use of the term "deficit" referred to by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Federal Government and the Queensland Opposition when speaking about deficit, not the book-keeping use of the term persisted in by the Queensland Government, that counts. Queensland's reluctance to adopt national accounting conventions is due presumably to the fact that they would explode the myth about a balanced Budget.

The second key feature of the Budget as introduced by the Premier and Treasurer is that it provides no key increases in taxes, no new taxes and taxation concessions in particular areas. The point that deserves emphasis is that, only two days after the Budget speech, increases in a range of Government charges, the most significant being rail freights, were announced by notice in the Government Gazette. Government fees and charges that are spread across various departments are numbered in their thousands. Those that were increased immediately after the Budget were merely the first of what we know to be many more to come. Notifications of increases appear virtually every week in the Government Gazette. A significant number of the increases are in excess of the inflation rate or Consumer Price Index rises, to which they are supposedly tied. That is being brought home very forcefully by the opposition by my colleagues in the parliamentary Labor Party to many of the regulations.

Among the latest increases in Government fees and charges are those imposed by the State Housing Commission. Those fee increases cover building applications, the lodgment and issue of documents, the inspection of leases and other miscellaneous charges. Housing Commission tenants are being forced to shoulder an ever greater cost burden; but no-one is exempt from the clutches of this money-hungry State Government that pretends to be a low-tax Government. I remind honourable members that quarterly electricity bills are another form of indirect State Government taxation. Queensland is fast reaching the stage at which electricity will be priced out of the range of such disadvantaged groups as pensioners and those on low and fixed incomes. I know that over recent days several honourable members have received numerous telephone calls about the high cost of electricity as reflected in the electricity accounts now being received. It is becoming a very serious matter. It is certainly an imposition on people who can ill-afford to pay that amount of money. In a moment I will refer to the impact of the Government's electricity pricing policies.

I draw attention to the increase in the pay-roll tax exemption figure from \$252,000 to \$270,000, which was announced as a tax concession in the Budget papers. It should be stressed that the increase represents no increased concession at all in real terms. The stated increase only reflects the expected rate of growth in wages of 7.1 per cent.

A more appropriate initiative would have been for the Government to reduce the rate of pay-roll tax from 5 per cent. After all, that has been a National Party promise from time immemorial. It has certainly been a promise made during the last two State

election campaigns, and it is a promise that the Government has not been able to keep. The rate is still 5 per cent, and more appropriate action by this Government would have brought the Queensland Government into line with the Western Australian Labor Government, which reduced pay-roll tax from 5 per cent in the October State Budget.

As all honourable members know, pay-roll tax is a tax on employment. It is an iniquitous tax, and, if given the opportunity, the Labor Party in Queensland would reduce that tax.

I turn now to what the Queensland Government has promoted as the outstanding feature of the Budget. The Premier and Treasurer has described this as the Special Major Capital Works Program. The Opposition has shown that this program amounts to no more than a rearrangement of capital works funds and the reallocation of normal loan borrowings. The Opposition has provided details of the Queensland Budget for 1983-84 and the Estimates for 1984-85, based on the presentation of the Consolidated Revenue Fund Estimates in the Budget papers. However, the information has been adjusted to exclude identified transactions of a capital nature. The details show that there has been a reduction from \$134.5m in 1983-84 to \$129.4m in the amount allocated from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for capital works projects.

Next, a new category of Special Major Capital Works Program was created and funded to the tune of \$90m by squeezing some of the funds that had been made available for special projects, thereby wiping out altogether the payments to the Cultural Capital Development Fund. The conclusion was, and still is, that no additional expenditure has been provided for capital works. In fact, there is less expenditure capacity and no functional difference between the Special Major Capital Works Program and the previous Special Projects Fund.

The Opposition also examined the financial arrangements for the balance of the Special Major Capital Works Program, in particular the \$510m that needs to be financed off Budget through borrowing. In other words, \$510m will need to be raised through loans that will be repaid by the members of the public in Queensland, with interest.

As the Opposition has pointed out, loan-raising by the Queensland Government cannot exceed the limits that have been set by the Australian Loan Council. The \$510m of this so-called Special Major Capital Works Program will, in fact, comprise part of the normal borrowing program as approved. The \$510m is not special at all. It is merely a shift of loan funds from one construction program to another. In other words, all that the special program did was provide a notion of the projected spending on future capital works. It was packaged and presented in such a way that it gave the impression that the allocation was additional and above the norm. I repeat: it was an absolute fraud.

The Opposition has provided a detailed analysis of the Budget papers, highlighting the fraudulent way in which the so-called Special Major Capital Works Program has been presented and promoted. The Opposition's analysis has certainly drawn a response from the Government. I point out that, in factual terms, the Opposition's assessment remains completely unchallenged.

The Government has failed to provide a proper or correctly detailed break-down of how money will be expended under this so-called Special Major Capital Works Program in 1984-85. A discrepancy of \$17.5m is to be found in the Budget papers that refer to the Special Major Capital Works Program, and the Government has not yet explained the reason for that.

As I outlined in my speech in reply to the Premier and Treasurer's Budget speech, the amount allocated for the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the program this financial year is \$72.1m, but it is not adequately explained how that will be spent. Page 99 of the Estimates of Receipts and Expenditure sets out that the \$72.1m will be required for: education, an amount of \$14.9m; water resources, an amount of \$15.4m; Crown employee housing, \$4m; public buildings and other special works, \$27.8m; and roads, \$10m.

In his Budget speech the Premier and Treasurer advised the Chamber that details of the Special Major Capital Works Program and the Government's capital works proposals are set out in the separate Budget document entitled "The State Capital Works Programs" It states at the bottom of page 8—

"Anticipated 1984-85 expenditures in the various segments of the Program are included in the total projected expenditures shown under the relevant headings that follow."

In other words, \$14.9m from the special program fund is to be spent on education, \$10m is to be spent on roads, \$15.35m is to be spent on water resources and \$14.3m is to be spent on public buildings and Crown employee housing.

I draw attention to the amount of \$14.3m that is contained on page 60 of the capital works document. According to the Estimates, \$31.8m has been allocated to those categories. A \$17.5m shortfall is not accounted for in the figures available to the Opposition and the public through the Budget documents.

In his response to speeches during the Budget debate, Mr Gunn alluded to the hospitals component of the so-called Special Major Capital Works Programs and stated that the combined amount to be spent under normal and special programs in the current financial year was \$122m. But nowhere is there presented a detailed break-down of the two programs that would help establish precisely what is normal and what is meant to be special. The Opposition has repeatedly called on the Premier and Treasurer (Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen) and Mr Gunn to provide comprehensive details of the so-called special program. Today I repeat that call for comprehensive details so that we in the Opposition and the public can know what this Government is up to.

On 3 October, weeks after the Budget was delivered, Mr Gunn disclosed that \$470m would be spent on hospitals, allegedly as part of the special program, but no information was provided to substantiate his claim.

Mr Gunn: Everything is explained to you.

Mr WARBURTON: No information was given to substantiate the Minister's claim. We want it now; we do not want it next month or the month after. I am asking the Minister to provide the information that he should be providing instead of, as usual, hiding under his little bush.

The National Party State Government is under a very heavy obligation to provide a proper break-down of capital works under its supposedly special program, and the source of funding for those projects. The Opposition has established conclusively that there is nothing special about the so-called special program. As I said, it is merely a reallocation of funds normally available for capital works and a rearrangement of normal loan borrowings to finance the works involved. If the \$70m amount is correct, why was it not included in the Budget? The Budget paper that purports to contain details of this year's capital works projects makes no reference to that \$70m. I ask the Deputy Premier: Why was it that the Premier and Treasurer could not have revealed that information in his Budget speech? We know why. The Budget documents that have been presented ad infinitum by this State Government over many years are not designed to allow the Opposition and the public to know what is going on.

Why is it that the Budget papers do not contain mention of that very important matter? Is it because the Premier and Treasurer was too preoccupied trying to sell the notion of a \$600m special works boost—one that the Opposition has shown can quite properly be regarded as normal works dressed up under a fancy new title?

The State Budget was grossly deficient in the information that it provided, particularly in relation to what the Government described as its Special Major Capital Works Program. The Government has failed to verify its claim that these works are over and above what would normally be expected of it in the course of the next three years in the overall context of capital works.

The Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer has simply echoed the Premier and Treasurer's assertion that the program is completely over and above the Government's usual scale of capital works. Opposition members say that that is not so. Neither the Premier and Treasurer nor the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer has provided the information necessary to justify what has been claimed. On the other hand, members of the Opposition have demonstrated the fraudulent nature of the Government's claims relative to this program.

I refer once more to State Government fees and charges. When delivering the 1984-85 State Budget, the Premier and Treasurer did not have the guts to tell the Queensland public about the planned increases. He did not say one word in his speech about those increases, nor was any reference made to them in the full-page newspaper advertisements which appeared throughout the State and cost the tax-payers tens of thousands of dollars, and which were designed to promote the special section of the Budget. It is dishonest of the Government to suggest at any stage that the increases are automatic each year in line with the rate of inflation. The increases in Government fees and charges represent a conscious decision by the Government, with Cabinet Ministers submitting increases for their respective departments for Executive Council approval.

As usual, the public was kept in the dark until the increases were in force. When the increases took effect, they were published, as required by law, only in the seldom read Queensland Government Gazette. Some increases are in line with inflation, but I give members of the public an absolute assurance that many others are far higher. The Opposition's description of the State Budget as one of false pretences was vindicated by the increases in Government charges which were approved on the day that the Budget was brought down. Details of the increases appeared in the Government Gazette two days later. The Premier was conspicuously silent about them. In his Budget speech, the Premier said that supplementary Budget papers provided detailed information on the Government's activities. Nowhere was information to be found about increases in fees and charges, except for a summary of the amounts to be raised. That was typical of the Government's cynical and deceitful handling of financial matters affecting the Queensland public.

Surely the Opposition is not asking too much when it seeks precise details about these increases that play such an important role in the Government's revenue-raising operations. They certainly have a horrendous effect on the people of Queensland, particularly those who were unprepared for such savage increases or who are unable to meet the costs in these days of economic recession.

Members of the Opposition acknowledge that certain increases in Government fees and charges are appropriate to keep pace with cost-of-living increases. But the Government must be more open and honest about the way in which increases are approved and how they are implemented. The new fees and charges are simply listed in the Government Gazette without reference to the previous charges or the increases that have occurred.

The Queensland National Party State Government appears to be more intent on sneaking the increases through the back door than on telling the public the truth about them. At no time does it think of justifying them. The State Government's policy on taxes, fees and charges was outlined recently in this Chamber by the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer when he said that the Government's "user pays" policy was to fund capital works development "by taxing the people today". The Government is certainly living up to that policy and the tax-payers of Queensland are the poorer for it.

The State of Queensland cannot function without a large amount of Federal funding. In this financial year, the Hawke Labor Government's allocation to Queensland was a record figure. If Australia was unfortunate enough to have an alternative Government after the Federal election, I would have reservations about how this State would cope with its funding arrangements.

I will speak now about the mishmash of contradictions that the Federal Opposition describes as its economic policies. If the Liberal-National Party Coalition should form a Federal Government at the next election, Queensland's finances would be seriously affected. The Government would have difficulty meeting its commitments.

The Liberals and Nationals have promised everything to everybody. The only explanation for these rash promises is that the Federal Opposition knows that it will not be called upon to deliver them. I can only describe them as desperate promises from desperate men. The latest costing of the Federal Opposition's specific promises amounts to \$2.5 billion or \$2,500m. The less specific and more grandiose promises amount to another \$3,500m and the health promises take the total up by another \$897m. To date, the total promises amount to \$7,000m. That is the cost of the promises by the Federal Liberal/National Party coalition, which seeks to take over the reins of Federal Government.

If these promises were implemented, the Federal deficit—to which the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer referred when criticising the Hawke Government this morning—would be almost \$14,000m, which is more than double its present level. It is no wonder that Mr Howard is running round after Mr Peacock and Mr Sinclair saying that a coalition Government may not be able to implement its taxation policies and its financial policies, and that it will all depend on budgetary circumstances. That seems to be the latest phrase. Quite frankly, the Federal coalition's claims are nothing but a joke.

I have commented on Federal funding because of my concern for Queensland's finances. I am sure that honourable members would agree that Federal funding has a dramatic effect on Queensland. This year, the Hawke Labor Government has given millions upon millions of dollars to this State. However, in response to questions this morning and in his second-reading speech, Mr Gunn accused the Hawke Government of not being concerned about the national deficit.

Perhaps the Premier and Treasurer or the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer could explain to the people of Queensland how tax cuts could be implemented by a Federal coalition Government, when its promises would blow out the deficit from \$6,700m to almost \$14,000m. That needs to be explained. However, the economic expertise of Mr Gunn is open to question. If the National Party's flat rate tax proposal were implemented, most Australians would pay higher taxes. The only people who would benefit would be those in the Ministry such as Mr Gunn and politicians on high salaries. At present, a person on the average weekly wage pays \$68 per week in tax. If the National Party's flat rate tax of 20 per cent were introduced, the earner of the average weekly income would pay \$76 per week in tax. If the tax was levied at 30 per cent, he would pay \$114 per week. That is a massive increase in taxation.

The 5 per cent of people in the community who are highly paid can expect massive tax cuts at the expense of tax increases for the average Australian. That is what the famous flat tax proposition put up by the National Party is all about.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I do not want to remind the Leader of the Opposition too often that the debate must have some relevance to the State Budget. The honourable member has mentioned it, but I think that he is straying away from it. A Federal election campaign is not being run in this Chamber.

Mr WARBURTON: I take those comments on board. I think, Mr Deputy Speaker, you will agree that, as it entails thousands of millions of dollars, the funding that comes from the Federal sphere is tremendously important to the State's Budget. I am simply pointing out the problems that will face the Queensland Government if the policies enunciated by some political parties are implemented. I suggest that that is tremendously important to the matters now under debate.

Mr Fouras: If they are implemented, they will have horrendous implications for future Queensland Budgets.

Mr WARBURTON: That is correct, and that was the point I was making. That is directly relevant to the debate.

If the promises of the Liberal-National Party coalition were kept, they would lead to a massive blow-out in the deficit. That is the important point. If for some strange reason Australia had a Liberal-National Party Federal Government, the resultant massive deficit blow-out would be of tremendous importance to the State Government, which would have to address itself to the problem of reduced Federal funding in the future. The unquestionable fact is that that would lead to an explosion in interest rates and a consequent wages explosion to keep pace with inflation.

Perhaps the Deputy Premier will be able to tell the House whether he agrees explicitly with the comments of Mr Peacock, who indicated that he would destroy the prices and incomes accord. I suggest that that would have a tremendously direct effect on the Queensland Government in the future and on the State's ability to meet the cost of services.

What did the Federal Opposition Leader say in yesterday's press on the likelihood of the implementation of the promised tax concessions? He said that they may have to be postponed because of budgetary conditions. No doubt he was talking about his own proposed Budget deficit blow-out. The Federal Opposition Leader is offering every small business tax concessions of 70c per week and at the same time saying that that might have to be phased out. No wonder very few people are taking any of the other Federal Opposition claims very seriously.

Let me look at the economic recovery brought about by the policies of the present Federal Labor Government. In 1983-84 the gross profits of Australian businesses increased by \$9,500m, after having been utterly stagnant during the final two years of the previous Government. That massive profit recovery of 30 per cent, which is so important to the future of this State, was achieved, and has been preserved, by the policies of the accord, which led to the important matters of wage restraint, lower interest rates and stronger sales. The profit share of national income is now higher than at any time during the seven years of the former Liberal-National Country Party Government. In fact, what the Federal Opposition is promising is a return to the dismally unsuccessful and uncoordinated economic measures pursued for seven years by the Fraser Government—policies which plunged the nation into its worst recession since the Great Depression.

Most importantly, the Federal Opposition, under Peacock, rejects the accord with the trade union movement and plans to abandon centralised wage determination. It proposes to return to direct bargaining between individual trade unions and employers that led to the wage explosion in 1981-82.

Mr Peacock wants to do away with the industrial commissions of this country. If I put a question to the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer, he might be good enough to answer it in his reply. Does the Queensland Government agree with Mr Peacock that the industrial commissions of this country should be ravaged, that the wages and prices accord should be abolished, and that everyone should return to the days of collective bargaining and the days when the strong won and the weak lost? Is that what the Queensland Government wants? The Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer (Mr Gunn) should tell honourable members whether they are the policies that are being put forward by the Queensland Government in support of Mr Peacock's policies. I hate to think what would happen to this State if that was allowed to occur.

So there is no misrepresentation of what I am saying, I state clearly that Queensland's economic recovery is lagging behind the recovery of other States. That is borne out by any statistic to which one might like to refer. Whether it is in the area of retail sales or building approvals, the statistics are quite clear. Yesterday's revelation about the number of building approvals in Queensland rising by a little more than 6 per cent when the national average was in excess of 16 per cent proves the point.

This State's political management is stagnant. Unless there is a preparedness on the Government's part to change its course, and, as I have said on numerous occasions, take its head out of the sand, I regret to say that Queensland's economic position in relation to that of its sister States will remain as it is today.

Sitting suspended from 12.58 to 2.15 p.m.

Mr ALISON (Maryborough) (2.15 p.m.): I have great pleasure in supporting the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer in his introduction of this very important Appropriation Bill. The Federal Government plays a very important role in the finances of any State Government by providing funds, some with strings attached, others with no strings attached. Unfortunately, over the last few years, the trend has been towards more and more tied funds from the Federal Government in relation to giving the State Government a dip into the general taxation pool. That applies particularly to the present Hawke Labor Government.

Some years ago, in quite a display of openness, Mr Hawke made clear what he regarded as the role of the Federal Government in particular and the role of government generally in Australia. During the course of that speech, Mr Hawke indicated quite clearly that he saw the best government for Australia as being the Federal Government and, doing away with State Governments, what could be called local governments. Obviously, Mr Hawke and his socialist henchmen are setting out along that track. They will not admit it, but that is their intention. If the Hawke Government is returned to power on 1 December, the centralism of the socialist government will affect the finances of all the States.

In regard to the interchange of powers as it affects State Governments, I refer to the second question on the referendum that the people of Australia will be deciding on 1 December. There is no need for that question to be considered at all. Mr Hawke and his Government, in a show of magnanimity, wants to give more powers to State Government to raise funds. Of course, those of us who understand what socialism is all about realise that it is just a big con, that there is something quite devious and deceptive about it and that Mr Hawke has his eye on taking even more powers away from the States in relation to the raising of taxation in the interests of good government in the States.

I will highlight a few points in an effort to illustrate the problems that the Government of Queensland will have in regard to future Appropriation Bills should the Hawke Government be returned on 1 December. Over the last 18 months, the Hawke Government has broken more major promises than any Government in the history of Australia. The breaking of those promises highlights what the Hawke Government is all about—to hell with integrity; to hell with honesty in Government; to hell with open Government. Obviously, it is trying to destroy State Governments, largely by taking over as many powers as it can by all sorts of means. The Franklin River case is a good instance. Wherever the Federal Government can grab more fund-raising or tax-raising powers from the States, it will.

To highlight that Mr Hawke cannot be trusted to keep his promises, particularly in regard to economic matters, I refer to an article in "The Courier-Mail" of 17 February. That article says that Mr Hawke "also promised a cut in petrol prices". That is a lulu. He promised that he would "cancel the January 1 oil-price increase of \$3.23 a barrel imposed under the government's world-parity scheme—and so reduce the retail price of petrol by 3c a litre".

We all know what happened. He did the reverse. He conveniently forgot the promise. The price of petrol is now indexed at six-monthly intervals based on the Consumer Price Index. He has done the same thing with other excise. Another promise he made on economic matters was for tax cuts for lower and middle income-earners. We know what has happened to that promise. A superficial cut was made in taxation scales; but, as inflation has taken the average wage into a higher tax scale, the average wage-earner is paying \$22 a week more in tax. That is another example of Mr Hawke's duplicity.

Mr Hawke promised to lift the basic pension to 25 per cent of the average male earnings. What has been given to the elderly people of Australia? Virtually nothing. The duplicity of Mr Hawke is scandalous. He cannot be trusted. If through some unfortunate set of circumstances Mr Hawke is returned on 1 December, State Governments will be in for an even more torrid time. Quite frankly, though, I do not think he will be returned; yet again will 75 per cent of the media be proved to be wrong and have egg on their faces.

We all remember MacArthur and his Brisbane line. I suggest that we now have Hawke and the Brisbane line. He and his henchmen from down south really do not give a damn about what is happening north of the Brisbane River. They do not understand our problems, as is patently obvious from his recent statements that our cane-growers ought to be moving into small crops. That was the height of stupidity and shows just how little Mr Hawke knows about anything north of Sydney, let alone north of Brisbane. He does not understand the problems of non-metropolitan Australia.

One matter I refer to is the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. I have it on very good authority that in the last day or two a decision was made to scrap the regional TV news that is shown just prior to 7 p.m. The decision is to be implemented late in December, but Mr Hawke and his gang are trying to sit on it. As would be obvious, some staff in the ABC are not very pleased about it. Programming will be altered to provide for a new program dealing with news and current affairs from 6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. That is scandalous.

In future in Appropriation Bills I would like to see allocations enabling the State Government to offer to take over the ABC. Under the Hawke Government the ABC will not be enabled to perform its true function for people outside the capital cities, particularly in Queensland. It will withdraw into itself. ABC journalists scattered throughout Queensland will be relaying news down to Brisbane, where it will be put in a mincing machine. The only news to hit the deck will be of State significance. Regional and country news services will be thrown out the window. Mr Hawke does not give a damn. I repeat that he does not understand. I seriously suggest that the State Government consider taking over the ABC in order to provide a better service to the country people. We could also reverse the decision of the ABC management to give homosexual partners the same rights in transfers and so on as normal couples.

I turn now to employment. We are all well aware of Mr Hawke's famous statement—he has made it several times in the last week or two—that this Government has created 250 000 jobs in Australia. That statement is a load of rubbish. It is another con. It is a straight-out piece of deception. For instance, between March 1983 and September 1984—these figures are obtainable from the Australian Bureau of Statistics—employment increased by 247 500. However, if we look behind that figure, we find that between March 1983 and June 1984—the figure for the period to September would be higher still—public service employment in Australia increased by 66 700.

Over that period, the biggest increase occurred in New South Wales, where the figure was 16 000. The Commonwealth public service is the next largest, with an increase of approximately 12 000. The Western Australian socialist Government shows an increase of approximately 8 000, and so it goes on. The point I make is that the Hawke Government is not to be trusted on any matter at all, whether or not it is economic. If the Hawke Government is re-elected on 1 December, in the future appropriation of funds the Queensland Government will be faced with more problems such as are evident in the matters outlined in the Bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I remind the honourable member for Maryborough that I have previously referred to the matter of relevance in this debate. The question might arise for determination whether relevance will be observed by honourable members during this debate. Since the debate commenced, members have paid very little attention to relevance. I am afraid that I may have to determine the

question of relevance in the context of the Bill and whether the debate should be allowed to concentrate on the forthcoming Federal election.

The line will have to be drawn. I draw the attention of honourable members to the requirement of relevance, regardless of the present political climate. I want more relevance in the debate on matters that pertain to the Bill.

Mr ALISON: I thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for your guidance. I had almost concluded my comments, which I believed were pertinent to the debate.

I congratulate the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer on what has been accomplished over the last 13 months of National Party Government in Queensland. The Government of Queensland has brought good news to and has created employment for many Queenslanders. Government members can hold their heads up in terms of integrity, honesty and openness of government. However, by comparison, the Federal Government can be looked to as an example of a Government that operates along distinctly opposite lines.

With those concluding comments, once again I congratulate the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer (Mr Gunn). I look forward to more good government over the next couple of years.

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (2.28 p.m.): Nothing is presently more relevant in the State of Queensland than the financial and economic resolutions that contain virtually all the details of finance, supply, and ways and means for the ensuing 12 months, as mentioned in the remarks of the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer (Mr Gunn).

One of the relevant arguments presented this morning focused on the plight of the sugar industry and the need for funding to be directed towards that industry. I note that the Minister for Primary Industries (Mr Turner) is in the House. All honourable members would have noted the comments that have been made in recent weeks about the availability of additional funds.

From statements that have been made recently in this Assembly, it might be assumed that the allocation of funds for the sugar industry had been included in the original Budget papers. In fact, a major public relations exercise is taking place in this State. I say that it can only be regarded as a public relations exercise because the Queensland Cane Growers Council has employed a group of public relations consultants in this State to conduct a particular exercise. That exercise is an examination of a so-called movement of numbers of cane-growers throughout the State in an endeavour to stage a great political stunt in Brisbane next Thursday.

My advice to the cane-growers is that when they arrive in Brisbane by train or bus on Thursday—I do not think too many of them will be marching, as was suggested earlier in the House today—the first place they should call at is the Executive Building, 100 George Street, Brisbane, the office of the Premier and Treasurer of Queensland.

I say that because the entire growth of the sugar industry is controlled by legislation that has been carried or amended at some stage or other by this Parliament. The Government of Queensland completely controls the sugar industry in Queensland—and in Australia, for that matter. I remind honourable members that every grain of sugar that has been produced in Australia since 1915 has become the property of the Queensland Government. That is who owns the sugar—not the cane-growers, not the Australian Sugar Producers Association, not the millers, not CSR Ltd, not Pioneer Sugar Mills Ltd, and not even the co-operative mills. Every grain of sugar is the property of the Queensland Government. Therefore, the most necessary financial transaction that this State undertakes every year is the sale of the Queensland Government's sugar. Nothing could be more relevant to this debate. I hope that the Minister for Primary Industries does not intend to leave the Chamber, because I feel sure that he would like to hear the truth about a few very pertinent points that he made this morning. Unfortunately, he has now left the Chamber, so perhaps he is not too anxious to hear the truth.

When the cane-growers come to Brisbane on Thursday, one of the questions they should ask the Premier is why, only two weeks ago, he suddenly discovered that the sugar industry was facing economic problems? Members who read almost any newspaper published in Queensland will find that his comments were featured. How did the Premier discover those problems only two weeks ago when he was warned two years ago during the debate on the Sugar Acquisition Act Amendment Bill about what would happen if the Government did not start to do something about the problems in the sugar industry? Never mind trying to put all the blame on the Commonwealth Government!

The cane-growers should ask the Premier what action has Government has undertaken concerning the 20 points raised with him by the Queensland Cane Growers Council in June this year. Those points related to action that this Government could take to improve the lot of cane-growers. There have been a great many hassles and accusations about who has done this and that. The Government has done a great amount of buck-passing. The real problem confronting the cane-grower today is his lack of cash flow because the price he receives for his cane is too low. He wants to know how soon he will again enjoy a sound cash flow arrangement, or what will be done by his Government—this Government that owns all the sugar produced in Australia—to assist him through this difficult period.

I will point out one step that this Government has not taken. I could say that it has taken action, but it has done so in a very spurious sort of way. I refer to its great boast that almost two years ago it lent \$10m to the co-operative sugar-mills of Queensland. Where did that money come from? What happened to it? A study of this Government's financial reports, including the Auditor-General's report on the miscellaneous departmental accounts, which was presented to this Parliament while the Estimates were being discussed and after the Budget debate, shows that that \$10m for the co-operative sugar-mills came from none other than the Rural Reconstruction Board and the Rural Adjustment Scheme. The annual report of the Rural Reconstruction Board for the year ended 30 June 1983 states—

“The board has sufficient funds in hand to meet anticipated needs in the aftermath of drought and flood for the coming year, but its ability to fund later requirements has been impaired by State Treasury's withdrawal of \$10 million from the Board's resources, during the year under review, to fund other rural industry requirements.”

A little further on the report discloses that \$2m was taken from the Rural Adjustment Fund and paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund and that \$8m was taken from the Rural Reconstruction Fund and paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund. If the Queensland press want something to get their teeth into they should be looking at this report. Unfortunately they, like so many others in the community and in this Parliament, do not fully understand what is happening in the sugar industry at the moment. It is those people who live in the sugar areas of Queensland who do know and understand exactly what the problems are and how much worse they will become.

What happened to the \$10m that was transferred to the Consolidated Revenue Fund? The notes to the Rural Reconstruction Board's report disclose—

“Transfer of funds approved by Executive Council to enable special Treasury loans to be made available to co-operative sugar mills.”

That money surely went to the co-operative sugar mills.

Mr Menzel interjected.

Mr CASEY: The honourable member for Mulgrave said, “Don't transgress the truth.” I presume that he is making an accusation against the Rural Reconstruction Board and the Premier and Treasurer of Queensland, because I am quoting a State Government publication. Mr Deputy Speaker, with your knowledge of the sugar industry which is far greater than that of the member for Mulgrave, you would know that I am quoting the figures accurately.

The \$10m was allocated in this way—

	Mill	\$
Proserpine		2 388 000
Marian		2 191 000
Cattle Creek		788 000
South Johnstone		2 594 000
Tully		1 039 000
Babinda		1 000 000

I am not sure that the honourable member for Mulgrave was chairman of the Babinda mill at the time, but he certainly has had something to do with that mill for some years.

All of those mills are owned by Queensland cane-growers. Quite a number of cane-growers are coming by bus and train to Brisbane to find out what is happening. According to both the Queensland and Federal Governments the maximum interest charged on money going to the Rural Reconstruction Board is 8 per cent. In the past few days I have spoken to people from some of the mills who know what is happening. The Government fiddled rural reconstruction and rural adjustment money, put it into consolidated revenue, called it Treasury loan money, and lent it at 14.8 per cent, which is 6.8 per cent higher than the cost of the rural reconstruction money. But the position is even worse than that. Because of the way in which the mills are being asked to repay the money, it is an effective 15.8 per cent.

Mr Menzel interjected.

Mr CASEY: If the honourable member for Mulgrave thinks that the Babinda mill is getting the money at 8 per cent, he is being told untruths. If he checks the books of the Babinda mill he will find that an effective 15.8 per cent is being paid.

Mr MENZEL: I rise to a point of order. I did not say that the mill is paying only 8 per cent; I meant the growers.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! Will the honourable member accept the explanation?

Mr CASEY: I accept the honourable member's explanation, but he is wrong. The growers are being charged 8.5 per cent. I refer the honourable member to the Rural Reconstruction Board report, and suggest that he study it.

It seems that the Government is charging 0.5 per cent for handling the money. Although the State and Commonwealth Governments are sharing the cost, and the Queensland Government is getting the money at a maximum of 8 per cent, the Queensland Government is charging 15.8 per cent. The State Government is touching the cane-growers to the extent of 7.8 per cent. The Government is charging the growers almost twice the interest that it is paying on that money.

When the cane-growers get to Brisbane they should ask the Premier and Treasurer why he is charging them such high interest rates for money that is supposed to be used to help them over their financial problems. That is typical of actions taken by the State Government, which is hypocritical to the extreme in its actions relating to the sugar industry.

That is conclusive proof of what is happening in the sugar industry. The mills are manufacturing sugar for the Government. It is the Government's sugar, but the Government is touching the cane-growers hell, west and crooked. What sort of a Government is it? It has a colossal hide to make accusations about Commonwealth Government assistance for the sugar industry.

Mr De Lacy: They are making a profit out of the cane-growers' distress.

Mr CASEY: The Government is making use of the cane-growers' distress to make money; but that is nothing new for this Government.

One has only to consider the surplus funds that are available for the Rural Reconstruction Board and the Rural Adjustment Scheme. At the beginning of the 1983-84 financial year, \$23m was available by way of rural adjustment and rural reconstruction funds in Queensland. That money was attracting high interest on the short-term market. It should have been distributed to help growers in their serious financial plight. That is typical of the Government's actions over a long period, and such actions are now catching up with it.

Although money was not appropriated for this purpose in the first Appropriation Bill, it has been announced that a brochure is to be distributed to all cane-growers in Queensland to let them know what is happening in the sugar industry. It is a 10-fact brochure that, at the moment, is being held in secret for later distribution. The brochure points out that the State Government has generously allocated \$10m by way of special Treasury loans to six co-operative sugar-mills in Queensland. I have touched on that point and I have indicated what a farce it is. The brochure points out also that \$800,000 has been provided towards the interest component to raise the payment for the first delivery from \$160 to \$180 per tonne. That has occurred in the sugar industry for an aeon because the sugar belongs to the Queensland Government, not to the mills. I stress that it is the sugar of the Queensland Government.

The brochure is farcical. It refers to funds available under the Rural Adjustment Scheme. If one traces the records of the Rural Adjustment Scheme and the Rural Reconstruction Fund, one finds that 90 per cent of the funding for those schemes in the last few years has been from the Federal Government, not from the State Government.

Mr Menzel: Don't tell lies.

Mr CASEY: For the benefit of the honourable member for Mulgrave, I will give the total figures. Almost \$71.2m has been provided by the Commonwealth Government; \$7.8m has come direct from State funds. If the honourable member for Mulgrave does not believe me, he should do his own sums by looking through the past reports. He will learn then what has happened.

Mr Underwood: Tell us how the member for Mulgrave sent the Babinda sugar-mill broke through his leadership.

Mr CASEY: I do not want to bring personalities into the debate today. I do not want to stray from your ruling, Mr Deputy Speaker.

It is absolutely impossible for the Queensland Government to balance the figures listed in the brochure that will be put out for cane-growers in Queensland. The Government is disseminating absolute rubbish. The brochure quotes Mr Kerin as saying in March 1983 that Labor would sympathetically consider any request for an industry loan and/or an underwriting scheme. Mr Kerin has sympathetically considered such a scheme. At this stage, the scheme has been rejected, not only by Mr Kerin and Mr Hawke but also by Mr Ian Sinclair, who is the Federal leader of the National Party. In late October of this year, in Mackay, Mr Sinclair rightly stated that an underwriting scheme would be of no benefit to the Queensland sugar industry.

Who did make the promises about an underwriting scheme in the Federal election campaign? I quote the Mackay newspaper, "The Daily Mercury", of 22 February 1983 as follows—

"The Federal Government has promised to underwrite the sugar industry against unprofitable production. The promise was made by the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Anthony, when launching the National Party's election campaign at Murwillumbah yesterday."

Mr Anthony, not Mr Kerin, was the one who promised an underwriting scheme. The present leader of the National Party (Mr Sinclair) is now saying that an underwriting scheme would be of no use whatsoever to the sugar industry.

Mr Anthony also said that he would introduce a scheme consistent with the Liberal-National Party approach to the wheat, dairy, apple, pear and dried fruits industries. The dairying industry has only one-third of the producers that it had 10 years ago. All over the length and breadth of Australia the Liberal-National Country Party Government paid the producers in the apple, pear and dried fruits industries to tear their trees and vines down. That is the attitude of the National Party to the problems facing primary industries.

One of the other claims contained in the brochure is that the first Hawke Budget slashed outlays under the Rural Adjustment Scheme from \$45m to less than \$26m. That is an absolute untruth. The first Hawke Labor Government Budget increased funds in the Rural Adjustment Scheme to \$45m from the very low figure that applied before it came to office. I can tell honourable members why the 1984-85 Hawke Budget reduced moneys overall throughout Australia for the Rural Adjustment Scheme. The Queensland Government brochure states that natural disaster relief funding was drastically reduced and assistance in the promotion of exports was cut. Of course natural disaster relief funding was reduced. In his second-reading speech, the Deputy Premier quite clearly claimed that the recovery in Australia was due to the fact that the drought had broken throughout the length and breadth of Australia. Why did not the Queensland Government tell the truth and put that in this pamphlet? Why does it not tell the truth and say to cane-growers in Queensland that the reduction was due to the breaking of the drought? This is an absolutely filthy publication that is deliberately designed to mislead the people of Queensland. It is completely and utterly wrong and should be treated with the contempt it deserves.

Mr Kruger: I wonder whether the Queensland Government will list that as a campaign cost and bill the Federal Government?

Mr CASEY: One never knows what will happen with the book-keeping of the Government.

On 30 August I spoke in the Address in Reply debate and clearly went through the 20 points that the Queensland Cane Growers Council raised with the Premier at a deputation to him in June this year. It presented him with the industry's requirements. I do not see the Government acting on those points. I have not seen an introduction of special tariffs in the electricity industry, a reduction in water charges to try to reduce costs or changes in fees payable on the renewal of company names or family trusts that are used by many people in the sugar industry. They are still subject to the high charges of the Government.

This morning I heard the honourable member for Callide place on notice a question in relation to an approach by someone from overseas to buy a considerable amount of packaged white sugar from Queensland. The Sugar Board would not allow that. You, Mr Deputy Speaker, know that for years in this Chamber I have been advocating that Queensland should have moved towards the white sugar trade four years ago. That is where the European Economic Community has picked up the export markets. That is where the EEC has flogged the guts out of Queensland, if one wishes to use that expression, on the marketing side of the sugar industry. The EEC has turned to the white sugar trade, which is where the big increase in exports has been outside of the European Economic Community. The EEC has been able to sell white sugar to countries that have moved more towards that product rather than the old, tried and proven raw sugar, which is what Queensland wants to sell on the world market.

I advocate that Queensland should go further. The Queensland Government should be conducting major investment into researching other means of marketing sugar. It should develop a better product for consumer use. That is what the artificial sweetener

companies are doing, and the sugar industry is not matching them. The Government is sitting back, allowing them to waltz in and take over the sugar trade.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr CASEY: That has been the head-in-the-sand attitude that has been adopted by National Party Governments throughout this country. They almost brought the wool industry to its knees. They almost brought the beef industry to its knees. The wheat industry will suffer the same fate in the very near future unless something is done to come to grips with the industry's problems.

In 1982 in this Chamber the Sugar Acquisition Act was amended. I do not want to canvass again all the points that were made only a month or so ago. The Act was amended because——

Mr Menzel: You were not even in the Parliament.

Mr CASEY: That is correct. I was not present when the vote was taken. If honourable members want to know where I was, I point out, Mr Deputy Speaker, that you were with me on the occasion on which my home city was host for the Northern Australian Development Seminar. The Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer was also present at that seminar. If they felt that it was so important for them to be there, I certainly should have been there, too. The honourable member for Mulgrave should not canvass that matter further.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! The Chair would prefer to remain independent on that issue.

Mr CASEY: There was considerable dissent in the House about the amendments to the Sugar Acquisition Act. Late in 1982, for the first time since 1915 that the Act was really amended, a sunset clause was included. It was stated that the provisions would be met within two years. However, they were not. The promise to conduct an inquiry was not fulfilled. It was only after the four sugar industry organisations met with the Federal Minister for Primary Industry (Mr Kerin) earlier this year that the parties got together and got the sugar industry review program moving.

Some material has been published in relation to that matter. I remind the Queensland Government that it has the responsibility for the sugar industry at the moment. The material states that the Queensland Government controls production through assignments, the location of assignments and the area of assignments. In other words, it states who can grow cane, how much a grower can grow and where he can grow it. The industry is controlled completely and absolutely by the Queensland Government. Not only in Queensland, but also in New South Wales by agreement with the Commonwealth, the marketing controls, the delivery quotas and the peaks that are set for mills and farms are controlled by the Queensland Government. The whole idea behind those controls was, as far as Queensland sugar is concerned, that Queensland could have a hedge against marketing fluctuations.

The inquiry has been going on all year. What has happened to it? It is getting nowhere. The Government wants to claim that in its 10-point program it has allocated \$165,000 to help with that inquiry. The sooner the inquiry is completed, the sooner something will be done for the long-term benefit of the sugar industry. I am positive that agreement will not be reached among the parties concerned. The Government can keep putting in money, but it must also look at what it is doing for the long-term future of the industry.

The report of the review committee indicates that consideration of the inquiry report, preparations, scrutiny and enactment of appropriate legislation are to be in place for commencement of the 1987 season. If sugar prices do not improve throughout the world by the 1987 season, there will be few people within the industry. That committee of inquiry is taking too long to do its work. A judicial inquiry along the lines of the

inquiries that have been conducted in the sugar industry should have been held to get things straightened out as quickly as possible.

The Minister commenced to leave the Chamber as soon as I began my speech. He knows very little about the sugar industry.

When the Minister for Primary Industries returned from the International Sugar Agreement negotiations, he made some comments which I am sure have not been picked up by the industry as a whole. He said that negotiations had fallen down. "Now that we have no such constraint, the industry can go flat out to compete for a greater share", said Mr Turner. The answer, according to the Minister for Primary Industries, is to go flat out and produce as much sugar as possible at a time when it is already being produced at a loss; in other words, to go broke quicker. That is his answer.

Mr De Lacy: Do you think he represents the millers or the growers?

Mr CASEY: He represents the Government, and the Government represents CSR, the Bundaberg mill and the Pioneer mill. If it did not, it would be doing more for the growers. Complaints have been coming from mill areas throughout the length and breadth of Queensland.

I have from a mill suppliers committee a submission which shows clearly that growers are not getting their proper return from mill moneys: the old two-thirds to one-third division. They are just not getting it, and the Government has allowed the matter to get out of kilter in many areas.

In an article titled "Underwriting 'not suitable'", in a newspaper dated 26 October 1984, this appears—

"Underwriting is not a suitable answer to the sugar industry's problems, according to leader of the Federal National Party Mr Ian Sinclair."

Obviously he made the statement in Mackay on the 25th. Only last week in this Parliament some back-bench members of the National Party who represent sugar-producing areas were advocating an underwriting scheme. They will clutch at anything!

The Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs (Mr Katter) tried to say what the Government has and has not done for the sugar industry. When he made the statements, he did not even know where his father's electorate was. Giru, a major cane-growing area, is in his electorate.

I could go on and on, but time will not permit me to do so. Unless the Queensland Government accepts its responsibilities, the sugar industry will get nowhere.

Mr INNES (Sherwood) (2.58 p.m.): I will speak briefly in the debate on the Appropriation Bill and, because of an interest in keeping the Government accountable, I will pose specific questions to the Minister in relation to the Supplementary Estimates for unforeseen expenditure. The level of public sector growth or the level of Government expenditure is a matter of concern because it has such a great impact on the private sector in difficult times in this State.

The Government's additional charges or burdens upon the private sector are crucial to the maintenance of reasonable employment and profitability for Queensland companies. An indication of concern about the public sector can be found in broad statistics. The member for Maryborough mentioned statistics on the level of public sector growth. I will add to them.

Australian Bureau of Statistics tables on employed wage and salary-earners show that, for the nine months between July 1983 and March 1984, about 46 000 new jobs were created for Australian wage and salary-earners; and 54 per cent of those jobs were in Government. A further 26 per cent were in community service areas of the private sector. That deals with private education and health and other services heavily dependent upon Government subsidies and funding. The public component of the new job creation,

therefore, is very significant. Only 20 per cent of the new jobs were for wage and salary-earners in the private sector. That is the sector with which I am particularly concerned, because upon it depends all the wealth and the long-term ability of Government.

The honourable member for Maryborough sought to pat himself, his party and the National Party Government on the back. He congratulated his Government on its success in securing economic stability and achievement since the last election. I point out—and I suggest that the statistics bear me out and will continue to do so—that the Government has not performed as well and the economy of Queensland has not performed as well since the Liberals left Government prior to the last election.

I leave the rural sector to the special interests of the National Party and deal with the areas in which the Liberal Party has a more dominant concern—the urban areas and the small business sector. The State's mines are operating below capacity—in most cases, at something like 60 or 70 per cent. New projects have been cancelled. No major new wealth-creating projects appear to be in train at the moment. Youth employment is a matter of great concern, and apprenticeships are down in this State in almost every sector. Certainly there are fewer apprenticeships in the traditional and major trades. Most businesses that have recorded profits have done so only after retrenchments to prune their labour component to the bare bones. That is not good for the future of the State. It might be good in the short term. It is an action that is necessary if business is to accommodate a shrinkage in the economy. Since last October, Queensland's economy has not performed as well as the economies of other States.

I deal with the facets that concern me. Honourable members should review any budgetary expenditure, and on this occasion I move away from the general review of the Budget, which was made in the Estimates and Budget debates, and deal with the supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure. I ask some specific questions. For what major purposes—I do not want to know all the details—is the supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure of almost \$240,000 made for the portfolio of Industry, Small Business and Technology? What items are covered by it? I ask a similar question in relation to the Department of Transport.

Turning to the supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure from the Trust and Special Funds, I ask: How much of the \$11m allocated to the Premier's Department is for the Brisbane Exposition and South Bank Redevelopment Fund and how much is for the State Service Superannuation Fund? How much of the appropriation for the Treasury Department is for the Queensland Government Development Authority Fund and what is the purpose of that fund? Of course, I ask what the money will be spent on.

Mr Fouras: You don't expect Mr Gunn to answer this, do you?

Mr INNES: He has departmental advisers. I have no doubt that they would not put anything to him unless there was a reason that had satisfied them.

Mr Gunn: They are not like Labor.

Mr INNES: No. In the time left for the debate, I am sure that they will do their best to give us the facts.

Included in the Treasury allocation of \$149m is the Special Projects Fund. I know that that can be fairly significant. I ask: In approximate terms—I do not want it down to cents—how much is allocated to that fund, and for what projects?

For the Education Department, \$17m is appropriated for the Commonwealth Education Fund, the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Fund and the Education Department Special Standing Fund. Again, in broad terms, I ask: What are the predominant actual purposes of that appropriation?

In similar terms, I ask a question about the Lands, Forestry and Police portfolio. How much of the expenditure relates to the superannuation fund of the Queensland

Police Force? A significant amount of \$21m has been allocated, and I ask for what purposes the balance will be applied.

I refer now to the allocation for the portfolio of Local Government, Main Roads and Racing. I ask: How much of the total allocation will be expended on the construction of main roads and for what dominant purpose, and how much of it will be directed to the Racing Development Fund?

Mr SIMPSON (Coorooora) (3.6 p.m.): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill now before the House and to highlight the good husbandry that has been a feature of the Queensland Government's management of the economy. Economic management becomes more and more complex as revenue is collected from private enterprise through personal income tax and company tax.

The ability of State Governments to raise funds is restricted, and the funds that they do raise are combined with those received under the tax-sharing arrangements with the Commonwealth to provide services for the people residing in the respective States.

Government has an important role in providing services in traditional areas such as transportation, education, health, water resources, primary industries and services to small business. I wish to concentrate my remarks on the plight of small business.

The number of regulations affecting that sector of business activity is often a disadvantage because of the restrictive effect on competition with larger companies. Many large companies are able to enter into sweetheart deals with trade unions. The conditions that pertain to those deals are imposed across the board, sometimes with detrimental effect upon small businesses. Regulations tend to govern the activities of established industries in particular fields and protect the future of those industries; but the application of those regulations often makes it difficult for newly established enterprises to maintain viability. Although the need for such regulations is obvious, in some instances their continuing effect may be detrimental to small private enterprises, and thus have a bad effect on competition.

Competition is an essential element in a free enterprise system of Government. It must be remembered that the State's economy is based primarily on private enterprise, not on nationalised corporate enterprise wholly owned by the Government. Not only should that basis of activity be preserved; a similar principle should be applied to the collection of taxation revenue. Taxation should not be used as a socialistic tool by Marxists who wish to take away the wealth of those whom they consider are not entitled to be wealthy and distribute it among those who are not wealthy. Such action would be a monumental intrusion into the capacity of the system to provide profits.

In turn, taxes should be levied on a proportional basis to enable the community to be supplied with various services as determined by its elected representatives. In other words, private enterprise should be encouraged to become as profitable as possible, and taxation should be levied at a rate that will not be a disincentive to the making of a profit but will, at the same time, put into the coffers of the Government sufficient funds for the provision of essential services at the discretion of parliamentarians.

Those essential services are the traditional Commonwealth responsibilities of communications and defence. In terms of the State's responsibilities, one thinks of education, roads, health services and transportation, to which I have already referred. So this Government should be looking at the profitability of the private sector.

Only last night I attended a graduation ceremony at a TAFE college. People attend such colleges in order to gain additional skills and thus make their own business more profitable or enable their employers to make greater profits. A person spoke to me after the ceremony and said, "But our children are not meant to be out there to make profits for someone else." I said, "You missed the whole point. Private enterprise cannot employ people unless it makes a profit out of them." That is the whole basis of the private enterprise system. It has to be realised that profit is an essential part of Australia's financial system. The Marxist theory is that the system can be interfered with and that

profitable and productive people can be highly taxed and that tax can be used as a social tool to take from the haves to give to the have-nots. That theory has not worked in other parts of the world.

Although it is not taught in schools, everybody accepts the private enterprise system as the basis of the Australian economy. That is shown by the Bill now before the House. The Government appropriates profits made by private enterprise and then distributes them for the good of the people of Queensland. Our responsibility as parliamentarians has always to be looked at in those terms, that we uphold the system of private enterprise and profitability and are extremely prudent in our use of public funds. An example of that is the Government's incentive to the building industry, which is very much a barometer of the economy. The industry has been given a boost of \$600m in order to provide additional jobs. I believe that was a timely and prudent incentive.

Over \$1,000m of Budget funds will be spent directly in the education area. That is an increase of 15.7 per cent—well above the inflation rate—and a definite growth in real terms. Part of that additional expenditure has been made necessary by the higher number of students in Queensland schools as a result of increased migration to this State. It does not matter how many people criticise this Government or this State. The reality of the situation is the assessment of the people who live here. Often, exaggerated criticisms are levelled at this State, but the people will not be fooled by them. People who are dissatisfied will return to their State of origin, but that does not seem to be a common occurrence. The migration figures show that people from other States believe that this Government's attitude to private enterprise will give them an opportunity to gain those material things that they believe will provide them with a higher standard of living. Expenditure on schools needs to be looked at very carefully and a greater effort should be made to ensure that the education system provides more directly for the consumer—the employer. Students must possess skills that will bring profitability to their future employers. Likewise, tradesmen must be so trained that they can get into business. The work-places and the teaching institutions must be better integrated to ensure more efficient use of educational facilities, so that employers will profit and profits will be returned to ensure greater services within the State.

From time to time, certain industries will get into difficulties. Queensland still depends largely on its primary industries. The cane-growing industry is experiencing many difficulties. History discloses that the ups and downs in the sugar industry are cyclic. At this time it is very difficult to see a bright horizon for the sugar industry. The troubles in the sugar industry are not caused by seasonal conditions or normal supply and demand problems; they are man-made by the politicians in the European Economic Community. On my recent visit to Europe I hoped to learn that the tax-payers in Europe were sick of the escalating taxes to cover subsidies on sugar, beef and dairy products; but that was not so. I found a high acceptance of the system, to such an extent that most countries would rather be exporters of food than importers. They contrasted their present position to that in times when their primary producers were competing on world markets against imports; when EEC producers received prices so low that they could not lift capital investment or improve production methods and were therefore becoming inefficient. In these days, production in the EEC countries is up, and, thanks to an artificial home consumption price, they do not care at what price the surplus is sold on the world market. That is the basis of the problem affecting the sugar industry. Home consumption and exports in Australia are completely different from those of the EEC.

About 78 per cent of Australian sugar is exported, whereas almost the same percentage of EEC sugar is consumed domestically. The EEC countries do not care what price export sugar brings, because sugar production is still profitable. The EEC countries are unlikely to change their policy, which means that the future of the Queensland sugar industry is not rosy. However, a study of history reveals that the industry has always pulled out of the troughs. I live in hope that the sugar industry will see brighter days. The industry is very much in need of assistance, but I hope that, as in the past, it will again become a great and efficient industry for the State and nation. Because most of

the sugar industry is in Queensland, it seems that certain people tend to think that it does not need special attention. Special assistance is given to the car and steel industries. The inconsistency is very obvious to those in the sugar industry, as is the excise duty amounting to \$74m a year that is taken by the Federal Government from a section of the sugar industry.

The parliamentary support offered by the Federal Government is very disappointing for cane-growers, and I know that many cane-growers from my electorate will be in Brisbane on Thursday to attempt to speak with the Prime Minister and to voice their opinions to him.

The tourist industry shows great promise for Queensland. I would like the Premier and Treasurer to take up with the Federal Treasurer the possibility of using Community Employment Program funds to create long-term jobs rather than the temporary work-experience jobs that the program currently provides. Perhaps those funds could be converted into a promotion of Australia internationally, or further funds could be found for that purpose.

Queensland could be promoted as offering the greatest potential for the tourist industry in Australia. However, the experience of the tourist industry in Queensland is similar to that of the sugar industry. It is hard to get through to people in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne that Queensland has what international tourists are looking for. Queensland has unique fauna in pleasant, natural surroundings. It has delightful backdrops and pleasant pictorial settings. Cairns and Brisbane, at each end of the State, have international airports.

Package tours or holidays could be planned for international tourists, showing them what they want to see. Australia's natural beauty and not its cities should be promoted. I do not refer specifically to Queensland's beaches, because, although we know that they are the best in the world, it is hard to sell them to overseas tourists. They can realise their beauty only when they get here. The Great Barrier Reef is a major attraction and international tourists know much about it. It is hoped that when they visit the reef they will be able to enjoy it and that better facilities will be established in and near the reef. The natural beauty of Queensland will be the base for the tourist industry of the future, and it must be promoted. The Queensland Government has a major role to play, and the Federal Government should be convinced of the need to provide more funds to promote Australia to international tourists.

The tourist industry is labour-intensive and many jobs within the industry do not call for a great deal of skill or much training on the part of employees to attain proficiency. The lasting memory for a tourist is of someone who is polite and pleasant, and who has a friendly smile and words of encouragement. That goes a long way in the tourist industry.

I am pleased that funds are being appropriated for hospitals in Queensland. In my electorate, more beds are needed. Many patients who, because of the lack of beds, cannot be admitted to hospitals in the area, particularly the Nambour hospital, are transferred to Brisbane via a dangerous and busy section of road. Because of the state of that road, people take risks and a patient travelling to a Brisbane hospital is placed at further risk.

To collect funds prudently and to use them efficiently is the responsibility of the Government. The project management scheme in operation on a building in Nambour will save between \$8m and \$10m on a \$30m contract. That is a substantial saving on a public project, and it is worth considering. The project management scheme does have teething problems and Treasury should keep a close eye on it, as should appropriate Government departments. I refer particularly to the employment, through project managers, of subcontractors.

I should mention the subcontractor who submitted a tender for the blockwork at the Nambour Hospital. When tenders were first called, he was the only tenderer. The project management made a mistake in the calculation of the quantities of blocks needed.

Because it estimated the number of blocks needed to be much fewer than the number calculated by the only tenderer, that tender was cancelled and tenders were again called. Unfortunately that subcontractor had told several people his tender price so that, the second time around, other people tendered a slightly lower price.

Sir William Knox: Wasn't it a public tender?

Mr SIMPSON: A public tender, yes.

Sir William Knox: Everybody would know the tender price.

Mr SIMPSON: As the honourable member would know, even with a public tender, many people still do not know what the tender price is unless it is talked about.

Sir William Knox: They are opened in public and the information is published.

Mr SIMPSON: I know that.

Mr Fouras: I think there is an argument for the public tender system to be looked at and its not being used in certain cases.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Randell): Order! I suggest that the honourable member for Cooroora get on with this speech.

Mr SIMPSON: An agreement exists between the Government and the Master Builders Association that it is not good enough to ask a tenderer to submit another tender when it is thought that the first tender is not acceptable. The new tenders that were called were different. Because the quantities were incorrect in the first place, that action was certainly necessary in the case that I have mentioned. The original tenderer, who had tendered on the basis of what he considered to be the correct quantity, was not successful by a very, very small margin after tenders were recalled. He is very upset. He is a local person; the others are not. The Government should give particular consideration to that sort of thing when it is seeking the most efficient way of constructing major development works.

Funds are needed to provide sufficient police in the State. The number of police will never be enough to satisfy the need everywhere in the State, but I believe that the Sunshine Coast, with a growing population and a growing number of offences, needs more 24-hour police stations. The facilities at Noosa can meet that demand but unfortunately the station is lacking the personnel.

The Costigan report recently put Noosa in the news. The headlines proclaimed Noosa as a drug capital. The subheading called it a place for R and R. Thugs with their ill-gotten gains from the businesses that they are carrying on in places other than Noosa are coming to the Sunshine Coast for their holidays. People are reading the headlines but not all of the articles.

I admit that a man named Bull has been mentioned, and his solicitor, Mr Cartwright, who is a past president of the Noosa Heads branch of the Labor Party. Local people are naturally inclined to jump to the defence of another local who has been so accused and say what a nice guy he is. However, those matters are still to be investigated. Mr Costigan has said that it is for the Queensland Law Society to investigate the solicitor.

I repeat that Noosa Heads needs a police station that is manned 24 hours a day. That end of the Sunshine Coast has been neglected. With the technology that is now available, I am sure that criminals on that part of the coast know the location of police cars and therefore the amount of time before those cars will be able to get to that part of Noosa where they are engaging in skulduggery. More technology should be used. More police are needed to provide a 24-hour service to look after the people properly and to provide adequate law and order.

The provision of improved railway services is necessary. The highways to the Sunshine Coast are being upgraded. By Christmas next year the new alignment from

Beerburrum Creek to the Caloundra turn-off will be opened. A major sum is being expended on the Bruce Highway. Unless alternatives, such as railway services and better commuter services, are provided, the Bruce Highway will continue to be busy. Faster and better trains should be provided. Some of the carriages of the trains that operate daily on the Sunshine Coast route are 90 years old. Only last week I heard reference in this Chamber to carriages that are 60 and 70 years old. However, some of the dog-boxes provided on that service are 90 years old. There is a difference between historical significance and the comfort of passengers. Facilities, design and speed of today were not provided in the good old days. A push should be made for the electrification of the line from Brisbane to the Sunshine Coast. It is surprising how many people already commute daily from the Sunshine Coast to work in Brisbane. Compared with the service provided in other parts of the world, the railway service in Queensland has a long way to go.

In the management of the economy and in assessing priorities, greater consideration should be given to providing a better service to the people in this State. New technology should be used. Recently in Melbourne I spoke to officers of the CSIRO to try to find new jobs for Queensland, particularly in the area of technology and computers. Queensland has expertise in the sugar industry and the tropical fruit industry. The Queensland Government has an opportunity to move in and provide a service to people throughout the world, especially those in Third World countries. That would be an indication of Queensland's goodwill. The project would pay for itself as information and services were provided to overcome problems within industries.

Initially, the program needs to be spearheaded by the Government. That would not be necessary if private enterprise could do the job efficiently. That philosophy should be encouraged. As I said earlier, private enterprise must make a profit so that the functioning of this State can continue on a financially sound basis. Not one cent of funds is generated by the Government. Government is only a crude way of spending the money earned by profitable people in this State.

In turn, most of the money is collected by the Federal Government in the form of personal income tax. I continually take exception to the Australian Labor Party because it uses that collection and sees it as a Marxist tool to take from the haves and to give to the have-nots. It has a philosophy of taking from people according to their ability to pay and giving to people according to their need. That philosophy of tax collection in Australia's free enterprise system is a corruption of the taxation system. Many people in Australia do not realise that part of that philosophy is a capital gains tax and a wealth tax that that Government would introduce and talk about freely until election-time. At election-time, they suddenly try to make out that they will not do it and that they are not keen about it at all.

The Queensland Government, as part of its commitment to private enterprise and to encouraging people to be even more productive, does everything possible to enable them to retain their capital. That is why this Government abolished death duties and gift duties and why, unlike the Labor Government, it does not believe in a capital gains tax. The National Party in this State believes in smaller tax and smaller government.

Time expired.

Mr FOURAS (South Brisbane) (3.36 p.m.): Before I develop the main theme of my argument in this afternoon's debate, I will take up a couple of points made by the member for Coorooora. He made two points at the beginning of his speech and concluded with the same points, so he must feel that they are very important and are worth while repeating. He said firstly, of course, that his Government's philosophy was free enterprise. He went on to say that the tax policies of the socialists were a Marxist tool which would take from the haves and give to the have-nots. The rhetoric from members on the Government side of the Chamber is interesting. What an empty gesture it is.

Recently Mr Austin Donnelly, a noted financial adviser, wrote an article in "The Australian Financial Review" about what happens in the so-called free enterprise State

of Queensland. He said that he got out of bed one morning and decided to have a cup of coffee and a piece of toast. While boiling the water for the coffee he realised that, although Queensland has the cheapest coal in the world, the electricity charges in Brisbane are the second highest of any capital city in Australia. He wrote about putting the sugar into his coffee and how, in this so-called free enterprise society, he could not go out and grow some sugar if he wanted to. He wrote about the bread that he was going to toast, that he could not buy it at a discount price at his local supermarket. The Government talks about Queensland being a free enterprise State when those sorts of things happen!

I worked in the Department of Primary Industries and I am aware of the myriad of marketing boards in this State that tell people how much rice or wheat or No. 1 Pool sugar they can grow. They tell people when to harvest and what price they will get. So Queensland has an allowable sort of agrarian socialism. That is the sort of legislation that originated from my side of politics and was supported by those from the other side. So it suits the Government in that situation to have orderly marketing. That is fine, because it is looking after the interests of the farmer.

This so-called free enterprise Government tried to grab land from innocent people at Kangaroo Point so that, in the true private enterprise sense, the Government could pay as little as possible for it and pass it on to a developer so that that developer could develop it and market it for the maximum return. That is another example of the philosophy of this Government, which is State capitalism. The philosophy that is practised by those opposite is something between agrarian socialism and State capitalism. It is unbelievable that any Government in the history of the Australian Federation would legislate to take land from private individuals and give it to another private individual so that he could profit from it.

Another example is what is happening with "Collins Place" One of the 70 land-owners on the Expo site—Miss Bloss of "Collins Place"—says to the authority, "You are not knocking my building down. It is listed by the National Trust and you will not desecrate it in any way at all. Let me give it to you to be used at no cost for the duration of Expo so that I can have it afterwards to retain my private property." That individual right has been trampled on by the Expo legislation. let us not have any more of this nonsense about private enterprise from the member for Cooroora.

Similarly, he spoke about the Marxist tool of taxation—taking from the haves to give to the have-nots. On the other side of the House we see the principle of Robin Hood working in reverse. We will see how inconsistent the National Party is in what the Government is trying to do to the small shop-keepers and small-businessmen. By its philosophy, the National Party is really taking from the poor, through the myriad of increased charges, so that it might give stamp duty or land-tax reductions to the rich. It is absolutely appalling.

The issue I wish to raise in the debate is grocery sales or fast-food sales from petrol station outlets. Let me deal with the history of the matter. The issue was raised in "The Courier-Mail" of 12 May 1981. The major oil companies indicated that they wanted permission to sell food. We were told that that would be opposed by the State Government. The Premier said—

"It would be an unwise move that would put undue stress and strain on small business.

This is something we could not agree to, even though we appreciate that there is intensive competition in the petrol industry and the companies want to diversify."

The article continues—

"The petrol stations initially were granted rezoning applications for a specific purpose—to establish service stations, which in some cases were beside small stores."

He said that the concept of allowing open slather to service stations was totally unacceptable.

In the same article the present leader of the Liberal Party (Sir William Knox) was reported as saying that he "would ask Mr Hinze to take action to prevent the move." The Liberals are now sitting in opposition, but they and the National Party were then as one. He made the point also that the original approval for service station sites was never intended to allow them the right to compete with small business in their vicinity.

The honourable member for Surfers Paradise (Mr Borbidge) later entered the debate, assuring the Gold Coast Combined Chambers of Commerce that "the State Government was keeping a close eye on the situation" and would make sure that action was taken "to prevent oil companies turning service station sites into shopping centres." A further article referred to a statement by Sir William Knox. The headline read—

"Food sales at garages 'out' "

The honourable member for Lytton (Tom Burns), speaking for the Labor Party, agreed with them. In other words, there was political unanimity on the matter, which led to the introduction of legislation into this Assembly. In November 1981, the Government introduced the Local Government Act and Another Act Amendment Bill to preclude the combined development of service stations and convenience stores on the one site. The Bill had the support of all parties. The Minister, in his second-reading speech, had this to say—

"It provides that, notwithstanding any provision of a local authority town-planning scheme in force in an area or part of an area specified by the Governor in Council, land or any building or other structure thereon shall not be used as a service station in combination with a drive-in shopping centre, general store, local store, shop, shopping centre or store, unless the land concerned is included in the special facilities zone. The land concerned also must be designated on the appropriate scheme map with the purpose 'service station' in combination with the particular specified use.

The provisions of the Bill will not prevent the continuation of the use of land as a service station/shop where the use in question was a lawful use of the land at the commencement of the legislation."

In the debate on that Bill, the then member for Rockhampton (Mr Wright) expressed his concern that the legislation would not work and that ultimately it would be up to local authorities to do something about it. The petrol companies found a loophole. The issue has arisen because foreign-owned petrol companies were given permission by the the Federal Treasurer (Mr John Howard), within the Foreign Investment Review Board guide-lines, to bring in overseas money to compete by setting up food outlets at their service station sites. They had too many sites and wanted to do something about them. Fancy a conservative Government allowing people to bring in foreign money for that purpose!

A loophole was found, and the oil companies considered that the local authorities could be defeated. But to the credit of the Brisbane City Council—in particular, Alderman St Ledger, who has responsibilities as a member of that council—a public statement was issued on 20 October 1983—more than 12 months ago—that a company that had been engaging in these activities, an Australian subsidiary of BP Australia Ltd called Food Plus Pty Ltd, had submitted more than a dozen applications to the council over the previous two months and all of the applications had been rejected. Alderman St Ledger is quoted as saying—

" . . . the council was opposed to the selling of any sort of fast food or groceries through service stations. 'Petrol and food don't mix,' he said.

The Brisbane City Council would continue to reject the applications."

It can be seen from an article that appeared in "The Sunday Mail" last week-end that the support that had been promised by this Government in banning service station stores will not be forthcoming. The Government refuses to impose the bans.

It is amazing how, on frequent occasions, the Queensland Government will make promises when it suits it and refuses to deliver the goods. I draw the attention of honourable members to a joint statement released by the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing and the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology on 23 April 1984. The statement is worth quoting in full. It reads—

"The State Government has moved to reaffirm and strengthen its opposition to service stations in Brisbane and other areas of Queensland trading as shops and convenience stores and will legislate to outlaw the practice in specified areas."

That is a positive statement that it will take legislative action to outlaw the practice in specified areas. Next—

"State Local Government Minister, Mr Russ Hinze, and the Minister for Industry and Small Business, Mr Mike Ahern, confirmed this today.

Mr Hinze and Mr Ahern said the Government had an obligation to protect the rights of small businessmen and retail shopping outlets.

'Legislation will be prepared to amend the Local Government Act and the City of Brisbane Town Planning Act,' Mr Hinze and Mr Ahern said.

In December 1981, the State Government legislated to restrict the combined use of any land, building or other structure for the purposes of a service station/convenience store unless such lands were included in a special zone. The legislation included a provision whereby established service stations/convenience stores could continue to operate in small country towns and isolated rural areas where it was found that there was a need for such a service and that it did nothing to disadvantage existing retail outlets. Mr Hinze and Mr Ahern said attempts had been made by some oil companies to avoid the spirit and the intent of the 1981 amendments to the Local Government Act and the City of Brisbane Town Planning Act."

The press release finishes with that very firm assurance. The statement continues as follows—

"Certain provisions have been taken advantage of and as such the Government has decided to tighten existing legislation to ensure that retail shopping outlets do not suffer as a result of service station/convenience stores unfairly taking business away from them."

That was a very firm commitment given to retailers and small industry operators in Queensland on 27 April 1984.

On 10 September 1984, the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology (Mr Ahern) sent a letter, and again he stated—

"However, the extension of convenience store retailing in combination with petrol outlets has been a concept which the Government, in fact, legislated against.

It is true that one Oil Company Subsidiary has set out to exploit what it sees as ways around that legislation. My colleague, the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing, the Honourable R. J. Hinze, M.L.A., has already announced that further legislation is being prepared for presentation to Parliament in the near future—"

it should be noted that legislation will be presented in the near future and that this letter was written on 10 September 1984—

"to ensure that there will be no way in which Local Government approvals may be granted for combined petrol and convenience retail outlets in other than quite remote locations.

In the meantime, I will ensure that your viewpoint is represented to the Government in all circumstances where this question arises."

As was predicted in 1981 by Mr Wright, those people could see loopholes in the legislation. They went to the Local Government Court and won, so they now have the right to operate such stores. They have the right to raze all the old petrol stations and erect only one self-service pump as a charade to allow them to open any sort of fast food or other business.

The same Mr Ahern, who was so forthright in his promises, has been part of that monumental sell-out of small business in this State. He has been part of the monumental breaking of promises by this Government. That is nothing new for this Government. If somebody can get to the Government, it will change its mind, but that is something that will be debated later today. In a newspaper last week-end an article stated—

“Mr Ahern will meet association representatives this week to discuss the issue.”

I believe that that meeting is to take place today. Mr Ahern will get plenty of curry from those association representatives. I represent a large number of those small-businessmen and in recent days my telephone has been running hot on this issue. I believe that National Party back-benchers must know about it because I understand that they have been lobbied very strongly about it.

The article continued—

“Mr Ahern conceded yesterday that there was a ‘division of opinion’ in the Government on the matter. He was reluctant to discuss it other than to say that the Government’s general philosophy was that free enterprise should not be over regulated.”

That brings me back to the member for Cooroora and the hypocrisy of this Government using the terms “free enterprise” and “private enterprise” when it suits it but adopting all sorts of other attitudes when it sees fit.

The article continued—

“At the same time we are concerned to protect small business interests. You must remember however that there have been radical changes to the pattern of retailing with hypermarkets and convenience stores trading at all hours.”

So what is the Minister saying? Is he saying that the Government will allow hypermarkets to be established in this State without requiring the necessary economic impact studies? Is he saying that the Government has allowed the little men to be literally screwed by this Government? He is using that as a rationale for backing down. I wonder why this Government is backing down. I am aware that members of the Minister’s committee were given a junket to the south by Food Plus. They were wined and dined extensively. I hope that they could not be bought off that cheaply and easily. Or is it perhaps that the people involved have decided to make donations to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation?

It is imperative that something be done very quickly to stop in its tracks the idea of petrol companies selling food. They are the petrol companies that were allowed by the previous Treasurer (Mr Howard) to bring in foreign funds and set themselves up in competition with local retail outlets. They were permitted to do so by the Foreign Investment Review Board. Because the overseas petrol companies were all competing for a market share, they established too many petrol stations. But they were allowed to establish them only because they were supposed to sell nothing but petrol. There is no way in the world that they would have been allowed to establish those stations to compete with Australian grocery chains and fast-food outlets. It will be a shame and a disgrace if this Government does nothing about the situation that has developed, and there is no doubt that it will feel the effects at the ballot-box.

As Opposition spokesperson for small business, I am receiving a tremendous response from small-businessmen. Because they are sure that they have been sold out, they are outraged. They want to know why the National Party is selling out their interests. I want to know why there has been this monumental sell-out.

The last issue I want to discuss also fits in with the general theme of my speech. It relates to this so-called private enterprise Government's attitude to Housing Commission rents. It is behaving like a capitalist of the worst sort towards Housing Commission tenants. If a poor little pensioner who lives in a pensioner unit receives a few extra dollars in his pension cheque—

Mrs Chapman: What about the assets test?

Mr FOURAS: Those people do not have assets to worry about. They do not have \$100,000 as well as their own home. They have nothing at all. Yet every time they receive an extra couple of dollars in their pension cheques this Government behaves like the worst sort of capitalist and wants to grab that extra money.

A short time ago the single pensioner received an increase of \$3.70 but after this Government had finished he was left with 70c. The other day the single pensioner received an extra \$2.50. But this Government—the Robin Hood in reverse who takes from the have-nots and gives to the haves—again attacked them. The honourable member for Cooroora was concerned about the Marxists who want to do it the other way round. This Government is removing all sorts of taxes payable by the well off. Somebody who has a property worth \$500,000 can give it away and not pay stamp duty on the transaction. Tonight members will debate the Land Tax Act Amendment Bill, which is another move by this Government to gradually dismantle land tax—the only form of wealth tax in this State. Queenslanders pay about a third or a quarter of the tax that is paid in the other States. However, when the pensioner got two small increases, the Government left him with 70c a short time ago and 50c recently. On an objective basis, electricity tariffs have increased by so much that the pensioner is behind because of two Government rip-offs. Whenever the price of beer and a loaf of bread goes up, the pensioner's living standard declines substantially under this so-called free-enterprise Government.

It was ludicrous that the members for Cooroora and Pine Rivers should say that they are concerned about the assets test when they are concerned only about maintaining privileges for one section of society. They are not worried about the Government trampling over the rights of little people at the Expo site, Kangaroo Point, in pensioner units, and so on. Government members should be ashamed of themselves.

Hon. N. E. LEE (Yeronga) (3.56 p.m.): I enter the debate basically to talk about the prices and incomes accord that will have a marked effect on the Treasury in years to come. It is rot for the Federal Government and the unions to say that agreement has been reached on the prices and incomes accord. Today, the powerful Federal Engineers and Firemen's Association of Australia lodged a claim with employers seeking a wage increase well outside the constraints of the prices and incomes accord. It is beyond me how both Federal and State ALP members can say that the accord is working. The accord works only when the unions can get their way.

If the unions do not get their way they take action in the same way as they are marching on the Executive Building today. The prices and incomes accord is one-way traffic. The unionists are marching on the four-weeks leave issue simply because of a court order. Immediately the unions do not get their way, they take action. I can only repeat that the prices and incomes accord is one-way traffic.

As Mr Peacock said, it is about time to do away with the arbitration system and get down to job bargaining. The present system is one-sided. If the unions get an increase in salary for their members they accept it but if they get a knock-back of any kind they will not accept it, and they go on strike or take other action.

A large advertisement which is costing the tax-payers a great deal of money is totally untruthful. Reference is made in it to a tune being out of harmony, and suddenly getting into harmony when the unions and the Federal Government get together. To me, that is garbage. The prices and incomes accord works in only one way.

Mr Kaus: It is a one-way ticket.

Mr LEE: It is.

It is interesting to note how the unions and the Federal Government define the accord.

Mr Vaughan: What does FED & FA stand for?

Mr LEE: The Federal Engineers Drivers—the honourable member did not think I knew, did he—the Federal Engineers and Drivers Firemen's Association. Is the honourable member satisfied?

Mr Vaughan: You are wrong.

Mr LEE: The honourable member should know because he is well and truly steeped in unionism.

The log of claims seeks a minimum wage of \$1,000 a week for all employees. It also seeks a range of allowances, special rates and additional payments, including a minimum of \$200 a week as an industry allowance, a \$200-a-week site allowance and disability allowance, a \$100-a-week inclement weather allowance and a \$200-a-week employee-carrying-oil allowance. The poor fellows might get their hands dirty!

Mr Vaughan: Out of which jurisdiction was that log of claims served?

Mr LEE: The honourable member should keep to himself, and I will keep to myself.

The claim includes that ordinary hours to be worked will be 30 hours a week with meal breaks of not less than two hours. Three meal breaks will total six hours. It is interesting to deduct the meal breaks from the 30-hour week. The claim also seeks for all work done in recognised meal breaks to be paid at four times the ordinary rate and for such a penalty payment to continue until a meal break is taken.

Mrs Chapman: These must be the rich that Mr Davis was talking about.

Mr LEE: They could be.

This is what the unions are aiming for in the long run. I have been laughed at before by those who say that such a claim is only an ambit claim. The unions will always go two steps forward, but they will never go two steps back. They always want more.

The claim sets out that all overtime is to be paid at quadruple time and all work on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays is to be paid at quadruple time and a half, with a day in lieu for each day worked. Later I will produce figures showing how much this claim could affect the people of this State. The claim seeks eight weeks' annual leave to be paid at double rates to the employee. I do not understand why an employee who is on holidays should be paid double rates. It is bad enough that holidays attract a 17½ per cent loading.

Mr McPhie: That is why they are ruining the economy.

Mr LEE: The honourable member for Toowoomba North is absolutely correct. If claims such as this were successful, Australia would not have an economy.

Mr Vaughan: I have one question, Mr Lee: Do you believe in the arbitration commission or not?

Mr LEE: I have said that it is not worth having arbitration at the moment, because of the way that it is working. Arbitration gives unions a one-way ticket. If a decision of the commission suits the unions, they agree with it; if it does not suit them, they go on strike. It seems to me that another system will have to be brought in to make the unions adhere to decisions.

The claim seeks eight weeks' annual leave that is to be paid at double rates for the employee, who would otherwise have been paid at work, with an addition of 30 days each year paid as public holidays. That is another 30 days at double normal rates. It is very difficult to follow the figures in this claim, and honourable members may well get lost.

The claim seeks free board and an allowance of \$300 a week for employees who are required to live away from home.

Mr Vaughan: Why only \$300?

Mr LEE: The honourable member for Nudgee asks why only \$300 a week is sought. I am sure that an allowance is sought because an employee has had to leave his poor mummy; he wants \$300 a week extra for doing so. That shows the mental attitude of those seeking this claim.

If a person is looking for a job, he must go where the work is. The work does not come to him. That is what it amounts to. I have had to do that all my life and, as I tell honourable members, it does not hurt anybody.

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr LEE: I have worked a damned sight harder than the honourable member for Port Curtis, who would not know what work is. He has worked points all his life. I was going to say that he has scabbed on his mates all his life, but I had better not say that.

Mr Lickiss: He wouldn't work in an iron lung.

Mr LEE: As my colleague the honourable member for Mount Coot-tha said, the honourable member for Port Curtis would not work in an iron lung.

In summary, I will discuss how these claims would affect the Treasury. Under this claim, Queensland Railways would pay \$837m in wages this year. I ask honourable members to consider what effect such a log of claims would have on that department.

The unions in this claim want a 30-hour week with eight weeks' annual leave at double rates. They seek \$1,000 per week. They seek \$200 per week industry allowance, \$200 per week site and disability allowance and \$100 per week inclement weather allowance. It might turn cold or perhaps the air-conditioning might break down and the workers might get too hot. Whatever the reason, they want an inclement weather allowance.

The poor fellow who gets his hands dirty wants \$200 per week for carrying oils. Perhaps he might spill some on his pants or shoes, so he wants an extra \$200 per week. That gives a total of \$1,700 for a 30-hour week, which is \$57 per hour. That is the lowest amount of cash in hand that the FED & FA wants. The claimed overtime rate is quadruple that figure, which is \$238 per hour if the employees work in a meal-time or outside of ordinary time. If they work on public holidays, Saturdays or Sundays, they want quadruple time and a half, which is \$342 per hour.

Mr Vaughan: Are these your figures?

Mr LEE: They are facts.

After receiving all of that pay, they want one day in lieu for every day at which they have been paid the rate of \$342 per hour. That is the claim that that union has put to the industrial commission. How ridiculous that is! How does it think that this nation can keep working if it succumbs to any of those demands?

If these claims were to be granted, the men would be paid \$10,260 per week—that is with no extras—or \$83,520 per year.

Mrs Chapman: That is the Prime Minister's wage.

Mr LEE: He is not worth that! Be fair, he is not worth that! I should not have taken that interjection, but I did because I know he is not worth it. I know the honourable member did not mean it; she meant that he is worth about \$83 a year.

Should these men have to live away from home—away from their mummies—they want another \$300 a week or \$15,600 per annum. The poor little fellows might not be able to go home and crawl into bed with mummy for the night. Most of them do not want to go home to mummy, but a whole heap of them want \$15,600 per year to compensate for being away from home.

Another claim is for double pay while on annual leave. That is another \$8,000 per year. If all these claims were granted, the members of that union would receive \$83,520 per annum plus the living-out allowance of \$15,600 and \$8,000 for double-time while on annual leave. That is a total of \$107,120 per annum. That is what the FED & FA is claiming before the industrial commission.

The Federal Government and the ALP members in this Chamber have the audacity to say that the unions are working with the Government under the prices and incomes accord. How stupid and foolish are the people of Queensland and Australia if they are gullible enough to believe that these men should be paid \$107,120 per annum or approximately \$2,000 per week. That is absurd. I hope that some of my speech is published so that the people of Queensland will know the facts.

Mr GOSS (Salisbury) (4.10 p.m.): I rise to speak generally in relation to the administration of the Police Department. I will refer to a number of deficiencies in the administration of the Police Department and raise one particular issue. The deficiencies in the Police Department relate to a number of matters. In some areas there are severe problems of undermanning. In other areas, overtime restrictions are not only serious but in some instances also produce absurd results. The statistical information provided by the Commissioner of Police in his report is, in my view, similarly deficient. In relation to a number of crimes, particularly breaking and entering and that type of offence, the clear-up rate is so poor that it should be a matter of serious concern. However, I will deal later with those more general aspects of the department's administration.

During the last year, on a number of occasions I have had to raise matters that have involved some criticism of the department and senior officers. For my part, that has not been a happy task, but I believe that those matters must be raised in the public interest. In some of those cases, allegations of wrongdoing or of some particular act that have been made against individual officers have warranted some censure. From my involvement in those matters, from talking to police officers, and from seeing against which officers charges are levelled, I have come to the firm view that, quite clearly, the senior administrators in the police force play favourites. When it comes to that minority of police officers who stray from the centre line, clearly there are favourites—favoured police who are immune from the full force of the law—whereas others are prosecuted either because a prosecution has become inescapable by virtue of public knowledge or as sacrificial lambs as a public relations exercise to persuade a cynical public that all people who break the law are treated equally by the processes of the law.

Apart from those issues of which some members would be aware, the recent issue involving widespread allegations and public knowledge of the involvement of a police constable in a child pornography ring is the most grubby, sordid affair that has ever come to my attention and has been my sad duty to raise in this Chamber. However, in raising that issue, I would stress that the Opposition—not just myself, but a number of members—has been flooded with information and protest not only from members of the public but also from many angry police officers. Until now, the Opposition has been moved to raise this issue in general terms because of the failure of the Queensland Government and senior police to act notwithstanding complaints continuing over a period of at least two years.

Because of the current controversy in other matters that run concurrently with this issue, I stress that this is not a campaign against homosexuals, many of whom, I have

been informed by police, have been coming forward and assisting police with certain information and documentation. They, too, are outraged at the conduct of certain people who would exploit and molest children in their early teenage years. Rather is this attack on the failure of the Queensland Government and the Police Department to bring to bear the full rigour of the law against those who would exploit and molest young people in our community. Nobody—male or female, policeman or civilian, homosexual or heterosexual—should be able to behave in that way with the apparent immunity that has been extended for some years.

The Opposition and a wide cross-section of the police force and the public are disturbed that the Queensland Government and the senior administration of the police force—the Commissioner of Police—have allowed that police constable to remain in a position of the highest trust in respect of children, notwithstanding numerous complaints and widespread concern over a period of at least two years. Honourable members should observe how the Minister for Police and other Ministers choose their words carefully when responding to questions on this matter. They said that there was no evidence “that would indicate that the police officer could be charged with doing anything improper in relation to children”. They referred in particular to certain photographs that have been the subject of discussion.

The point is that the Consorting Squad raid at Christmas-time in 1982 uncovered evidence, which included photographs and index cards, and also indicated an association with one Paul Breslin. Even if that bare information did not prove the commission of a criminal offence, it clearly proved a close involvement and association by the police constable with persons who were involved in child pornography and the exploitation and sexual molestation of young people.

The point is that, notwithstanding this evidence and numerous subsequent complaints by serving police officers and members of the public, this Government and the Commissioner of Police promoted this constable into a high public profile and, as I say, a position of trust with the young people of Queensland in his role in the public relations section of the Police Department. In a situation such as this, or where criminal activity is involved, the proper thing to do would have been to undertake a serious surveillance operation in relation to this officer so that evidence could be gathered. However, because certain people were not serious about catching him, that was not done. The evidence uncovered in the Consorting Squad raid and the other complaints were not investigated seriously, because certain people were not serious about getting to the bottom of things and dealing with this man.

Frankly, I am sick and tired of the sanctimonious sermonising from this Government on moral issues. It is nothing but a public relations front, and the reality is revealed by this sordid child pornography ring which has been carried on for years. So much for the Government's cant and strutting about the Year of the Family. What about these young boys? What about the young people and their families who have been affected by the failure of this Government and the police to act for so long in this grubby, sordid affair?

The whole affair started between two and three years ago, in terms of police knowledge, and police officers tell me that they began complaining to the administration when the police constable started taking cadets and probationary officers down to Breslin's unit in Alice Street, Brisbane, where they were taken advantage of whilst under the influence of liquor, drugs, or both. Senior police officers were not interested in the complaints and did not act. They specifically declined to do so.

At Christmas 1982 the Consorting Squad raided Breslin's unit. One of the officers in that raid was Detective Sergeant Pickering. The police found this evidence, including index cards, photographs and other information, indicating the existence at least of a child pornography ring. Amongst those photos were photos of the police constable with Breslin, photos of the constable with a youth, other photos of that same youth wearing parts of the policeman's uniform, including his hat, which, as everyone knows, would disclose his number, other photos of the youth in pornographic poses with other youths,

photographs of the police officer and a SEQEB officer having exchanged uniforms and the police constable being handcuffed to a bed or couch. Perhaps it is not a criminal offence in Queensland to wear a SEQEB uniform or to pose suggestively with a police baton, or to pose in photographs with other people, but surely that evidence should have sounded warning bells for senior police officers and members of the Government. Surely that evidence, together with the knowledge that the police had about the other people involved, should have been sufficient to cause serious concern when it came to promoting this police constable to a position of trust with young people at the public relations section.

Many other complaints have been made since. Other Opposition members and I are told of 14 complaints, and I will detail some of them today. In speaking about these complaints, I have been careful not to name the constable, our informants or any of the families involved. I have been careful not only in the hope of sparing them unnecessary distress, but also in the hope that a serious and genuine investigation will be conducted into this matter. However, if the Government is not prepared to act, it will leave others, including certain police officers, with no alternative to taking the matter further.

There is the complaint of the mother who found photographs of her 15-year-old son in a pornographic pose with the police constable. This youth had, in the past, suffered certain emotional problems and was vulnerable to exploitation of this kind. Because of possible repercussions for herself and her son, this woman, who moved to Brisbane from a southern State, is now terrified to talk and afraid to come forward.

This matter was investigated by Inspector Wilson of the Internal Investigations Section of the department, who reported that there was insufficient evidence on which to lay a charge. He claimed in his report that the woman had destroyed the photograph of the constable and her son. It has been reported to the Opposition that copies of the photograph are in a safe place—in fact, in a bank safe—but why is that woman and why are other complainants now afraid to co-operate? Because they have been threatened that their sons risk prosecution for being accessories to an illegal act or with care and protection applications being made for the children to be taken into the custody of the Director of Children's Services.

Another case involves an Italian lad whose uncle lodged a complaint with the Juvenile Aid Bureau threatening that, if the police did not act, that well-known Italian family would deal with the constable in their own way. I am told that the lad was found by the constable at a half-way house run by Breslin for young people. He was another youth vulnerable to exploitation.

Another complaint was made by a Brisbane bayside doctor after his wife had found photographs of their son and the constable. Now, after having made the complaint, that family is also reluctant to come forward and take the matter further. In fact, as late as last Friday week, 9 November, the constable was still trying to contact the youth and was warned off by the doctor and his wife. On that Friday evening, when the doctor and his wife went out, the doctor was so concerned about the persistence of the constable that he contacted the Redcliffe police and asked them to keep an eye on the place. He told them that, if the constable came near the family home, the daughter of the family would contact the police. The Redcliffe police agreed to co-operate and were preparing to charge the constable with any offence that he may commit, obviously including the offence under the Invasion of Privacy Act of being unlawfully on the doctor's premises. This information in relation to the request to the Redcliffe police was conveyed to the commissioner's office, however, and as a consequence the constable was tipped off. Accordingly, he did not travel to the family's home as planned and promised, and thereby avoided prosecution.

A complaint was made by the Christian Brothers at an inner city school, who discovered a number of pupils with inexplicably large sums of money which were traced back to the police constable. Police have identified that Indooroopilly Shoppingtown was another place where youths were picked up by the constable. The pupils would be

taken to a location in New Farm where they were persuaded and paid to take part in sexual poses so that pornographic photographs could be taken. They were returned to school or to Indooroopilly Shoppingtown. The photographs were subsequently circulated by that child pornography ring.

Another disturbing aspect about the investigation carried on by the internal investigations section is the complaint in relation to the 15-year-old son of the woman who moved to Brisbane from a southern State. She made that complaint to the Clayfield Police Station. The Internal Investigations Section demanded that the file and the evidence be handed over. That was done. However, Sergeant Kenny of the Clayfield police kept a copy of the file. That copy was subsequently stolen from the Clayfield Police Station and has not been located since. How could that happen? Why did that happen?

In the early hours of 19 January, a 14-year-old youth complained to police of having been abducted, drugged and sexually assaulted. Police, I am informed, obtained a search warrant and raided premises at Dunmore Terrace, Auchenflower. Amongst other things at the premises they found a number of photograph albums—up to 10, I am told—depicting the police constable in compromising poses with youths. There should be a record of that because, according to my information, a warrant was taken out.

The matter goes further than that. Only a year ago the Government and the Commissioner of Police sponsored a commissioner's essay competition. High school students were invited to participate and submit essays. Four students were successful in winning the competition, which included as a prize a trip to Hong Kong chaperoned by a police officer. Who was the police officer selected by the commissioner? None other than the police constable who had by that time been the subject of numerous complaints and widespread concern within the ranks of his own police force! I am told that, because of the complaints and the concern, police from the Public Relations Branch itself recommended to the commissioner against the constable's being allowed to take the pupils to Hong Kong.

That report was written or endorsed by Senior Sergeant Brian Johnston, but the objection was overruled or ignored by the Commissioner of Police, and the trip was undertaken by this constable. I stress that in this particular incident no allegation has been made that any of the pupils was the subject of any interference or improper behaviour on the part of the police constable. It is important to emphasise that point because I do not want any unnecessary stress or embarrassment to be caused. The point I emphasise is that the ruling of the commissioner held fast, notwithstanding the complaint and recommendation from his own junior officers.

The commissioner now complains that this matter should not be the subject of discussion whilst an investigation is under way. As far as I am concerned, that is humbug. The commissioner conducted an investigation previously, and it was ineffectual. The matter was buried; no action was taken. The constable was not even removed from the position of trust that he occupied in the Public Relations Branch. It was only—and I repeat "only"—when this matter was revealed to the public last week that the Government and the Commissioner of Police moved. I should not use the word "moved"; they scurried to have the constable transferred from public relations duties to non-operational duties and rostered from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. and not permitted to come into contact with members of the public. In the circumstances that I have outlined, the question of the commissioner's concern is raised.

I have been informed that last week-end the constable boasted to his associates who work for a Brisbane television channel and to his friends that he has been assured that he will not be charged.

I have only praise for the rank and file officers who have quietly and confidentially investigated this matter. I refer not only to those police officers who have complained and given information to members of the Opposition, but also to those who have worked with determination and a conscientious attitude in the face of obstruction or unwillingness

to act at senior officer levels. The police officers to whom I refer have evinced an attitude of determination to pursue this matter and ensure that justice is done. As I have pointed out, this lies in contrast with the previous internal affairs investigation. I trust that the current investigation, under the direction of Inspector Wightman, will be more conscientious and successful.

I had some previous contact with Inspector Wightman when he carried out prosecutions, and I must say that I found him to be a decent and conscientious officer. However, I am informed that the rank and file officers who are investigating this matter have recently submitted several statements of complaint and tape-recordings of interviews with the constable and others to the tribunal that is considering these internal affairs, and I trust that that material will be acted upon.

I am informed that the material forms a sufficient basis of evidence upon which charges could be laid and justified, so a court should decide this matter. I ask the Government to allow the normal processes of law to apply. The investigation, the charge and the hearing should be followed by either an acquittal or a conviction.

I do not suggest that the Government or the commissioner endorse or condone the exploitation of children or the proliferation of child pornography. The problem that I have outlined has clearly been a difficult and embarrassing one over the past two years. It has gone on for two years too long. The duty of the Minister and the commissioner is not to avoid embarrassment for the Police Department and the Government. On the contrary, their duty is to act to enforce the law.

By ignoring the problem and manifesting inactivity, they have betrayed the trust of the community. They have let the community and Queensland families down very badly, and it is time that they accounted for themselves. The Minister and the commissioner have admitted that the activities of this police constable have been known for over two years. I call on the Minister to make a full statement to the House tomorrow on the extent of the knowledge and the evidence. The guilty secret is out. How does the Government explain itself? How does the Government explain this inactivity and, most importantly, what is the Government going to do about it?

In the "Telegraph" yesterday, a number of comments appeared that I would like to quote. Firstly, the editorial takes up the worrying aspects, not the least of which is that the Minister (Mr Glasson) has had to appeal publicly for information, instead of taking the more usual course of instituting a police investigation. Too often during the past year, when complaints have been made about the police or the Police Department, the response from the commissioner, senior officers or the Minister himself has been the same. They say, "produce the evidence." They said that in relation to allegations that the Opposition made about drug trafficking on the Sunshine Coast. It is their job to produce the evidence. It is their job to carry out the necessary surveillance and investigation and produce the goods. The allegations that were made in regard to the Sunshine Coast were borne out by the Costigan inquiry.

The editorial says also that—

"The Minister should not be embroiled in a political row, but apparently people with information have despaired of obtaining action in any other way."

I endorse wholeheartedly the final paragraph—

"But this matter is so serious, and the area involved so sensitive, that had the slightest flicker of information reached officialdom's ears, action should surely have been instigated."

As I said, the Opposition has been flooded with information and protests, not just from members of the public but from serving police officers. Members of the Opposition have endeavoured, as far as possible, to separate the scuttlebut from the fact, the vicious rumour from the reliable evidence and, as I said, we have been careful to raise those issues in general terms so as not to cause unnecessary distress and so as not to prejudice

an investigation. But it has been necessary to do so to get action, and it is unfortunate—it is disgraceful—that we have had to take this step to get some official action.

Let me assure honourable members that some highly embarrassing and damaging allegations, involving some prominent people in the community, have been made to me and to other members of the Opposition. We have not raised them. We have put them to one side because there is not yet any reliable confirmation of those allegations. But, in my view, the Government needs to act to clear up the matter so that those people who should be charged are charged, and so that other people who, wrongly, have been the subject of vicious and unfounded rumour are not embarrassed by revelations in this place. Embarrassment can easily result when inactivity continues. When matters continue to be covered up they tend eventually to burst forth and a great many people are hurt and embarrassed.

As to the more general aspects of the administration and budget of the Police Department—as all honourable members know, and as the member for Cooroora said, there are serious problems involving undermanning in the Police Department. The Minister himself took a submission to Cabinet asking for an additional 500 or so police but was given only 100. Obviously, on the commissioner's own figures, the strength of the force is at least 400 police down. One area in which that causes a particular problem is the Gold Coast, where the police to population ratio is about one to 700. It is in fact worse than that, because of population surges during the tourist season and because itinerant people cause particular problems to police.

The honourable member for Cooroora referred to the Sunshine Coast, where there is a ratio of police to population of about 1 to 900. No wonder there are problems in that area. No wonder that the police, doing their best in their conscientious fashion, will not be able to get on top of serious crime.

In Logan city the ratio is 1 to 3 000. There is not even a police station in Capalaba, despite 20 years of promises. The clean-up rate for breaking and entering offences in that area is about 7 per cent. In other words, one would have to be a fairly clumsy burglar to be caught.

Similar serious problems are evident also in places such as Hervey Bay and Townsville. In Townsville, for example, with a population of nearly 110 000, there are no specialised detective squads. A number of police are on general duties. There is a serious drug problem in the north, but there is no Drug Squad in Townsville, nor is there a Break and Enter Squad. There is the Arson Squad, but it is hopelessly undermanned. I am not the only one who says that; the commissioner said so just two weeks ago. There are absurd overtime restrictions and, as a result, police officers half-way through a job are told to return to the station and sign off. In the early hours of the morning, police officers responding to a call for assistance and travelling to the job are being told to go back to the station and sign off because they will incur overtime and the budget does not provide for it.

When the Government convinces the criminal element that it should stick to a nine to five roster, it can then ask the police to do the same. The police are being prevented from doing the job that they want to do by Budget restrictions and by a Government that talks big about law and order and talks big about being tough on criminals but does not deliver. The Government's proposed drug legislation is typical of its approach.

Mr Menzel interjected.

Mr GOSS: We hear all the huff and puff from the northern crazies about getting tough on drug offenders by giving them compulsory life sentences. But having an Act of Parliament is a hollow gesture when the big drug-pushers are not caught.

In the statistics provided to Parliament in the annual report of the Police Department, honourable members are glowingly told that Queensland has a 51 per cent clean-up rate one of the best in Australia, in the western world or in the universe. That is typical of the public relations drivel that tries to make things appear better than they are. The fact

is that loaded into the statistics are huge numbers of drug offences and drink-driving offences—disproportionately large numbers when compared with other offences. The very nature of the drug offences and drink-driving offences means that there will always be virtually a 100 per cent clean-up rate. By that means, the Government is able to disguise the truth and distract attention from the fact that, at best, the clean-up rate for breaking and entering offences varies between 7 per cent and 25 per cent. Only the dumbest, clumsiest burglars in Queensland are caught.

In cases of breaking and entering, for which there is a very poor clean-up rate, people see the somewhat impressive example of the finger-print section occasionally coming to take many finger-prints. If they knew that the finger-prints were taken back to the police station and filed away without being checked, they would realise that the taking of finger-prints is a PR exercise to distract them from the real problems that exist in the police force.

Those problems go on and on—undermanning; overtime restrictions on the few police officers that we have; and difficulties confronting the forensic section and the Arson Squad. The police even have problems in getting enough blue lights for all the police cars. The police aircraft have been taken away from police officers who learnt to fly in their own time. They have become part of the Premier's private air-force to be used by Ministers to attend a fete at the black stump, or to be used at Cairns to ferry people to the Governor's ball and back. Because of a commitment to the Governor's ball, the aircraft were not available to fly police to remote areas of north Queensland to find drug plantations.

That is a good example of the Government's priorities. It is concerned with the appearance of action rather than the reality of action. Whether they relate to the broad administration of the department, to the broad aspect of funding, or to the individual case of a police constable, there are serious, deep-rooted problems in the department. Appropriate action and complete overhaul are long overdue.

Mr JENNINGS (Southport) (4.39 p.m.): It gives me pleasure to take part in the debate on the second Appropriation Bill. In doing so, I am impelled to comment on some of the matters raised by the honourable member for Salisbury in relation to the police portfolio. I note that the honourable member has left the Chamber, but I will still comment on them.

When members of Parliament are appointed, they all swear an oath of office. If any information comes into a member's hands, whether he be on the Opposition side or on the Government side, that he knows to be dishonest, he should keep in mind that a Minister of the Crown is also under an oath to make sure that everything happens as it should. The oath of office relates to what is right and what is wrong. The honourable member for Salisbury said that this and that information had come into the Opposition's hands.

Mr Vaughan: It has come into the hands of the police.

Mr JENNINGS: That may be so; but the honourable member heard the Minister—and rightly so—ask for the information. If the honourable member for Salisbury has information, why cannot he go to the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police?

Mr Vaughan: The Minister might not have the information, but the commissioner has it.

Mr JENNINGS: Whether we belong to the Liberal Party, the Labor Party or the National Party, we are all members of Parliament and we all swear the same oath of office.

Mr Vaughan: Get to the point.

Mr JENNINGS: I am getting to the point.

Honourable members, including the member for Salisbury, swear the same oath of office. The Minister responsible for Police asked the honourable member for Salisbury to provide that information. I know the Minister. If the honourable member approached the Minister and said, "Bill, can I see you privately?", Bill would say, "Yes." The honourable member should give any information that he has to the Minister. Is he genuinely trying to help to clean up society and restore law and order?

The honourable member described a trip to Hong Kong of some boys with a policeman. He said that nothing wrong had happened and that he was not insinuating anything, but he did state that the boys went to Hong Kong with a policeman. That is what he said.

Mr Palaszczuk: No, he didn't.

Mr JENNINGS: He did. It was very wrong of him to make that insinuation. It is one of the most despicable things that I have heard a member of Parliament say. It is all right for members of the Opposition, but the parents of those children would not be happy with the insinuation by the member for Salisbury that there was something wrong with that trip. That was the insinuation made by him. He will not disagree with that, because that is what he said. He said that there was nothing wrong.

Mr GOSS: I rise to a point of order.

Mr JENNINGS: I expected this. Opposition members can give it, but they can't take it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! I ask the honourable member for Salisbury to state his point of order.

Mr GOSS: I have been misrepresented. I would not have risen to a point of order had the honourable member for Southport not stated that I would not disagree with him. I did not say what he alleges. What I did say was that the Commissioner of Police had overruled the recommendations of his department in relation to that police officer going on that trip.

Mr JENNINGS: The honourable member for Salisbury can say what he likes, but I will read his party's policy to him. A Labor Government will give equal rights to homosexual couples in terms of State taxation, probate benefits, ownership and transfer of property, pensions, superannuation and other fiscal benefits. It is interesting to note that AIDS is not mentioned. That is a very serious issue. Members of the Labor Party, especially the member for Salisbury, should be ashamed of themselves. The honourable member made an insinuation about a police officer and a group of boys on a trip to Hong Kong.

The Labor Party's policy states also that a Labor Government will secure the immediate release from detention of all people held under antihomosexual laws and ensure that all fines be refunded to them and to others previously prosecuted under such law. Opposition members must live with that policy and stand by it. They should not raise matters in this place. They are a bunch of hypocrites. They took the oath, and if the member for Salisbury has some background information on police matters, it is his obligation, under his oath of office, to go to the Minister privately and give him that information. That is his obligation.

Mr GOSS: I rise to a further point of order.

Mr JENNINGS: Here we go again!

Mr GOSS: I resent the suggestion that I withheld material from the Minister for Police. I inform the honourable member for Southport, so that he is not misled, that I have been to see the Minister for Police and have told him about that information.

Mr JENNINGS: As the member for Salisbury said in his speech, it is not the job of honourable members to investigate; it is the job of the Police Department to investigate. All honourable members know that. Everyone in this country has a job to do and an obligation to play his role.

Earlier this year, the honourable member for Salisbury and other Opposition members went on about Detective Sergeant Dickson.

Mr Vaughan: You are getting off the track.

Mr JENNINGS: No, I am not getting off the track. The honourable member for Nudgee should listen to what I say.

Members of the Opposition spoke about Detective Sergeant Dickson and tried to make out that the Police Minister did something wrong and was covering up. However, Opposition members did not say anything much about the police union. That union told Detective Sergeant Dickson to get over to Townsville and do the job that he should be doing. Opposition members know that that is so.

Mr Davis: Hamer got rid of you.

Mr JENNINGS: Well, Opposition members made great capital out of that. They also made capital out of the Southport RSL. According to the Opposition's Police spokesman, it was supposed to be crooked. All honourable members know that everyone in Southport is decent, but the honourable member for Salisbury suggested that the Southport RSL was crooked. He had to swallow those words, because there was not one grain of truth in what he said. He spoke also about Rooklyn and many others, and he damaged the reputation of many people unnecessarily and wrongly. I mention that because the honourable member always speaks about information that has come into his hands and says that he has heard this and that.

Because the member for Salisbury has big ears, I will bet that he has heard many things. People know that if they go along to him, he will give them a hearing. He absorbs everything that is told to him and it comes out in the Parliament, not outside. He is an absorber, a sponge. He absorbs it outside and uses it in the Chamber and unnecessarily damages the reputations of many people. I say on behalf of every member on this side of the House that we are absolutely 100 per cent opposed to corruption and dishonesty of any sort.

Mr Prest: As long as you can get a quid out of it.

Mr JENNINGS: I suppose I have to accept that interjection from the member for Port Curtis, as he knows what that is all about. That sort of thing does not happen on this side of the Chamber.

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr JENNINGS: If that is the caper of the honourable member and he is involved——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! I will not allow the cross-firing to continue. I suggest to the honourable member for Southport that he address the Chair and I ask the member for Port Curtis to settle down.

Mr JENNINGS: If that is what the member for Port Curtis is involved in, that is his way of life; it is not mine and it is not the way of life of other members on this side. I suppose we on this side have to live with a few of them on the other side of the Chamber.

Members opposite have tried to raise a number of issues that are not based on fact. They have made insinuations. Once and for all I challenge the member for Salisbury to go along to the Minister for Police privately and present his information. If he does not get action then, we will all be worried.

Mr Milliner: Tell us about Hamer.

Mr JENNINGS: I will tell the honourable member about him later on, because the Victorian colleagues of the honourable member covered up for him. The honourable member's mob did that. They are the greatest cover-up merchants ever. What is more, they were paid for it.

Last year power was forced upon the National Party in Queensland. Its members had to take the reins. They had no alternative. They had to take the reins to ensure that Queensland kept going in the direction in which it has been going for the last 26 years.

Mr Comben: 27, actually.

Mr JENNINGS: Obviously the member for Windsor has a great deal of intelligence. He has been studying the National Party very closely. He is trying to learn something.

Power was forced upon the National Party. Everyone knows that fellows from the back-bench of the party—most of them had come out of the bush—went straight into Cabinet. They went straight into big offices to look after large departments with annual expenditures of millions of dollars. They had to organise, control and spend in the best interests of the public, which is exactly what they have done. That is exactly what this Appropriation Bill is all about.

Honourable members must appreciate that now is the first time since 1955 that Australia has had five Labor Governments. The problems connected with that fact are beginning to surface. It is the first time since 1947 that a Federal Labor Government has enjoyed having a majority of Labor States.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr JENNINGS: There are two sides in Canberra—the Federal Government and the Prime Minister. They are two completely different entities. The nation has a song and dance act on one side and a ruthless organiser on the other side, and there is something missing in the middle. I am sure that everyone knows that the Prime Minister is good at making expedient statements. I am yet to hear a statement of his basic beliefs, although he has said that Australia should be a republic, should change its flag and abolish State Parliaments.

Mr Henderson: He believes in Bob Hawke.

Mr JENNINGS: The other thing he believes in, as the member for Mount Gravatt has just said, is Bob Hawke.

The Prime Minister will not divulge whether his Government intends to introduce a capital gains tax. He will not say anything about a wealth tax or a property tax. He has said, "We will have a tax summit." He has no preconceived ideas because he has no basic beliefs.

Australia is not a developed country in the true sense of the word. Many areas of this country still need to be developed. The way in which people should be encouraged to risk their capital in the vast inland areas of natural grazing and grain lands, and in the mining areas, is to tell them that they can go out there, work hard, plough all their profits into their ventures and, if they sell to larger companies, they will not be taxed. If there are more share-holders in those projects, more people will be taking the risk. That is what this country is all about.

Small business grows into big business. Australia has about 730 000 small businesses. Those businesses growing into big businesses will make this country. A capital gains tax is the most foolish thing that we have ever thought of in this country. There is a method in the taxation laws of taxing capital gains in the short-term.

Mr Menzel: We won't be introducing it; Hawke will be.

Mr JENNINGS: I was referring to the position Australia-wide.

Honourable members should not have any preconceived ideas about a capital gains tax. That would be a killer for incentives in this country. Incentives, not the crazy suggestion about the FED & FA made by the member for Yeronga, are needed more than anything else. He referred to some frightening suggestions, including the payment of \$1,000 a week, \$200 a week for allowances, and so on. That is what is killing this country.

I remember when in 1981 some Federal politicians referred to a \$32 billion mining boom. However, what happened? By June, the mining federation came out with the same sort of caper—\$1,000 a week, quadruple overtime and 25 weeks' annual leave. What did the Japanese and other countries buying Queensland coal do? They were not stupid. They immediately looked for other sources of supply. Australia is living with that today.

Earlier, reference was made to the retrenchment of miners in New South Wales. Australia has outpriced itself on the world market because it is stupid. Australians should be paid on results. Many unions do not like incentive payments. In spite of what Norm Gallagher and others have said, a strike has not occurred in the housing industry since 1952 because the unions cannot pull the workers out. They all work as individuals. The subcontract carpenters, electricians and plumbers work by themselves. They make their feelings known to the union organisers. They do not go out on strike because they are paid on results. If they work six days a week, they receive more.

Before the last election, the Prime Minister said that a tax would not be imposed on wine. A wine tax has been imposed. That is how far the Prime Minister can be trusted. In no way would he touch superannuation! He is certainly reliable. It is funny that there is now a 30 per cent tax on lump sum superannuation.

Mr Alison: He is going to increase the price of petrol.

Mr JENNINGS: The honourable member is correct. I thought that the price of petrol was being reduced by 3c a litre. That is funny because it has gone up! The Prime Minister handles the mob behind him very well.

The assets test is an absolute disaster. It is a disgrace that any Government would introduce an assets test. I will cite one example. I know an old couple who have been farm-workers for many years. In 1935 the husband bought six half-acre blocks of land for £350. He is now over 70 years of age. When he dies, he wants to leave those blocks of land to his six children. He has been a very good father. Because he owns those six blocks of land, his pension will be slashed. That man has been frugal. Throughout his life he has built up that asset that he bought many years ago. That poor fellow's pension will be slashed. He has been a hard worker throughout his life. He has never been involved in business and he has never made a capital gain. He was frugal enough to purchase those blocks of land in 1935. At the age of 75, he will be strangled. That is a disgrace.

Mr Menzel: A shame.

Mr JENNINGS: As the honourable member for Mulgrave says, it is a shame. That is a disgrace for anyone who lives in this country.

Mr Borbidge: The Labor Party's silence is deafening.

Mr JENNINGS: Of course Opposition members are silent. They are as embarrassed as their colleagues in Canberra.

Not one Opposition member will say that he supports the assets test. Who supports the assets test?

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr Borbidge: Name them.

Mr JENNINGS: The Member for Nudgee was about to leave the Chamber, but he has decided to remain because he might get picked.

Many other things are wrong. No doubt, many people forget. Senator Gareth Evans talks about a Bill of Rights. I reminded honourable members of the Ivanov/Combe affair. I do not care what people think about Combe or Ivanov, but I remember the Hope royal commission and the secret telephone conversations. Combe's telephone was tapped. After the royal commission, Gareth Evans released the conversations to the public. Any Tom, Dick or Harry could have telephoned David Combe and the conversation could have been exposed to the public. Gareth Evans talks about a Bill of Rights!

A State Labor Government will encourage and co-operate with the Federal Labor Party to insert a Bill of Rights into the Australian Constitution, thereby ensuring citizens' individual rights and making them enforceable through ordinary courts of law. In the absence of a Federal Labor Government—and that is not far away, so the State Labor Government had better get it in quick—the State Labor Governments will act to have a Bill of Rights entrenched in the States' constitutional framework. Such a Bill of Rights will guarantee the basic right of freedom of speech, freedom of movement and freedom of sexuality, including AIDS. The Opposition cannot argue about that.

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. That last comment, associating members on this side of the House with AIDS, is disgusting. It is the most contemptible comment that I have heard in this Assembly and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! The honourable member for Brisbane Central has said that the words are offensive to him and he asks that they be withdrawn.

Mr JENNINGS: I will withdraw anything that the member for Brisbane Central wants withdrawn. It does not worry me one iota.

The Opposition should publicly state that it will withdraw its policy on homosexuality. Members opposite should get their leader to make a personal explanation and say that because of the problem of AIDS the Labor Party will alter its policy and will cut out giving equal rights to homosexual couples. That is the Labor Party's policy. No-one can deny that. Do members opposite want me to give them an agenda item for tomorrow's caucus meeting? There is no argument that, if they are fair dinkum, members of the Labor Party ought to deny it in the House. The acid is right on every one of them. They ought to convince their leader to make a statement about the matter tomorrow.

Mr Milliner: Do you support Sinclair 100 per cent?

Mr JENNINGS: It is all very well to say that. Opposition members should get their act into gear. Their policy is black and white. If they are fair dinkum, they will have it as an agenda item at their caucus and get their leader to make a statement on it in the House. We will be waiting for it with bated breath. I am sure that they will be given the time. We are a democratic Government.

A problem in Canberra that I am very concerned about relates to the High Court. Quite obviously, everyone is very concerned about the seriousness of the matter. I have heard on the grapevine that the Prime Minister is saying, "We cannot cover Lionel Murphy any longer." It is shocking when any doubt is cast on the highest court in the land. Integrity has been one of the greatest attributes of this country. When the Petrov papers were released after 30 years, it was said, "This will prove that Menzies was a conspirator." What did they prove? They proved that everything was absolutely honest.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr JENNINGS: The Labor Opposition is prickly on this one. The matter was handled with complete impartiality.

The High Court should be absolutely above reproach. It may be an embarrassment to members opposite that a High Court judge who was formerly a Federal Labor Minister is involved, but something should be done.

Queensland has done a tremendous amount for Aboriginal land rights. Much discussion has been held about the subject.

Mr Scott: You have been pretty slack on your side. You haven't even implemented it in Queensland yet. How long ago did it go through the House?

Mr JENNINGS: Aboriginal land rights can be great for the future of Australia or disastrous if handled as it is by the Federal Minister.

Mr Scott: Tell us what the State Government is doing. You are part of it.

Mr JENNINGS: First things first. I will tell the member what the Aborigines wanted. As he knows, we held meetings in all the Aboriginal reserves, whether in the Torres Strait or elsewhere in Queensland. I have here a handwritten document—beautifully handwritten—of what was agreed to by a meeting at Yarrabah, attended by various groups from Cape York—

“That this meeting expresses its support for the principle of individual private property ownership of house and land blocks within the reserve area. Applications for the allocation of these areas are to be determined by the council. For Rural lands outside the town areas other than house blocks the Councils will be authorised to arrange leasehold conditions for the development and use of such land subject to a review of this policy in 5 years by the Government and the Councils; and also subject to the provision of town common areas and lands required for public purposes.”

That was moved, seconded and signed.

Mr Scott: So you are going to change the deed of grant again, are you?

Mr JENNINGS: No. The member for Cook has said that we did not consult them. That document should be enshrined. It was handwritten on the day.

I have another one, which was done at Hope Vale—

“The elected representatives of the Aboriginal reserves representing the wishes of the majority of the people living on these reserves call for the provision and establishment of selfmanagement of the reserve in accordance with similar and existing local government principles throughout Queensland bearing in mind that detailed administrative arrangements will be under the specific control of the individual council. This meeting acknowledges the possible need to retain the expertise at present provided by D.A.I.A. personnel for a maximum period of 3 years, or longer if specifically requested by the councils until sufficient reserve residents are appropriately trained.”

That was their resolution. That is what they agreed to. It is not what we forced on them.

Mr Scott: You haven't even implemented the regulations under the Act yet.

Mr JENNINGS: That is all right. This has been going on for years. The allegation was that we did not consult the people. We consulted them and we did the right thing.

One of the most important aspects of Government policy—it is above all else—is the security of our nation. What did the Federal Labor Government in Canberra do over HMS Invincible, a British ship? Australia fought many wars alongside Britain—

An Opposition Member: The Boer War certainly.

Mr Comben: The only “Boer” around here is the boredom you are producing.

Mr JENNINGS: It may be boredom for the member for Windsor; but what happened when the aircraft carrier *Invincible*, which fought in the Falklands war, came to Sydney for maintenance? The crew was told, "Beat it." The Federal Government in Canberra said, "Beat it, because you might have a bomb on board!" Members of the Opposition cannot argue about that. HMS *Invincible* limped along to Singapore. Members of the crew had been responsible for the defence of Singapore and had assisted the Australian defence forces in warding off an invasion. The Federal Government in Canberra would not allow HMS *Invincible* to dock for maintenance to be carried out. What a disgrace! I ask Opposition members whether they agree with that.

Mr Davis: Why is the National Party in favour of conscription?

Mr JENNINGS: As a matter of fact, for the information of the honourable member for Brisbane Central, I point out that every chap I have met who has undertaken national service training—and I point out also that I enlisted in the Citizen Military Forces in the '50s and undertook training for four years—has described their training as the best experience in their lives.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr JENNINGS: In Australia, people are living in a fool's paradise in terms of defence. Every nation in Europe, including Switzerland, has programs for training young people to defend their countries. I am in absolute agreement with that concept. All young people should be trained in defence.

I learned how to write a letter when I was a member of the armed forces, and there are many other attributes of life in the defence forces that have merit. A training period in one of the defence forces can be the best education that a country such as Australia can offer.

I turn to the question of unemployment. I urge upon all honourable members consideration of the concept of a zone with a 50-mile or possibly a 25-mile radius extending from the central business district of Surfers Paradise. The concept would provide that a job could be obtained by anyone who presented for work within that zone for double the amount of unemployment benefit that would be paid. In other words, no unemployment benefit would be paid as of right, and job-seekers in that zone could approach employment opportunities on the basis that they could get a job and receive double the dole. That is a way to improve the unemployment situation in this country. Jobs should be provided within that 25-mile radius and anyone would be eligible to apply.

The problem with such a concept is that trade union officials would not agree to its implementation. The reason for so much unemployment in this country is that the relative cost of employing a young person is very close to the cost of employing an artisan or tradesman. Employers therefore prefer skilled workers.

I turn to the Foreign Investment Review Board. In my opinion, every possible dollar of foreign investment should be attracted to this country. For honourable members of the Labor Opposition, it is very fortunate that the drought broke and that economic circumstances have favoured their Federal counterparts. However, I point out that the Government of Queensland is the envy of every other State in Australia, and there is no doubt about that.

The Government of Queensland is characterised by stability of leadership. No backstabbing will be found in the National Party. There are no factions, such as the left wing, right wing and middle wing groups that exist in the Labor Party. Honourable members of the Opposition know that—

Mr Milliner: What about the honourable member for Callide?

Mr JENNINGS: The honourable member for Callide does not constitute a wing; he is a feather on the brain.

I congratulate the Premier and Treasurer, and every other Minister. They are all doing a fantastic job. The Ministers were plucked from the back bench and they are doing an excellent job. Honourable members of the Opposition know that, too. I feel sorry for the Opposition.

Time expired.

Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (5.9 p.m.): I take great pleasure in participating in the debate this afternoon. I have listened to the honourable member for Southport, and I wish to have it placed on record that it is a policy of the National Party of Australia to support conscription. The honourable member was ably supported by other members of the Government.

Amazing speeches have been presented in this House this afternoon but they are amazing in different ways. I was impressed by the speech made by the honourable member for Salisbury (Mr Goss), which demonstrated his concern for the acts of indecency that are occurring in Queensland. By his ridiculing the honourable member for Salisbury, the honourable member for Southport gives support for pornography and unnatural sexual relations, and I think that that conduct belittles the honourable member for Southport. People, not only honourable members, who do not believe in pornography and unnatural sexual relations would totally support the action taken by the honourable member for Salisbury. I give him my whole-hearted support, and that of my constituents.

The honourable member for Southport ridiculed the member for Salisbury. I know why—because the Gold Coast is the growth area for pornographic material in this State, and it is obvious from his speech that he wants the source of supply maintained because people on the coast are making a great deal of money out of peddling pornographic material. It is obvious that they have the ear of the member for Southport, and that is why he spoke in the tone he did.

I am very concerned about the contents of the Budget. For a long time Queenslanders have been told that everything in the garden is rosy, but it is obvious that it is not. One of the State's major problems is unemployment, and the Budget does nothing at all to relieve it. A number of schemes have been proposed to solve the problem.

The Special Major Capital Works Program will involve the expenditure of many millions of dollars, but it will be spread over a number of years. From time to time I hear about the wonderful increase in Queensland's economic growth rate. I refer to a press article of Saturday, 3 November, headed "Queensland lags in economic recovery". The article attributed that comment to none other than the general manager of the Queensland Confederation of Industry Limited, Mr Bruce Siebenhausen. It stated—

"Queensland's economy has worsened in the last three months and little improvement is expected in the next six months.

The Queensland Confederation of Industry says its latest quarterly survey of private sector performance indicates a deterioration in economic activity during the three months to September compared with the June results."

So the economy is getting worse.

The same sort of sentiments were expressed by the Premier and Treasurer when he wrote to me on 30 October 1984 in response to a letter that I wrote to him in September about a promise that was made, amid great publicity for this Government, in relation to a \$50m infrastructure program. The Co-ordinator-General and the Under Treasurer, who had visited Gladstone to assess the infrastructure situation, submitted a report on the matter to Cabinet. A subsequent letter to the Gladstone City Council stated—

"I now have pleasure in advising that on the recommendation of the Honourable the Premier and myself, Cabinet has approved a special \$50 million infrastructure program for the Gladstone area over the next five years. The program consists of the following works—

	\$m
Gladstone/Benaraby Road	
Main Roads Department \$2 million, Hooker, Comalco & Gladstone City Council \$6 million	8.00
Schools—T.A.F.E.	6.7
Pre-Schools	0.8
Primary Schools	3.3
Secondary Schools	<u>7.2</u>
	18.00
New Hospital	10.00
Police Station	45
Government Office Block	1.00
Community health Unit	1.30
70 Public Service & Teacher Houses	3.50
Land Administration Commission	
New residential land	1.50
Gladstone City Council Works	
Roadworks, sewerage and Administration Building	5.00
Calliope Shire Council Works	
Beach facilities and roadworks	1.25
	<u>\$50.00</u>

I wrote and asked the Premier what had happened to that money because I thought that, if all that money had been spent in Queensland, some employment opportunities must have been created. Unfortunately, not all of the money that was promised has come to light and what money has been spent has, I am certain, been part of the usual capital works program.

The letter stated that Queensland has not developed as expected, and in reply to my question about what had happened to the money, it stated—

“However, the decline in the population growth rate in the Gladstone area, from the high level of 1981, has meant that the growth in demand for land, housing and other services has been lower than anticipated at the time the program was drawn up. For this reason, the Government, while ensuring that the backlog of services has been overcome, has tailored the provision of new services to the growth in demand for such services. The major variations in the implementation of the program, which have occurred as a result of this reduced growth rate ”

Prior to the election and following the election, many promises were made about the multimillion-dollar companies that were coming to the area. I am certain that the money that has not been spent will come to the fore in the 1986 election year.

In 1981, the Premier said that \$8m had to be spent on the Gladstone-Benaraby road. So far, \$2,281,200 has been spent. The Premier told us about an amount of \$3,555,200 that had been spent, which makes a total of \$5,836,400, but the \$3,555,200 was contributed by Comalco and the Federal Government. The \$3,555,200 must be taken from the \$5.8m. It is therefore obvious that very little came from the State Government. Only \$2,281,200 of the promised \$8m was provided.

As to the Government's promise of \$18m for schools, five new pre-schools were built at a cost of \$701,000. The sum of \$3,122,000 was spent on primary schools and a further \$60,001 is to be spent in 1984-85, making a total of \$3,182,000. On secondary schools a sum of \$2,189,000 has been spent and a further program costing \$562,000 is to be undertaken in 1984-85, making a total of \$2,751,000. A sum of \$2,711,000 has been spent on a TAFE college, with a further \$3m to be spent in 1984-85, making a total of \$5,711,000. Of the \$10m to be spent on hospitals, \$6,779,600 has been spent,

with an estimated expenditure of \$281,000 in 1984-85. The sum of \$572,000 has been spent on police stations.

On Government offices, the sum of \$1,244,000 has been spent, but in 1984-85, 1985-86, and 1986-87 a further sum of \$34,000 will be spent on additional Government offices. A motor vehicle inspection centre is to cost \$650,000; a court house \$2,530,000 giving a total of \$5,418,000. To date, a sum of \$1,104,000 has been spent on a community health centre and a further \$30,000 is to be spent in 1984-85 making a total of \$1,290,000.

On Crown employee housing a total of \$3.5m was to be spent. To date, a total of \$1,619,000 has been spent. A further sum of \$160,000 is to be spent in 1984-85. On residential housing, \$436,900 has been spent.

The Gladstone City Council is to get a concessional loan of \$5m and the Calliope shire is to get one of \$1,250,000, making a total of \$6.25m.

Of the total of the \$50m assistance to be given to Gladstone city in 1981, a total of \$28,875,700 has been spent.

For 1984-85, 1985-86 and 1986-87, Gladstone has been promised the sum of \$7,307,000. That makes an overall total of \$36,182,700. Of that figure, \$436,900 was for urban Crown land development and would have been returned through proceeds from the sale of land.

The \$6.25m loan to the Gladstone and Calliope local authorities will be repaid in full plus interest over a 10-year period. Even without the funds that will be returned to the Government, the sum of \$13,817,300 is still to be allocated. A total of \$28,875,700 has been spent, but the money still to be spent amounts to \$21,125,300. Approximately 42.25 per cent of that money has not been spent, budgeted or allocated. I am not saying that the money should have been spent on projects that would have become white elephants, or on unnecessary facilities. However, the Premier or the Minister for Works and Housing could have made a further allocation to the provision of welfare housing in my area.

As I was told recently, 117 people are living in accommodation that is unsuitable. First-class accommodation is needed for those people. They are on a waiting-list at the Housing Commission. However, many other people who seek to apply to the Housing Commission are deterred from doing so because of the long waiting-list. They are told that they will have to wait too long for housing and that they should not bother applying.

If the Government were to make houses available, such houses would be fully occupied at all times. The Government would also be creating employment within the building industry. From that major allocation to which I have referred previously, the Government bought fully occupied units through a real estate agent who had property to flog. By buying those units, the Government put 11 families out and put 11 in. Nothing was achieved in relation to accommodation. Because the Government did not build 11 units, it did not create employment in the building industry.

Plenty of money is left out of the \$50m provided for improving the infrastructure of schools. The Boyne Island school and the Tannum Sands school could use additional funds. A tuck-shop and a library could be built at Boyne Island school. The school at Tannum Sands, which is now in its second or third year of operation, does not have a playground. The Government has a responsibility to the children who attend those schools to provide the necessary facilities and amenities. It is not only the children who are in need. The members of the p. and c. associations, who work in a voluntary capacity, would also appreciate additional funds. A pre-school is needed at Mount Larcom. I am certain that that would not be a waste of money.

I turn now to roads. Of the \$8m that was allocated for roads in my area, just over \$2m was spent. It would be a great asset to the area if money was spent on the road

between Gladstone and Mount Larcom through Yarwun. In fact, it would be a life-saving decision. An article entitled "Road deaths escalate in Gladstone area", which appeared on 10 November 1984 in a local paper, stated—

"Gladstone district's road toll is already two higher than the total for last year.

Eleven people have died so far this year in single vehicle smashes and collisions, including one double fatality."

Any money that is spent to improve the trouble-spots and to alleviate the dangers on our roads is well spent. No price can be placed on a life.

In 1982, the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing (Mr Russ Hinze) said that action would be taken to have the Gladstone to Mount Larcom road completed or at least started by 1984. Time has nearly run out and nothing has been done. In case the Minister does not know where the money can be found to construct that road, I remind him that, in 1981, \$5.5m was allocated for roads. The Government received much publicity over that allocation, and that money is still held by the Treasury for roadworks.

Because this year the Federal Labor Government has injected a major increase of funds in Queensland, I would like to see more money spent on roads in Queensland. The State is getting money through the usual channels as well as through the Australian Bicentennial Road Development Program.

Even though it is not in my electorate, I am very concerned about the road between Miriam Vale and Seventeen Seventy. All honourable members would know that Seventeen Seventy is a very significant place in Queensland; it was the landing place of Captain Cook. That road, which is in the electorate of the Minister for Works and Housing (Mr Wharton), is in a terrible condition. The Miriam Vale Shire Council has approached the Government. I told that council that I would do my utmost to have money made available to upgrade that section of road. What better bicentennial project could there be than upgrading the road that takes tourists and other visitors to Seventeen Seventy! If funding from the Australian Bicentennial Road Development Program cannot be made available, a grant should be made from the Community Employment Program so that people can be employed on the improvement of sections of that road, even if not the full 66 km of which the local authority is responsible for 58 km and the Main Roads Department for 8 km. Let money be made available to improve the flood-prone sections of the road.

Far too many road accidents and road fatalities are occurring south of Miriam Vale. Once again, that is in the electorate of the Minister for Works and Housing. Far too many accidents occur between Miriam Vale and Gin Gin. I give credit to the Minister for Main Roads for spending a considerable amount of money on the Bruce Highway in that area, but something must be wrong. A record of every accident should be kept so that if accidents occur repeatedly on one section of road, it can be signalled as a danger spot. The departments could then ascertain why accidents are happening on those sections of road.

The Railway Department has now left the deficit side of the ledger and is making a profit. Since 1974 the Gladstone branch of the Queensland Railway Institute has been trying to get its own clubhouse on land made available to it. After 10 years the members of the institute have saved about \$70,000. No consideration has been given to it by the Minister for Transport. Now that the Minister for Transport and the Commissioner for Railways are cutting out as much overtime as possible and thus giving railway workers more time for recreation, I ask them to give consideration to providing some assistance to the members of the institute.

Productivity in the railway system in Queensland has increased beyond all expectations. Forty years ago, when I was in the Railway Department, trains with three-man crews pulled between 250 tons and 600 tons, and they were considered to be big trains. Today

the Government is insistent on reducing train crews from three to two. At present three-man crews are in charge of trains that are pulling not 600 tons but in the vicinity of 8 000 tonnes. If that is not a productivity gain, I know nothing.

If there is any industry that has increased productivity beyond all expectation, it is the transport industry, particularly the railway industry. I give great credit to railwaymen who work long hours in all conditions. The Minister spent a considerable sum of money on the provision of facilities for train crews at the Jilalan depot or one of the other coal-mining depots. At the major depot at Gladstone, the Queensland Railway Institute has been requesting recreation facilities for more than 10 years. Now that the Railway Department is making profits because it has reduced overtime and train crews, the Minister should come to the party and provide the facilities so that the men can enjoy their increased recreational periods.

In April 1982, because of his generosity towards the racing industry, the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing promised that he would make available to the Gladstone Turf Club a considerable amount of money, namely \$1.7m, to upgrade Ferguson Park. Honourable members know what has happened within the industry since that time. Many smaller clubs in National Party electorates that do not race as often as Gladstone, which has 60 meetings a year, have been provided with first-class amenities for the enjoyment of the racing fraternity. I ask the Minister to honour the promise that he made in 1982 and make that money available without delay. He said that he has plenty of money in kitty and that he will put more money into the Racing Development Fund. On many occasions he has said that he never breaks a promise. He might not break a promise; on this occasion I ask him to keep one.

As I said, it has given me pleasure to be able to ask the Government to spend money to create employment. The Opposition does not believe that the money spent under the Community Employment Program will be of long-term benefit. However, the Opposition believes that the money being made available to local authorities and to sporting organisations throughout Queensland is bringing great benefit to the community and to local authorities.

I know that the Commonwealth Government has spent more than \$1m of CEP money in my electorate. A request has been made to the CEP committee for an additional \$1.7m. The money provided by the Federal Government is virtually free money; it is not costing the rate-payers anything. It is providing services that have not been programmed because of their cost. However, as a result of the Community Employment Program, those services are now being provided. Untidy areas are being cleaned up and amenities are being provided. If the Federal Government can do it, the State Government can do it.

An enormous amount is provided in the Queensland Budget for special capital works. The Government should not sit back and wait until next year or the year after to spend the money. The money should be spent now to provide some hope of employment.

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer) (5.35 p.m.), in reply: I have listened with interest to the contributions made by honourable members to the debate on the Appropriation Bill. I have taken the liberty of accepting that the honourable the Leader of the Opposition speaks on behalf of the Opposition and therefore have framed my comments accordingly.

I must say how disappointed I was to hear the Leader of the Opposition go over the same old hoary ground that he covered in his reply to the Budget speech delivered by the Honourable the Premier and Treasurer. I would have thought that all those points he raised then and again now had been fully covered in my Budget debate reply. I can only assume that the Leader of the Opposition does not understand financial matters or does not want to.

Let me deal with the Government's \$600m Special Major Capital Works Program, with which he dealt for some time. I repeat the comments that I made on a previous occasion that, no matter what the Opposition might claim, the \$600m Special Major Capital Works Program is additional to the Government's usual Capital Works Program.

To take one example, education: The normal State-funded capital works expenditure program for education in 1983-84 totalled \$62.9m. For 1984-85, the comparable figure is expected to be \$68m, an increase of 8 per cent. The program will at least be maintained in real terms in future years.

The \$100m provided for education under the Special Major Capital Works Program is additional to this \$68m. The Government does not seem to be able to get the Leader of the Opposition to understand that.

The Leader of the Opposition asked for full details to be supplied in regard to this program. I draw his attention again to the Honourable the Premier and Treasurer's Budget speech and also to pages 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the Budget document "The State Capital Works Programs 1984-85", where full details of the Special Major Capital Works Program are provided. Apparently the Leader of the Opposition is the only person who does not understand that.

Again, the Opposition has raised the question of balanced Budgets. I do not want to take up the time of this House in explaining yet again the position in this matter.

The simple fact is that the Consolidated Revenue Fund, Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund are collectively in balance and, in fact, in substantial credit. Today, the honourable the Leader of the Opposition, by his own definition of public accounts, intimated that we must look at not only the Consolidated Revenue Fund but the Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund as well. I have finally pinned him on his definition.

Let us look at these funds individually and collectively. The Consolidated Revenue Fund since 1859 till 30 June last is in credit for \$924,000. The Trust and Special Funds are in substantial credit and the Loan Fund has a credit balance of \$61,000.

The State's financial position is healthy. It is certainly not in deficit.

The State does borrow to fund capital works and it is simply a matter of definition that the Australian Bureau of Statistics describes borrowings as if these represent a deficit in Budget operations.

Again, the simple fact is that this State is moving ahead. It needs capital works and social infrastructure to meet the needs of development as well as needs of the community. These capital works are largely self-financing, as I pointed out to the House in my speech.

The impact on the Queensland tax-payer, other than the very many benefits he derives from these capital works, is minimal in terms of cost.

Members of the Opposition are jealous of this Government's record of sound economic and financial management, and so is every other State. They can see the shortcomings of their colleagues in the Federal sphere and in other States. They simply refuse to accept the facts that are presented to them.

If I can give just one more example. Tax relief can be implemented without increasing Budget deficits. It can be implemented if Federal Governments are prepared to run trim, taut ships as we do in Queensland.

We must ensure that people are taxed to the minimum extent possible and that maximum benefits are provided from that taxation. Yet, concurrently we must balance the Budget.

The Opposition talks about this Government's increasing taxes and charges. I draw attention to the Federal Government and the increases in sales tax, excise duties, etc., which it has been responsible for and which, in some cases, are now indexed automatically. Everybody knows about fuel costs.

The honourable member for Mackay raised the matter of assistance to the sugar industry. The Government has acted quickly and sympathetically to provide assistance to producers. It provided a total of \$25m in the past three years, and it would provide more if the Commonwealth Government would come to the party.

The honourable member for Sherwood raised the matter of explanations for unforeseen expenditure. I simply draw his attention to the Auditor-General's Report, wherein full explanations are provided.

We have heard from the champions of morals in this State. The honourable member for Salisbury dwelt on the subject of homosexuals. I will read the policy of the Labor Party in that area. It says—

“Give equal rights to homosexual couples in terms of State taxation probate benefits, ownership and transfer of property, pensions, superannuation and other fiscal benefits.

Immediately release from detention all held under anti-homosexual laws, and ensure that all fines be refunded to them and others previously prosecuted under such laws.

Legislate to remove criminal sanctions against homosexual acts between consenting adults in private in line with A.L.P. philosophy that it is improper for the State to intrude into the privacy of the individual.”

The Labor Party has now become the homo party.

In conclusion, I must say that the people of Queensland undoubtedly support this Government's record of sound economic and financial management. I again assure the House that these principles will continue in regard to expenditures provided for in this Bill.

Motion (Mr Gunn) agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 5, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Gunn, read a third time.

Sitting suspended from 5.44 to 7.15 p.m.

THORNESIDE-CLEVELAND RAILWAY EXTENSION

Initiation

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport): I move—

“That Mr Speaker do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolution—

‘That the House approves of the working plan, section and book of reference for construction of the proposed extension of the railway from Thorneside to Cleveland.’ ”

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (7.15 p.m.): I move—

“That the House approves of the working plan, section and book of reference for construction of the proposed extension of the railway from Thorneside to Cleveland.”

The progressive electrification of the Brisbane suburban railway system has catered to definite and predictable residential growth areas. This certainly applies to the proposed extension of the railway from Thorneside to Cleveland. It will provide fast, efficient and cheap commuter access to Brisbane for residents of the Redland shire.

There is no doubt, as honourable members would be aware, that a substantial outward expansion of the Brisbane residential area has occurred. The residential area of Redland shire on either side of the proposed electrification expansion to Cleveland constitutes a rapidly-growing corridor that has made, and will continue to make, heavy demands on public transport. It includes not only large-scale urban development but also some rural development.

As such areas develop, the residents, quite rightly, demand improved access to public transport.

The Queensland Government's record stands alone in railway development in this country. Electrification of suburban lines and associated works, when completed, will cost more than \$380m.

The official opening of the extended electrification to Beenleigh from Kingston took place on 3 November this year, and the section from Petrie to Caboolture is due to be opened in 1986. That is all part of the Queensland Government's commitment to providing an efficient service where it is needed.

The extension of 9.26 km now proposed will be constructed initially as a single track, with provision for future duplication. It will begin at the Thorneside station and proceed east, generally following the route of the former Cleveland railway to Wellington Point. It will then proceed on a south-easterly direction for a kilometre before rejoining the former Cleveland railway and terminating adjacent to the site of the original Raby Bay station. It will be necessary for stations with ticket, car-park and bus-interchange facilities to be provided initially at Birkdale and Wellington Point and later at Ormiston and Cleveland.

The estimated cost of the proposed extension is \$12.041m for Stage 1 and \$8.571m for Stage 2.

There can be no doubt that the Brisbane suburban electrification scheme has been enormously successful. Patronage since the introduction of the first electric cars has increased overall by almost 40 per cent. I know that the provision of fast electric trains from Thorneside to Cleveland will increase that patronage.

The Queensland Government recognises the benefits to be obtained from its continuing commitment to rail development. Those benefits are not measured only in terms of the number of passengers using trains; they are reflected in employment opportunities and in savings in other areas, such as reduction in the number of motor vehicles that are on the State's roads and highways.

I commend the proposal to the Committee.

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (7.19 p.m.): The Opposition supports the Brisbane railway system. At the outset, I remind both the Minister and honourable members, as well as the people of Queensland, that what the Government has really done for the south-east corner of Queensland is put railway electrification 25 years behind. It was because of the decision of a former National-Liberal Government that work was stopped when that Government was elected in 1957. I will continue to remind the people of Queensland of that.

The Government's public relations machinery tries to assert that the electric trains that operate in Queensland are the most modern in the world. However, that is far from the truth. In many respects, they are well below the standard of trains that have been introduced in other countries, and well below the standard of similar trains in other States in Australia. It is unfortunate that most Queenslanders have not travelled on other

railway systems. They do not realise the big difference between the standards that exist in other States and other countries and the standards that exist in Queensland.

My initial remarks regarding the delay caused by this Government to the electrification of the rail system apply even more directly to the Thorneside to Cleveland extension, because it was this Government, not long after it took office, that pulled up that railway line. I well remember some years ago paying a visit to the area with the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who is also very interested in rail matters, and having a look at what had been done. Fortunately, the shire council retained ownership of most of the land, consequently not many resumptions will be necessary in order to rebuild the line. Nonetheless, substantial costs will be incurred in carrying out the necessary works.

I was heartened to hear that the original plans provide for the extensive use of grade separation on this line, which will mean greater safety as far as major intersections are concerned. Safety is something about which all members should be very concerned. On far too many occasions one picks up a morning newspaper and reads that a motor vehicle or a child on a bicycle has been hit by a train on a level crossing. On the last occasion a railway proposal was discussed, I raised the need for this Government to allocate more funds to providing signals on railway level crossings and, where possible, providing more grade separation in order to overcome the dangerous problem.

The Thorneside to Cleveland extension is, in many respects, similar to the other railway proposals that the Government has under way at the moment, that is, the reconstruction of the railway line from Beenleigh through to the Gold Coast. Everybody knows that the Government recently called tenders for a joint, co-ordinated bus/rail service from Brisbane to the Gold Coast, which is a step in the right direction. But again the Government is only reinstating a service that existed 20-odd years ago. Such a service should never have been taken away from the people of the Gold Coast, and, although a move is now being made to reinstate the service, it will be a few more years before those people have the opportunity to travel to Brisbane on an electrified rail service.

I am afraid that the honourable member for Redcliffe, who is not in the Chamber, has missed out altogether on the lucky dip. I wonder whether a bit of spite is involved. If so, that is unfortunate, because the people who are really suffering are the residents of the Redcliffe peninsula, who are being denied the benefit of a rail service. If, as now appears to be the case following the introduction of the Urban Public Passenger Transport Bill, Roma Street Station is to become the hub of all rail services in the south-east corner of the State, the Redcliffe peninsula will be the only major population centre within a reasonable distance of Brisbane that will not be serviced by a good, fast electrified rail service.

It seems that the planning for the new railway extension envisages trains travelling at only the same speed as they travel in the inner-city area. That is rather a pity. The preliminary announcements made by the Minister in relation to the Gold Coast line indicate that much the same speeds are planned, and that is also a pity because there would appear to be an opportunity to provide at least a 100 km/h service from the Gold Coast to Brisbane. At this stage I suggest that the Minister should scrap some of the ideas he obviously has so far as that line is concerned. He should rethink his approach and provide for much faster trains than are presently envisaged. It is a long distance, and the trend throughout Australia and, indeed, throughout the world is for far faster trains than are presently in service.

I was very interested to read a publication from the United Kingdom about what has happened in London. It explained that the old Tilbury docks area is being converted for use by light industry and commerce, and new docks have been relocated further down the Thames River for container shipping. The rail authority is constructing a line to be used by an almost automatic service on a regular basis. It will be a cheap, cost-effective means of transport for the people who work and carry on business in the area.

Railways should provide good, fast, efficient and comfortable rail cars and give people ample opportunity to travel to and from an area. That is the way to win people back to rail travel in Queensland.

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (7.26 p.m.): It is always interesting when railway extension proposals come before the Chamber. Opposition members might prefer to call the proposed extension of the railway from Thorneside to Cleveland the "Benefit to John Goleby Proposal." The last railway extension to Thorneside was completed shortly before the State election so that the momentous opening could be performed by the Premier. At the time, the Transport Minister and many other members of Parliament attended the bun-fight and said what a great job they had done. The completion of the Wellington Point section will probably mean an opening ceremony at both stations and, no doubt, will be timed nicely for the 1986 State election. Following that, if the same member represents the area, the opening ceremony for the final section will take place in 1989.

Mr Prest: I do not think this Government plans so far ahead.

Mr DAVIS: It plans so far ahead if it benefits Government members.

The National Party Government is very keen on criticising other political parties for not keeping promises. The honourable member for Mackay spoke about the breaking of the promise about the railway line to Redcliffe. The reason for that may be that the member for Redcliffe had problems with the National Party.

Mr Menzel interjected.

Mr DAVIS: I am raising a pertinent matter. I remind the honourable member of what the Government did to prop up a candidate for a by-election shortly before 1980. Since then, very little work has been done on that proposal.

The Government has broken faith with the electors and the many people who have worked so hard to get a railway line to the Redcliffe peninsula. It is all very well for the Minister to get square with the member for Redcliffe, but the people of the Redcliffe peninsula deserve a much better deal.

It is good that Central Railway Station has been refurbished after so many years of neglect by the Railway Department. It is interesting that the Minister announced in a press release that the Roma Street proposal will be undertaken by private developers. Because of the way that the Government operates, it is natural that the redevelopment be done privately.

Brunswick Street Railway Station, which is in the electorate of the Minister for Transport, should be updated. When former Treasurer Chalk announced that the SGIO would redevelop Brunswick Street Railway Station, he promised the electorate that escalators would be provided. No station in Brisbane has more steps than Brunswick Street.

Mr Lane: It has the worst access.

Mr DAVIS: Yes, it has more steps and a very steep ramp. That is another broken promise; it is a quinella of broken promises.

The Government made four promises, and it has kept only one, which is the extension of the railway line from Cleveland. That promise was not made before the election, anyway. Some honourable members would recall the Wilbur Smith transport survey. One proposal from that survey was for a ring line round Brisbane that would come over the river, do a circle of the city and connect with ferries and Parliament House. It was estimated that it would carry 250 000 passengers. That proposal was put into the too-hard basket.

As the Opposition spokesman on Transport (the member for Mackay) said, the Government's transport policy is piecemeal. Its electrification policy has been presented

in bits and pieces, and that was the nature of transport policies of former National/Liberal Governments. The policy of the present Government is not exciting. A line from Cleveland round to Beenleigh should also be planned. That is the sort of imaginative policy that the Government should implement. Ring lines should be created round the city.

Mr Lane: It is a very good electorate.

Mr DAVIS: Yes, it is a very good electorate, but it is badly represented. The member for Beenleigh—Albert——

Mr Burns: I can't remember his electorate, either.

Mr DAVIS: I have forgotten who it is because he is so inconspicuous in this Chamber. The unknown member for Albert should come up with some ideas that would shed light on the very poor transport policy of the Government.

The Opposition supports the extension of the line. It has been proposed to prop up the ailing member for that area. If the Government does not prop him up, the electors will ensure that he is not propped up for much longer.

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (7.34 p.m.): The Opposition always welcomes new railway lines and new extensions to lines because they mean more work and more progress. As has been mentioned, it was a pity that the lines in this area were pulled up in 1960. That was probably one of the most expensive decisions that any Government has made in this State.

Tribute should be paid to Jack Duggan. I understand that he is not very well at present and is in frail health. When he was the Minister responsible for railways, he displayed great foresight and spent much money on surveys for the possible electrification of the metropolitan area. I think that he was Minister when the proposal was put forward that Brisbane's railway system could be electrified for less than £5m in cold hard cash. Work was started at Redbank and at Northgate. I can remember the big sheds at Northgate and also the railway platforms that were altered in preparation for electrification. Jack Duggan should be remembered for his contribution.

Because railway extensions are major items in the expansion and development of the State, they are debated in this place. A need exists for a plan for new rail services or new types of rail services in the metropolitan area. The Government should be stating what it will do in the future; it should also learn from the mistakes of the past.

In my area a massive problem has developed over the siting of the Acacia Ridge-port railway system. I can remember Clem Jones and others fighting years ago over a transportation corridor that was put on the town plan. It was at the instigation of the member for Mansfield and others, who were upset that some land would be frozen, that it was decided to exclude those lines from the town plan. In the long term the decision to take those lines off the map has caused more trouble than if they had been left on.

Mr Lane: They were different lines.

Mr BURNS: If that is the case, I apologise.

The Government ought to be planning railway lines to Mount Gravatt and Inala and it should be planning whether they should be monorail or underground. The Government ought to be looking for corridors because there has to be some form of rapid public transport in the future.

Mr Lane: Fisherman Islands.

Mr BURNS: I am just about to talk about that. I have asked the Minister in this place and I challenged him during the last two election campaigns about the program for the main line extension to the port at Fisherman Islands. However, he has never

answered me. A fellow by the name of Goebel, who used to be on the Minister's staff, was a candidate for the electorate of Mansfield. He ran round talking about all the traffic problems that would be caused by the roadworks associated with the Gateway Bridge. He did not say anything at all about a railway line. He kept right out of the argument.

The people in that area could have been told prior to the last election that their homes would be affected. Since then many people have built lovely homes in those areas thinking that they were building in an area of peace and quiet, when all along the Minister and his department knew that a proposal would be put to the Federal Government seeking \$38m or \$40m to build a railway line.

Mr Lane: You said a minute ago that we should lay down these corridors. Now you are complaining about them.

Mr BURNS: No. What I am saying quite truthfully is that the Minister did not tell the people at the time. He knew what the Government was doing. Surveyors were working in the area. They were drinking in the pubs and drawing lines on plans for the local people, but the department would not give the answers. Even now, if the right bloke in the department is rung he will tell a person whether his home will be affected, but if another section of the department is rung the answer is that that information cannot be handed out. It is about time the Minister produced a map and displayed the plan of the area that will be affected by the railway line. The Minister must have the map.

Mr Lane: I will when it is finalised.

Mr BURNS: The Minister must have the map now. He could not have gone to the Federal Government and said, "This is going to cost \$37.5m," if he did not know where the railway line was going. He must have been in a position to estimate the cost of resumptions. If he did not know that, how could he estimate the cost? The Minister must have had some knowledge of the value of the land that the department would resume. If he knew that, he misled the people. He has let them spend their money in those areas. In some cases he has let them waste their money. When a person builds a home he sets out with high hopes and high expectations. He does a great deal of planning. In this case the department has decided to put a railway line through his back yard, which no-one could plan as part of his home.

Mr Lane: What about the one to Inala?

Mr BURNS: The same thing should happen there. A transportation corridor should be planned for that area.

Mr Lane: Do you support it?

Mr BURNS: Yes, I do. I also support the proposal of a railway line to the port. It could go alongside the existing lines.

Mr Lane: Which route do you prefer?

Mr BURNS: Down the existing line.

Mr Lane: The route through all the suburbs?

Mr BURNS: Yes. It is there now. The Minister should not worry about that. Millions of tonnes of coal is being carted through that area. All the wheat from the Darling Downs is passing through there now. If all of the Darling Downs coal is to be transported to the port, the Minister should tell the people the route of the line through Acacia Ridge, Rochedale, Mount Gravatt, Mansfield and Tingalpa. He will not tell the people, who are entitled to know. They are the electors of this State. They pay their taxes; they put their money up and are entitled to know where the railway line is to go. Why shouldn't they know that? The Minister knows where it will go—at least he has a

rough idea. I have seen surveyors working in my area. I got them to draw a map showing where the line will go and I will bet that they are not very far out in where it will go in the Lytton electorate.

The Minister should let the people know about planning concepts. Why is the Government scared of the people? Why is it scared that they might learn what is happening? Why shouldn't they be told beforehand? At election-time the Government makes many airy-fairy promises, but when it comes down to what affects a person's 32-perch, half-acre or one-acre block of land, the Government is strangely silent.

Mr Lane: Like Roy Harvey's bridge across the St Lucia reach of the Brisbane River.

Mr BURNS: If new bridges are to be built across the river, a transport plan should be instituted. Lines should be drawn on a map so that everybody knows.

Mr Lane: Tell your mate Roy Harvey.

Mr BURNS: The Minister should not blame someone else. That is a classic example of what is done by the Government. The Queensland Government operates in two ways. It promises something if the Federal Government will pay for it. On the other side of the coin, if anything goes wrong it blames the local authority or the Federal Government. The Queensland Government's classic approach is to blame everybody else or demand that somebody else pay.

It is a pity that the old line was pulled up. What will happen now is that all the people from Redland Bay who catch the train will travel through Wynnum, Wynnum North, Lindum and other areas. Many trains are already overcrowded and many passengers have to stand.

Mr Lane: Trains are very popular.

Mr BURNS: They are popular, and that is good.

If the Government had not pulled up so many lines 25 years ago, those services would be more popular, and Queensland would have a more modern railway system. Brisbane would have had an electric railway system for many years and it would have been improved by now. The Liberal-National Party Government of the day—including Sir Gordon Chalk, one of the Liberal Party's famous leaders who was supported so strongly in this Chamber by the present Minister for Transport—made the decision to destroy the railway electrification scheme in Queensland. That set Queensland back many millions of dollars and set the scheme back many years.

The additional traffic using the existing line and the traffic generated by the proposed line will create major traffic problems. There is already a problem at Morningside, which is in my electorate. The line is dangerous and creates a major traffic problem. The Minister is responsible for road safety as well as railways. He can wear both hats and handle both matters. Something has to be done about that problem. It will involve a major reconstruction program with a fly-over across Wynnum Road and into Thynne Road so that no traffic will have to wait at the "Stop" sign.

There is no worse traffic situation than the one at the railway crossing at Barrack Road. At half past 7 or 8 o'clock in the morning, a couple of little goods trains are shunted round the corner into the Cannon Hill salesyard area. A signalman has to close the gate while trains are shunted backwards and forwards. The road traffic builds up from Barrack Road into Wynnum Road, which is a main road. I am talking about the early days of the scheme. There is trouble now, and there will be more trains and major problems in that area.

The only place in my electorate at which the Minister has started to solve the problem of more trains and more traffic is at Creek Road where a new fly-over will be constructed. A similar fly-over should be constructed over Barrack Road and at the Lindum rail crossing. I understand that a plan has been bandied about, although the

people of the district have not been told about it. If they listen hard enough they will find out about the plan to go over Kianawah Road and cut out the crossing there.

No park-and-ride facilities exist at the Lindum Railway Station. People have to park their cars in the streets or in front of shops. Cars are being damaged. Those cars should be properly looked after in a suitable area. All those matters will be affected by the additional trains on that line. The line services the major port, the new cementworks and the new grain terminals. Hopefully, it will service a new sugar terminal.

The Minister might tell me how much coal is now carted into those areas by road instead of by rail. The West Moreton transport trucks, which transport a great deal of coal, travel down Creek Road at the rate of about one every five minutes.

Mr Vaughan: It can be carted cheaper by road than by rail.

Mr BURNS: Is that so?

In the old days, the railway line ran right into the meatworks. A great deal of coal was carried by rail into that area. Rail transport is the answer to those problems. It gets vehicles off the roads where all the traffic is found, particularly women taking their children backwards and forwards to school. The coal trucks are large and potentially dangerous. They must maintain a tight schedule, so they travel at a fairly fast speed. Because they carry heavy loads, if anything goes wrong a few people will be cleaned up and everyone will be very sorry about it.

I want to see the plans for the future. I want to know about the new rail lines that will be built in Brisbane. I want to see the plans for the monorails, the underground lines and things like that. When a major city in the world reaches the size of Brisbane, it starts to plan for inner-city transport services. As underground transport is very costly, it may be that, with Expo coming to Brisbane, a monorail might be the answer. Honourable members ought to be talking about that. They ought to be taking people into their confidence and doing things differently from what was done with the Acacia Ridge railway connection. If a rail line is to be constructed from Acacia Ridge to Wynnum, I have no objection to it. I will accept it, endorse it and do everything to see that it works properly. I want the Minister to ensure that the people are made aware of the problems and that they are told in advance so that they can plan their future to ensure that the rail line does not disrupt them.

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (7.45 p.m.), in reply: The contributions by honourable members opposite have been interesting, although, as usual, they canvassed many of the matters that are put forward each time I bring a railway proposal before this Assembly. Because of the great railway development now taking place in Queensland, new proposals are becoming the rule rather than the exception in this Chamber. The old furphy that was repeated by the member for Mackay and the echoes that followed him about the electrification of the Brisbane suburban system proposed by a former Minister for Transport, Jack Duggan, is just that—a furphy. That proposal was not very far developed; nevertheless, it was a proposal to introduce an electrification system based on a 1 500 DC current. That would have been an inferior system. Thank the Lord, it was abandoned by a former National-Liberal Government in favour of dieselisation, giving this State a form of locomotion that could be used more widely and more flexibly. Of course, a rich reward has been reaped from that decision. Instead of being to the detriment of the State, as was claimed by members opposite, the decision turned out to be to the long-term advantage of the State, because the 25 KVA system now in use is one of the most modern and efficient systems, and the same system will be introduced on the coal lines in Central Queensland. In due course, when Government plans for electrification of the main line are completed, the State will have a uniform system.

Another furphy that is spread by members of the Australian Labor Party in this Chamber relates to the provision of a railway line to Redcliffe or, more specifically, to Kippa-Ring. Honourable members might be interested to know that the tax-payers of

Queensland have already contributed almost \$2.9m towards the cost of that railway line in terms of design, survey costs and the acquisition of property. Almost daily, the Railway Department is acquiring and taking up options on property following declarations under the Acquisition of Land Act. That is a fairly sizable commitment to the Kippa-Ring railway line. The most recent estimate of cost to the tax-payer for the construction of a railway line to Redcliffe is \$24.5m, with a further \$10.5m necessary for the provision of central rolling-stock to carry the service.

More than \$35m worth of work is yet to be done to complete that line. If honourable members opposite can tell me where to find a magic hat from which the Government can pull \$35m, I will be very happy to take it and proceed forthwith to build a railway line to Redcliffe. In the meantime, the Government is taking up the option of constructing a railway line to Wellington Point.

Mr Burns: What about the \$32m that the Premier said he would have no trouble taking out of the Budget for the Southport Bar when it was not even provided for? If you can find that, why can't you find the money for the railways?

Mr LANE: How many speeches on a matter does the honourable member make in one night?

Mr Burns: I have just made another one. That is two.

Mr LANE: At the moment, the railway line to Wellington Point is being built. It will not be as costly as the line to Redcliffe would be.

Mr Davis: What about the rolling-stock?

Mr LANE: I am very happy to see the great support that I have from the member for Brisbane Central for the Roma Street redevelopment. I assure him that it will be a beauty.

Mr Davis: What about Brunswick Street?

Mr LANE: As the honourable member can imagine, that is very high on my list of priorities, since it is situated in the centre of my electorate. The honourable member is interested in it because he is too tight to pay for petrol. He uses his gold rail pass to travel, when he cannot hitch a free ride on one of Hughie Williams's trucks.

Electrification has been a great success. It has proved to be enormously popular with the people of Brisbane. The electrification program will be continued.

The honourable member for Lytton spoke about the line to Fisherman Islands. When he rises he inevitably gives a smorgasbord of a speech. We can take our pick. There is something for everyone. That is not a bad practice for politicians who shoot from the hip. The press can choose from a wide range of items. By that hit-or-miss system of his, perhaps he will have the press select something that will get him a headline. He spoke about telling the people in the bayside suburbs the route of the railway line to the port of Brisbane. At the moment there is no firm route for the line; nor will there be until a book of reference is tabled by me in this Chamber and all honourable members——

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr LANE: Does the honourable member want to make a third speech on this?

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr LANE: I ask the member for Lytton to let me finish my sentence. All honourable members will have an opportunity to study the book of reference and working plans for the line, debate them and vote on them. That is the way railway routes are laid down. Now I will listen to the member for Lytton.

Mr Burns: How is it that your department is able to tell people that the railway line will go through their property, as it has told them?

Mr LANE: I have been assured by the Deputy Commissioner for Railways that nobody has been told the route by any member of the Railway Department.

Mr Burns: People are being told before you tell the Parliament. He is not telling you the truth.

Mr LANE: Is that so?

Mr Burns: Yes.

Mr LANE: I will mention those comments to him in the morning.

Mr Burns: You certainly can. I'll write to him.

Mr LANE: I questioned him most carefully about this to assure myself that information which could mislead the public was not being promulgated. He assured me that it was not.

Mr Burns: People can point out blocks of land that they have been told will be resumed.

Mr LANE: Perhaps some informal advice has been given in a hotel bar. All human beings are susceptible to conduct of that sort. If they are being plied with beer down at the Colmslie Hotel by the member for Lytton or some of his colleagues, who knows what will happen? If they had a bunch of his mates round them, they would probably say anything to get out of the place. I repeat that there is no firm route to the port of Brisbane, and the honourable member will be the first to hear about it when I table the book of reference in the Parliament.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr LANE: The member does not understand the Railway Act. He should read it.

Part of his smorgasbord touched on the transport of coal to the port. Certainly, from time to time trucks transport coal to the port of Brisbane as an alternative to rail. I do not hesitate to say that I prefer the carriage of coal by rail. That is how large quantities of bulk commodities ought to be transported. The steel wheel on a steel rail is very efficient. It is the preferred method. From time to time special circumstances arise——

Mr De Lacy: What about sugar? Do you think it ought to go by road?

Mr LANE: From time to time special circumstances arise, such as arose in the Cairns area with the cartage of bulk sugar. Costs or circumstances might decree that road transport ought to be used. Permits have been issued by the Transport Department for the cartage of approximately 5 000 tonnes of coal to the port of Brisbane. It is coal of a type the composition and form of which would be damaged, thus making it unacceptable to the customer on the other side of the world——

Mr Burns: For how long?

Mr LANE: This is one shipment. Very strict permits have been issued, with guidelines, to be supervised by the commercial vehicle section of the State Highway Patrol and by the State transport inspectors. An investigation is carried out before each permit is issued. A permit is issued under such circumstances only. Coal will be transported in trucks by road from time to time, and that is the reason.

I am sure that members of the Opposition would not want to see coal-miners in Ipswich and seamen in the port of Brisbane out of work because coal could not be exported—and of course, they would not want to see losses incurred by coal companies.

I have outlined the facts in relation to the transportation of coal and the permit system. I think that enough debate has taken place on this very simple proposition that is before the Committee this evening.

Motion (Mr Lane) agreed to.

Resolution reported and agreed to.

TRAFFIC ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 13 November (see p. 2337) on Mr Lane's motion—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (7.58 p.m.): It is regrettable that more time has not been available to study the proposed amendments to the Traffic Acts, and it is also a pity that more consideration has not been given to other anomalies that exist in the road system in Queensland, the driving of motor vehicles, the riding of bicycles, etc., so that the problems that arise from those factors can be properly discussed.

The Bill is a very important piece of legislation. Every week Ministers and Opposition spokesmen discuss traffic problems—in particular the road toll—not only in Queensland, but in all States and in the national capital. I believe a concerted effort is being made by all Governments to find a proper solution to the problem of the high road toll in all States of Australia.

This evening I could mouth platitudes on the subject of the road toll, as many other honourable members do; but that would not help to save one life. Positive action is needed in the form of legislation that provides effective control and can be enforced by police officers. The only way that the rising road toll can be countered is by the determined efforts of Governments in implementing legislation. The proof of that proposition is to be found in the effect that random breath-testing has had in New South Wales and Victoria, where more than a 20 per cent drop in the rate of traffic accidents has occurred.

The Bill, however, only deals with very small principles and amendments to the Traffic Acts. Basically, the Opposition offers guarded support for most of the measures and principles that are being introduced. The first principle applies to the further control of young drivers in this State by lowering the blood alcohol limit from .05 to .02.

The problem of drink-driving is also a cause of concern. Any member of the Queensland Police Force will say that the majority of road accidents are alcohol-related, so obviously in some respects the fines that are imposed are not having the necessary deterrent effect.

I have discussed this problem with the Minister, with people in my own party and with a number of police officers. Driver education is perhaps the best solution, but again, although that is a nice phrase that rolls easily off the tongue, it is not as easy to implement as it sounds. At the risk of upsetting those who become emotional about this issue—many people insist that any driver who has any alcohol at all in his blood should be convicted of a drink-driving offence and fined—I state that the Government should look at the South Australian proposal for lifting the blood alcohol limit to .08. The South Australian authorities commissioned a number of reports on that subject, and they believe that some serious consideration should be given to again lifting the blood alcohol limit. I do not go along with the idea that alcohol should be totally banned so far as drivers are concerned.

On the scale that was used when the blood alcohol limit was reduced to .05, the proposed limit of .02 really means that a driver cannot have more than one beer. I do not believe that anybody could really be affected by having one beer, but I will be happy

to be corrected. I do not believe that one beer would have a great effect on any person, whether he be 17, 18 or 80. I suppose one could be very pious and say that those under the age of 18 years should not be drinking, anyway. However, everybody knows that underage drinking does go on. Youngsters gain access to alcohol through older people, so the offence of underage drinking is not an easy one to stamp out, either.

As I said earlier, the Opposition gives this Bill its guarded support. The Government should very closely monitor what happens and, after the legislation has been in operation for 12 months, should commission an expert report on the subject to see what effect the legislation really has had. I know that that will be a difficult job.

One has only to read the annual report of the Commissioner of Police to see that the attitude of the public towards the offence of drink-driving is coloured by the attitude of those who are convicted of the offence. I suppose that many of us have been in the same boat in that we have been at a party where perhaps a couple of dozen people, all with fairly substantial quantities of alcohol on board, leave at about the same time and if one is caught by the police or has an accident on the way home, he is considered unlucky. Unfortunately, that is the public attitude, and that is the hardest problem to overcome. Everybody says, "Not me, I'm all right, but Joe over there has got a few under the tail and he will have to be careful." How often does one see a person elect himself as the driver for his mates, who he says are too affected by alcohol to drive, after having consumed more alcohol than any of them? It is very difficult to argue the merits of any case unless one has some sort of statistical evidence. I suppose that only after the introduction of the legislation will any statistical evidence be able to be gathered to give an indication of whether the proposed solution will work.

I recently read an article about a new device that appeals to me rather more than the breathalyser. It is a video game, about the size of a small radar set, that will fit in the back seat of a car and can be used by police to determine a person's skills. After all, the proper determinant of a person's level of drunkenness is the skill with which he can handle a motor vehicle. Everyone knows that one person can consume a quantity of alcohol and under most circumstances still remain an excellent driver, whereas another person, who has consumed the same quantity of alcohol or perhaps even less, can be very dangerous to other road-users. Even the size of a person's body can make a difference to the effect of a given amount of alcohol. That has a great deal to do with the way that alcohol enters the blood stream and the effect that the alcohol has on the brain and the nervous system and the body's reactions.

All these matters should be looked at. I ask the Government to investigate a South Australian report that recommends proper testing on the road in a police car to ascertain whether a person has the skill to continue driving or has consumed so much alcohol that he does not possess the skill necessary to drive safely on the road. Such a system is far better than a blood test.

The provisional licence principle has caused controversy in many parts of the community. People should not be penalised because of the foolhardiness of others. Under some legislation compensation is payable to victims of unfortunate events perpetrated by others. If a person who requires a driving licence in his employment loses his licence because of drink-driving, a severe penalty is inflicted on his wife and family because, in many instances, on conviction, he immediately loses his job and joins the ranks of the unemployed. Honourable members are aware of the high rate of unemployment in Queensland because the Government has failed to follow the initiatives of the Hawke Government to get people back into employment.

If a man loses his job because of a drink-driving offence, it is his wife and children who suffer, but in some instances the employer also is penalised. When I was in business prior to my entering Parliament, one of my employees was a specialist driver of a certain vehicle. One week-end he got into trouble with the police and lost his licence. Because of the crankiness of the magistrate he was gaoled. On the Monday morning an unskilled

person had to drive the vehicle to a job. In the long run, it was a very expensive exercise. That indicates how an employer can be penalised.

For some time the Labor Party policy has been that employees, particularly on the first offence of drink-driving, should have an opportunity to get a provisional licence so that they may continue working. That ensures that their families and others are not penalised. The Labor Party agrees that when such a person abuses the privilege and suffers a further conviction he deserves whatever punishment is forthcoming. The big deterrent with drink-driving convictions, supposedly, is that one conviction should be enough for the offender to learn not to place himself in the same situation again. Taxis are much cheaper than court fines and the loss of a driving licence and a job. The legislation sets out clearly that, if an offence occurs during working hours, special consideration should not be extended. The Opposition agrees with that provision.

Opposition members are very concerned about how the court shall handle a certain matter. The Minister has assured me that the Government intends to introduce a procedure under which a person facing a charge of drink-driving will be given an application form to submit to the magistrate relative to his being given a provisional licence.

Although I accept the Minister's assurance, the legislation does not contain that provision. I am sure that all honourable members know the procedure in many courts. Members of the police force are interested in maintaining their conviction rate, and when the offender appears in court the morning after, he may be a little dishevelled and a little down at heel because of the amount of alcohol that he took on board the night before. Before he knows where he is and before he has recovered properly from his binge, an offender may find himself fined \$300 and have his licence suspended for 12 months. That is the way in which courts operate. I do not know whether other honourable members have been present at the Monday morning roll-call for prayers in court. I have seen what happens, and on a considerable number of occasions people have spoken to me about the procedure for drink-driving offences.

The legislation should include an amendment ensuring that a magistrate gives an offender full details of his rights. That is very important, because another part of the legislation indicates clearly that unless the person concerned makes application for a provisional licence when he appears before the court, he cannot come back the next day or the next week or the next month to make application for such a licence. That provision may be all very well when a legal aid duty solicitor can instruct a person about his rights in law. However, that happens only in the major provincial cities and in the metropolitan area. It does not happen in all court-rooms throughout Queensland. I would like the Minister, in his reply, to give an assurance to the House that that form will be insisted upon, that it will be presented to the offender on a drink-driving charge and that he will be allowed to indicate clearly before the court whether he wants to apply for a provisional licence.

Another provision in the Bill relates to the diversion of traffic. The new provision clarifies a number of points that have been under a cloud for some time. However, the wording of the proposed new section is typical of that favoured by the Government. The Bill provides that—

“An application shall be in the prescribed form and be accompanied by the prescribed fee.”

The Bill provides further that the superintendent shall grant an application for the closure of the road—

“ . . . subject to such conditions, as he thinks fit, which may include but are not necessarily limited to the payment of fees and expenses in connexion with the closure.”

Once more the Government has introduced an additional tax measure. I accept that applicants for the closure of a road should be required to pay advertising fees. However, what happens in the case of a local Apex club that wants to close off a section of a road

for a special night of entertainment at Christmas-time, or for the special fairs and festivals that are held in many parts of Queensland? Charitable organisations, which try to raise funds, will have to pay an additional tax that goes into the coffers of the Queensland Government. Despite its assertion that it is a low-tax Government, it tries to rip people off at every opportunity.

The provision in the legislation regarding parking-meters concerns me, and it could prove troublesome. The Bill certainly tidies up the current provision under which people may park all day at one parking-meter and have to pay only one fine instead of a series of fines.

As the Bill is framed, the maximum period or, as the case may be, the longest maximum period could be open to interpretation. Depending on the length of time that it takes the parking-meter attendant to do his rounds, an occasion could arise when somebody has returned to the meter, inserted a smaller coin and been free of the provisions of the parking regulations for a short period, but would be fined in a different way because the Bill refers to the longest maximum period. I feel that that clause may have to be interpreted in a court of law.

One very important matter I wish to touch on relates to a further principle regarding regulations. One clause of the Bill states that regulations may be introduced to cover recommendations of the Australian Transport Advisory Council and the Standards Association of Australia. Most assuredly I go along with that, because Australia must have standard rules for traffic. What I wish to draw the attention of the House to at the moment is the fact that since February this year the Standards Association of Australia has been looking at radar guns.

I raised this matter in the House in April when I asked a question of the Minister for Police in relation to the use of radar guns in Queensland. I did that because of a report of the Standards Association of Australia in its bulletin of February 1984, in which it clearly stated that the radar guns used by most Australian police forces, including the Queensland Police Force, were not of a proper standard in that, instead of projecting a pencil-like beam, they projected a beam in an arc that can be up to 30 degrees off centre. Therefore, the radar guns used by the Queensland Police Force are not necessarily picking up the correct vehicle. A similar opinion has been expressed by many lay people who have been caught in police radar traps and wrongly convicted. The Standards Association of Australia clearly states that that is the case. Instead of projecting a pencil-like beam, the radar guns are projecting an arc that can be 30 degrees to the left or right of centre. That gives an arc of 60 degrees, which is a fairly wide beam, particularly on a four-lane highway, where it would cover a great deal of traffic. That is what has been found by the Standards Association of Australia.

Many experiments have been done in relation to this and reports are coming forward from other States. Transport people involved with trucks throughout Australia have done investigations into it and they have found that on occasions a radar gun picked up a vehicle travelling in the opposite direction instead of the oncoming vehicle. The beams of radar guns have penetrated a number of lanes of traffic and have picked up vehicles going in the opposite direction instead of the oncoming vehicles. In one case a truck was crawling up a hill at 30 km/h and was being followed by a number of cars. Even though the cars could be travelling at no more than 30 km/h, the radar gun allegedly picked up one of them, whereas in actual fact it had picked up a car travelling in the opposite direction. The Standards Association of Australia has also shown that radar guns will pick up the large rear portion of a vehicle rather than the sloping front of a vehicle. That is one of the reasons why, unquestionably, numerous people have been wrongly issued with on-the-spot traffic tickets. Those people have been wrongfully charged and convicted and have had to pay the fine.

The Australian Standards Association claims that insufficient training in the use of radar guns is given to most police officers throughout Australia, especially those employed by the Queensland Police Force. The only police force in Australia that is attaining

anywhere near the standard set by the ASA for radar guns is the New South Wales Police Force. The Australian Standards Association says that two to five days' training in the use of radar guns is given to police officers in the State of Queensland.

There should be a moratorium on the use of radar guns until a committee comprising the police forces of each State and the motor associations of each State, including the RACQ, has a proper look at the situation and comes up with a standard of training for members of the police force in the use of radar guns and a standard for the use of the gun.

It has been said that, so far, up to 60 000 people have been wrongly convicted in Australia. Those convictions have not been upset by the courts, because people are not aware of the Australian Standards Association's present recommendation. Because of the high legal costs in Australia, particularly in Queensland, most people do not bother appealing to a court.

A nine-point demerit system operates under the Traffic Act. Many people are not fully aware of their rights under the Traffic Act and regulations. Members of Parliament often receive representations from constituents about problems created by a superintendent of traffic who has said that he has power only to suspend or cancel a licence. That is not true. That may be a directive that has been issued by the Commissioner of Police or the assistant commissioner in charge of traffic. It is quite clear that the Traffic Regulations provide that the district superintendent may modify the licence by imposing any condition that he may determine and making an endorsement thereon. That is the first thing that the people of Queensland should know. They have that right under the nine-point demerit system.

I have always advised anyone who has felt that he has been aggrieved by the suspension or cancellation of his licence by the superintendent of traffic that under the Traffic Act he has the right of appeal to a Magistrates Court. Section 57 of the Traffic Act sets out clearly that a person has that right of appeal. Under that section, a magistrate or a justice has the power to modify any directive given by a district superintendent of traffic. All Queenslanders should be made aware of that. Somewhere along the line, members of the police force have it in their mind that as soon as they get hold of a person with nine points they must automatically suspend or cancel his licence. That is what most of them do.

It is most urgent that amendments are made to the Traffic Act covering the functions of bikeways in Queensland. Almost every local authority throughout Queensland, particularly those in heavily populated provincial cities and in smaller country towns, have introduced bikeway systems. Although regulations under the Traffic Act cover the use and conduct of bicycles, particularly the behaviour that must be observed at intersections, whether a person is walking, riding a bicycle or driving a motor vehicle, truck or train, a number of grey areas exist in the law relative to intersections and the way in which bikeways can function properly. Reference is made to the way in which motor vehicles should stay away from bikeways. Those rules need to be enforced. Because the legislation is so wide, they cannot be enforced at present. An urgent need exists for legislation to be introduced to tidy up bikeways in Queensland.

Those are the main matters that I wish to bring forward. As I mentioned earlier, other Opposition members will bring forward other matters. However, there has not been a great deal of time to consider all the ramifications of this Bill.

Mr INNES (Sherwood) (8.25 p.m.): Undoubtedly, the principal and important proposal relates to the control of drink-driving by the young driver. The statistics that the Minister outlined in his introductory speech have been repeated many times. The proportion of those in the 17 to 25 age group who are killed or seriously injured in road accidents is far greater than their proportion in the community. The social and financial losses suffered by them, their families and the community are enormous.

Some warning should be given about the introduction of this legislation. As the Minsiter rightly said, .02 is a very low limit. The Borkenstein breathalyser, which is currently used by the police force, has an accuracy rating which is stated by the manufacturers to be .01. As the consumption of a 7-ounce glass of standard beer would result in a blood alcohol reading of .015, something less than a glass of beer can be consumed by a 17-year-old driver before he is at risk. Adding to that the manufacturers acknowledged limitations of accuracy to the Borkenstein breathalyser, if a young person goes out on a Saturday night and consumes a skinful of liquor, and even if he travels by taxi both ways or gets a lift with a sober friend, he will undoubtedly be a risk for a good percentage of the following day—certainly he could have a reading which would put him at risk all through the morning of the next day. Even if an adult consumed a skinful one night, allowing for his losing about a 10-ounce beer an hour, he would have a significant reading the following day.

Mr Vaughan: I am just wondering about a 17-year-old going out at night and getting a skinful.

Mr INNES: A 17-year-old would probably still be registering a level through the following morning, far beyond the small hours, which would put him at risk under this legislation.

The baby-faced 18-year-old, 19-year-old and 20-year-old must also be warned, because this legislation introduces the power for a policeman not only to form the opinion that he has a concentration of alcohol in his blood which would put him at risk and make him liable to undertake an alcotest, but also to form a suspicion on reasonable grounds as to the person's age, whether or not he has attained the age of 18 years.

The importance of that is that the police will have to carry round two alcotesters, one that registers .02 to .05 and, no doubt, another that registers .05 to .1 for the adult driver. It is to be assumed that there is a new type of alcotester which will register a far lower reading. If a person registers over .02 and the policeman has formed the suspicion that he is under the age of 18, he will have to go to the police station, submit to a test on the Borkenstein breathalyser and, presumably, be kept until such time as he proves that he is over the age of 18 years. It really means that a baby-faced person in his late teens or early twenties—we all know people who look far younger than their years—ought to be warned that, if he is driving, he should carry with him positive evidence of his maturity.

Mr Vaughan: What about his driver's licence?

Mr INNES: A driver's licence obviously is a practical way of doing it.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr INNES: It is not always done. A fellow who has worked on his car in a pair of Stubbies might get in and drive round the block. He might have had a stubby with his mates in the yard while he was working on it. I speak with a considerable amount of knowledge of the circumstances that give rise to arrests for drink-driving. It kept me going for the first three years of my practice at the bar. Such occurrences happen. The provision gives rise to an extra problem for the driver who is over 18 years of age. There is an extra level of subjective assessment made by the police officer, and more procedures to be satisfied by the arresting officer.

Mr Davis: When you were a police officer, did you have any problems?

Mr INNES: In my days in the Northern Territory, probably thankfully, there was no such thing as a Borkenstein breathalyser or an alcotester.

The apparent severity of the action would appear to be justified because of the number of serious driving offences committed by the age group and the injury and damage that they cause to themselves and others.

I sometimes wonder where the spur for legislation comes from and feel that it depends on the last three representations made to a member of Parliament. They vary from savage reaction to leniency and back to savage reaction. For many years it has been an absolute offence if a person exceeds the blood alcohol limit set down by the law. He or she has known his or her fate exactly—absolute loss of licence. The statements of the magistracy and appeal courts have been simple: “If your licence is so important to you, it is important enough to safeguard. If it is your livelihood, you take the action appropriate to protect your livelihood.” I am darned sure that the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General will in the future receive representations based upon the agony and anguish of people whose children, husbands or wives are mown down by the drink-driver, with a call for more severe penalties and more severe restrictions. They will say, “Why did you change? You are going soft.”

The Parliament is softening the law in respect of a large number of complaints. That seems to be the touchstone for legislation. Rather than finding a sensible course and sticking to it, the Parliament veers according to who complained last. I am referring, of course, to the provisional licence. Certainly, there are people whose families have been greatly affected by loss of licence. The misfortune was that they did not have that in mind before they engaged in their drink-driving. Provisional licences are proposed by the Bill.

The member for Mackay (Mr Casey) mentioned the points system. On the face of it, the new system seems to give the drink-driver an opportunity that is not available under the points system. Under this provision, a person has a statutory right to a provisional licence, whereas under the administration and practice of both the superintendent of traffic and the magistrates court on appeal, no provisional licences are available under the points system.

In the proposed procedures, I foresee some practical problems. For instance, the courts will be overloaded with applications brought under this new section. Although it is probably sensible not to be too restrictive in the criteria set down, the phrases, “is a fit and proper person” and, “would cause extreme hardship” are capable of very wide interpretation. I have no doubt that jockeying will take place to have cases brought before magistrates who are known to be lenient rather than before magistrates who have a reputation for taking a hard line.

Mr Price: Are you saying that all transport drivers are drunks?

Mr INNES: The honourable member for Mount Isa has asked whether or not I think that all transport drivers are drunks. Such a question reflects the logical processes of his mind, which would seem to be so suspect that comments he has made might be better applied to members of Parliament. I cannot see how on earth what I have said could be interpreted as any slight upon any particular group of drivers.

Mr Price: But you said that there would be a flood of applications.

Mr INNES: My remarks are not addressed only to transport drivers. Any driver is capable of claiming leniency under the provisions of this legislation. All sorts of people can claim to be dependent upon their licence for their livelihood—for example, insurance representatives and salesmen.

I have had experience in taking cases before magistrates on appeal under the points system. Almost everybody, including members of Parliament, would be capable of saying, “My livelihood depends upon my licence.” That is really a sentence that has a great deal of flexibility. Unless the magistracy sets a fairly rigid regimen and takes a fairly hard line, thousands of applications will be made under the proposed new section.

I suggest that a two-phase process operates: firstly, there is the conviction; secondly, there must be an application. It would have been more practical to examine the application procedure and allow an application to be supported by a sworn affidavit. Both documents could be presented immediately to the magistrate and, if necessary, the deponent could

be cross-examined. The alternative to that would be simply that the deponent be cross-examined by the police prosecutor on the affidavit. Such a measure would obviate the need to undertake a whole new evidence procedure upon conviction, because thousands of applications will be made under the provisions of this legislative indulgence.

I fear that it will be used so frequently that it will be viewed without the same terror that presently attaches to a drink-driving offence. It will probably mean that the first time a person is charged with a drink-driving offence, an application will be made for a limited licence, and that on the second occasion, if the person is unlucky, he may be sent to gaol. The interpretation of rules and administration on a fairly strict basis should be left to the magistrates. Otherwise, the tendency will be to have immediate recourse to the provisions of the proposed section because of the consequences that will follow from a charge of drink-driving. I might add that there, but for the grace of God, go many of us. However, so be it!

When I was referring to the provision relating to .02, I should have said that it might have been more practical or more sensible if the Minister had introduced an amendment that allowed the police to require the particulars of date of birth. It is presently an offence for a driver not to furnish details of name and address, and particulars of date of birth could be incorporated in the same way into the provisions of the Traffic Act.

The legislative provisions that have been introduced hinge upon the factor of age. It would have been sensible to require the furnishing of vital information such as the date of birth under the same section. In cases in which a driver is not carrying a driver's licence in his possession, the procedure that gives police the power to require particulars of name and address and age puts the process one step ahead. As I have pointed out, the factor of age will be vital under the provisions of the Bill. I definitely support such a requirement, and I hope that the Minister will take my suggestion on board and give some thought to it for future action.

The trend of applications for limited licences will have to be watched; otherwise they will overload the courts. On the subject of the practical administrative proposal that I suggest will be necessary, particularly in regard to the right to make an application, an affidavit should be prepared in an effort to restrict the amount of court-time taken up by such applications.

As to the proposed changes in penalties under the Bill, members of the Liberal Party believe that, in these years of high inflation, it is about time that a standard clause was introduced into legislation to allow the indexing of penalties. A formula could be devised based upon one of the usual indices—the Consumer Price Index or its equivalent—and taken to the nearest dollar so that legislation is not bogged down with cents, and reviewed on a nominated date each year or taking effect from the first gazettal after a nominated date each year. That is necessary because all Acts are getting out of date. The value of money is changing so rapidly that it seems stupid to wait for other amendments to be made to legislation before increasing a monetary penalty to an appropriate level. I propose to the Minister, and generally to the Parliamentary Counsel, that an appropriate formula be devised for use in all legislation containing penalties.

Finally, one small problem in relation to the Traffic Act generally and, in particular, in relation to parking offences. During the year. I received a complaint relative to an argument that developed over the interpretation of the word "ambulance" The argument over the interpretation of the word was not quite as relevant as the human situation out of which it arose.

A person drove either a relative or friend to a doctor's surgery on Wickham Terrace for urgent medical attention. He had to leave the car and assist the person, who was seriously ill, into the doctor's rooms. While he was in the doctor's rooms, he was booked for a parking offence. Absolutely no compassion was shown, and no leniency or tolerance was given by the Brisbane City Council or by the parking authority. That seems to be extremely regrettable, and I hope that whatever power the Minister has in relation to

that area—the Act that he administers ultimately allows the declaration of parking areas—is exercised to stop such harsh and draconian action by the law enforcement authorities, albeit that they are local authorities.

Mr McPHIE (Toowoomba North) (8.44 p.m.): I support the Bill introduced by the Minister for Transport, and I congratulate him on the initiatives that he has taken in maintaining this Government's commitment to reducing the road toll. As a member of the Minister's committee, I have taken a great interest in its work, and I have noted the Minister's concern at all levels for all aspects of road safety.

I will direct my brief remarks to two of the proposed provisions of this amending Bill. The first is to allow courts to issue special licences for first-time offenders who have lost their licences on a drink-driving charge. All members should be aware from the outset that that licence will not be granted as a matter of course. The applicant will need to prove to the magistrate, through sworn evidence, a genuine need to drive during the period of disqualification.

As I understand the Bill, the provision is not automatic and is not retrospective. Application must be made at the time the conviction is recorded. Although the honourable member for Sherwood suggested that the provision could cause overloading of the courts, I do not really see that that will happen, because the application will be made at the time of the conviction and will be dealt with then.

The other problem is that, in Western Australia, applications were accepted other than at the hearing of the initial charge and retrospective applications were accepted. That meant a big backlog of work that was not overcome.

I am sure that all honourable members have received numerous representations from families whose future has been put in jeopardy by drink-driving offences. The public of Queensland do not really appreciate the tremendous heart-break that can occur as a result of a drink-driving charge. I am sure that all members are aggrieved by the tragedies caused by drink-driving. At the outset, drink-drivers must be condemned. The concern for what happens further down the line has prompted Parliament to take very severe action against drink-drivers—and rightly so. Under this legislation consideration is to be shown to those whose livelihood may be affected as a result of a conviction for drink-driving.

In determining penalties it is essential to look at more than simple retribution. The broader consequences of the penalties imposed must be considered. That is what I have been touching on. In too many instances the brunt of the penalty is borne by the innocent family of the drink-driver. Many people may say that the consequences should be considered by the drink-driver before he breaches the law. However, we are all human, and we know that drink-drivers do not stop to think of the consequences of their actions. When they are caught, it is too late. As a result, families are disadvantaged, not merely for the period of the disqualification, but frequently for the remainder of their lives.

The society is confronted with compounding problems. Strained marital relationships and economic hardships for wives and children can produce further problems, many of which the State may have to deal with in depth at a later date.

In today's society, the consequences of losing employment are enormous. For that reason, this legislation provides an avenue for the first offender to be able to remain in employment. The Bill exempts from that provision drivers who are convicted of drink-driving while engaged in the course of employment. First-time offenders only are given consideration, and only when they are convicted of an offence that does not occur while they are engaged in the course of their employment.

Those provisions should bring home to professional drivers the fact that the Government expects them to show a definite commitment to road safety. I point out that if they are given a special licence by the court they will be expected to abide faithfully by the requirements thereof. If they fail to do so, any breach of the special provisions will be treated very severely.

Mr Innes interjected.

Mr McPHIE: Not as I understand it.

I trust that this legislation will serve as a further deterrent to drink-driving, particularly by professional drivers. I believe that it will ease the burden on some families who could be made to suffer if only in the short term because of the irresponsibility of a loved one. In the long term, this legislation will mean a lessening of the social problems that could follow drink-driving convictions, without in any way militating against the road safety program that has been tremendously successful to date.

My second point on the Bill is very brief. The Committee of Subordinate Legislation suggested to the Minister that section 28A of the Acts Interpretation Act 1954-1977 should apply. Provision has been included in the Bill for it to be part of the legislation, as is the case with all other Bills that are processed in this Parliament.

I support the Bill and compliment the Minister for introducing it.

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (8.50 p.m.): This Bill concerns two vexed questions and, as the Opposition spokesman mentioned, they have been discussed time and time again. I am fairly dubious about the effect of the .02 reading of blood alcohol that will apply to 17-year-olds. I would prefer that the provision applied to any person for the first 12 months after he obtained a driver's licence.

Mr Vaughan: Any new drivers.

Mr DAVIS: Yes, it should apply to any new driver. Whether the community likes it or not, all penalties for persons driving under the influence of liquor are imposed as a deterrent. In some Scandinavian countries the blood alcohol level is .00. That level also applies to pilots. That means that, if a person has any alcoholic drink, he cannot drive. I agree with the comments of the honourable member for Sherwood. This Parliament does seem to have highs and lows——

Mr FitzGerald: We are in a low now.

Mr DAVIS: Probably some of the honourable member's cow-cocky friends approached the Minister to have the legislation changed. What the Parliament should be doing——

Mr FitzGerald: I thought you were supporting it.

Mr DAVIS: What the Parliament should be doing——

Mr Borbidge: Be consistent; tell us where you stand.

Mr DAVIS: If Government members wait, I will tell them where I stand. My experience over the years in the transport industry and my knowledge of various aspects of road safety would be much better than that of some of my rural friends whose only interest in driving lies in driving the plough. Instead of the cow-cockies on the Government side grunting and moaning like pigs at slops, they should——

Mr Booth: Tell us where you stand.

Mr DAVIS: The honourable member should not panic and get excited.

Mr Booth: Don't get into the middle of the road.

Mr DAVIS: The honourable member should not worry about my getting into the middle of the road. If Government members will just wait, I will tell them where I stand on this vitally important question.

As the Labor Party has said on many occasions, road safety should not be a political question. It should be considered by an all-party parliamentary committee. Of course, the National Party under its dictatorial leadership does not like parliamentary committees.

In every other State and in the Federal sphere, all-party parliamentary committees consider road safety apolitically. Other members of the Labor Party and I do not like to score political points on an issue as important as road safety. I am sure that even some National Party members would agree with me. I am the last person in this House who would try to score political points off the National Party. A number of years ago I was a member of a road safety committee that was set up by the Labor Party because the Parliament does not have all-party committee.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to speak to the Traffic Acts Amendment Bill.

Mr DAVIS: Certainly, Mr Speaker.

The main points in this Bill concern penalties for drunken drivers and blood alcohol levels. I was about to say that I was in a Labor Party committee, because this Parliament does not have all-party committees, and that committee visited all the States and numerous police stations, and watched random breath-testing operations.

Mr Borbidge: What committee was this?

Mr DAVIS: It was the Labor Party parliamentary committee on road safety.

Mr Stephan: That was the taxi-drivers' committee.

Mr DAVIS: There is always a time for laughter, but when the House is discussing road safety and road deaths, the honourable member for Gympie should not bring levity into the debate. I am talking about serious things, and the member for Gympie is trying to make a joke out of road safety and deaths on the road.

I wish to quote the committee's finding on drink-driving—

“Drink driving is not accidental, it's deliberate.

Motorists who drive when over the limit gamble on getting away with it. (They know they have had too much but take a chance).

Because most of the time they do get away with it, they continue to defy the law and take their lives and the lives of others into their hands.

The lack of strict enforcement of drink-driving legislation allows the regular driver to stake his life, his liberty, his license, his car, his insurance and his job on the chance of getting home safely.

If we really want to make drink-driving legislation work we must make the 'over the limit' driver believe that his chances of getting away with it are slim.”

The legislation now before the House moves away from the deterrent effect built into penalties for drink-driving. What is the deterrent in the penalty for drink-driving? If the size of the fines is increased, those who have money and can afford to pay heavy fines, such as the members on the Government side who can write open cheques, would have no trouble whatsoever. The battlers, who are supported by the Opposition, certainly would not be able to afford to pay a heavy fine. Time and time again, the fairest system and the greatest deterrent has been proved to be the loss of the driver's licence.

When I was an official of the Transport Workers Union, its policy was quite clear: If a person was to drink and drive, that was the risk he took. As well as people involved in the transport industry, such as truck-drivers, taxi-drivers, bus-drivers and commercial vehicle operators, others not in that category would certainly need to drive vehicles to get to work. The emotive issue involved in the Bill is that if a person loses his licence and requires that licence in his pursuit of work, that must be taken into consideration. If a person lived in one of the new estates such as Eagleby and was in employment in Cleveland, he would certainly have to drive a vehicle to continue in that employment.

The honourable member for Mackay made a very good comparison with the nine-point demerit system. A person who has nine demerit points gets a worse deal than a

person who, under the provisions of the Bill, can make application for a licence to allow him to continue his employment. Nine times out of ten a person who has nine demerit points and is called upon to show cause either to the sergeant in the country or in Makerston Street in Brisbane, even though he goes through the rigmarole of explaining why he has those nine demerit points, loses his licence. Whether that loss of licence is for a period of a month or whether the licence is cancelled, the person is in just as much jeopardy of losing his livelihood as the person who has been arrested and convicted for drink-driving.

The other matter upon which I wish to touch deals with the diversion of traffic. On a number of occasions in the last six or seven months, particularly in the area of Brisbane that I represent, the district superintendent of traffic has been very lax. Each September a fair is conducted at Spring Hill. The Brisbane City Council and a number of local residents publicly stated that they were very concerned about the way in which the Spring Hill Fair is conducted. The residents and the Brisbane City Council clearly indicated that they were against the closure of Leichhardt Street, which is very busy. Alternative accommodation in Albert Park, adjacent to Leichhardt Street, was offered to conduct the fair. Lo and behold! One simple application was made, and it was granted against the wishes of the local authority and a number of local residents. Amazingly, it was granted to a person who is not the member of a committee and who has no executive. He made the application as an individual. Purely and simply because he is a supporter of the Premier and Treasurer and a very keen supporter of the National Party, the application was granted.

Mr Gygar: You're an old wet blanket.

Mr DAVIS: I would have thought that the honourable member for Stafford would support me. When the same woman who conducted the Spring Hill Fair duded the Liberal Party, the members of the Liberal Party were dead against her. That is a simple fact of life. The closure of Leichhardt Street was allowed for political reasons.

Mr Lane: That is not true.

Mr DAVIS: I am sure that I, as an ordinary rate-payer, could not go up to the district superintendent and, against the wishes of the local authority, ask for the street to be closed.

Mr Lane: Are you in favour or against the Spring Hill Fair?

Mr DAVIS: I hope that the Minister in his outburst is saying that I am against the Spring Hill Fair. I am not against the Spring Hill Fair.

Mr Lane: Would you like it to be at West End?

Mr DAVIS: No. I said that the Spring Hill Fair should be held at Albert Park, as requested by the local authority. I am against the present location of the Spring Hill Fair. In case there is a fire amongst the tinder-box houses, I hope that "Hansard" records that the Minister for Transport is in favour of the Spring Hill Fair and in favour of the closure of that area.

Mr Gygar interjected.

Mr DAVIS: I have made my point quite clear, so my conscience is clear.

Government Members interjected.

Mr Katter: There is a bit of humour about your conscience.

Mr DAVIS: I have made my position quite clear. It is recorded in "Hansard". History will show who is right.

I have now completed my discussion on the Spring Hill Fair. I turn now to parking areas.

Mr Lane: How could they have the stalls on that bank in Albert Park?

Mr DAVIS: It is very easy. If the Minister knows how to run a fair, he would know that it is quite simple. All those stalls are nothing more than a lousy old table and a couple of chairs. It is not exactly what one would term big time.

I turn now to the part of the Bill that relates to parking. The Traffic Act seems to contain an anomaly. If it is not an anomaly, it is a basis for the police not wanting to police that section. I shall cite the Paddington shopping centre as an example. The local authority, which is the Brisbane City Council, has introduced two-hour parking. Basically, that has not had any great effect on the persons who park in that area. Instead of parking for two hours, they park all day or, in many cases, certainly for more than two hours. Constant requests have been made to the police to police that area. Because it is not within the central business district, the local authority, which is the Brisbane City Council, cannot police the area. The police say that the matter is out of their jurisdiction. I would like the Minister to tell honourable members what powers the police have in policing parking in such areas. Signs have been erected limiting parking to a period of two hours. If no-one is appointed to police that restriction, one might as well scribble on the sideboard. The same comment applies to illegal parking. I am not totally opposed to what the Minister has included in the Bill.

Mr FitzGerald: Good on you. Support it.

Mr DAVIS: I am supporting it. Don't get excited.

Mr FitzGerald: Waffle!

Mr DAVIS: It is all right for the member for Lockyer, who represents something in the order of six shops and two pie carts. I represent the commercial heart of Brisbane, with all its great skyscrapers and the biggest hospital in the southern hemisphere.

The big sporting arenas of Lang Park and Ballymore cause parking problems. The problem of parking near the Royal Brisbane Hospital for medical staff and visitors is compounded when the football is on at Ballymore Park. People are forced to park in driveways. Is it any wonder that the residents of Herston, Milton and surrounding areas complain?

Although I do not like advocating higher penalties, I do believe that increased parking penalties must be considered. My comments on drink-driving are applicable to illegal parking. A \$5 fine is no deterrent to illegal parking. For that small sum, people will even run the risk of parking in the middle of the road.

The Labor Party basically supports the Bill. However, I do have personal reservations about the drink-driving section.

Mr Borbidge: Having two bob each way?

Mr DAVIS: I am not having two bob each way. As I said before, nobody wants to score points regarding road safety, which is probably one of the biggest tragedies. For members opposite to say that I am having two bob each way is ridiculous. Road safety is probably the most important issue.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise) (9.8 p.m.): I support the legislation introduced by the Minister and I commend him for the initiatives that he has included in the Bill. It is a further indication of this Government's commitment to do what it can to reduce the road toll and to put together a considerable array of devices to combat road trauma and all that is associated with it.

I would pay tribute to the fine work of the Queensland Road Safety Council, of which the Minister is the chairman. For a short time over the last week-end I had the opportunity of attending the seminar that was held in Surfers Paradise into how that particular organisation could use the technology of today and tomorrow to try to get the road safety message across.

I take the opportunity to acquaint the House with the success of a road safety program that has been implemented on the Gold Coast. Its success has led to police forces and Departments of Transport in both New South Wales and Victoria examining the proposal. It was the brain-child of Ian Anderson of the "Gold Coast Bulletin". It was referred to as the "Clayton's cops program", and consisted of a near to full size mock-up of a highway patrol vehicle.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: I take offence at the inane interjection by the honourable member for Brisbane Central. A large part of his diatribe tonight was to the effect that road safety must not be made party political. What did he do? For 20 minutes, he made the most blatantly political speech in the debate. I suggest that he listen and absorb a little of the knowledge that from time to time emanates from the Government side of the Chamber.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: For the benefit of the honourable member, I repeat that the Clayton's cops program has been so successful that the Victorian and New South Wales Labor Governments are presently investigating the proposal. It uses mock-ups of a highway patrol vehicle, a motor-cycle policeman and a radar gun.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: The member for Brisbane Central may laugh, but some time ago when it was tested on the Gold Coast Highway, the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police attended with senior officers from the traffic section of the Gold Coast police. Next time it is being tested, the honourable member might be sufficiently interested to witness the effect the mock-ups had on the open road. It was extremely interesting to watch the traffic approaching the police vehicle mock-up. Almost without exception, drivers slowed very considerably. The mock-up was located on a deviation from the Gold Coast Highway, on which major traffic accidents had occurred. I suggest that the honourable member for Brisbane Central should not laugh at it. It is deemed to be serious enough by his own Labor Party colleagues in Government interstate for them to be pursuing the concept.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: That may be the honourable member's interpretation, but in my opinion that is not so. The scheme has merit. I urge the Minister, who is in charge of the Traffic Act, to maintain a liaison with the Police Department on that activity. All tribute is due to Ian Anderson and his crew from the "Gold Coast Bulletin", who have very successfully tested the scheme.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister outlined the extent of road trauma in our community. I am sure the real meaning of the problem is realised by all honourable members on both sides of the House. We all know people—constituents, friends and family, perhaps—who have suffered as a result of road accidents. Last year in Queensland 510 people lost their lives. I particularly commend the Minister for the initiative he has taken in introducing the provision of the .02 limit for 17-year-olds. We all recognise the dangers of drink-driving; but even a cursory examination of our road toll reveals that the problems are most pronounced with the inexperienced driver. The statistics show that the 17 to 25 age group is massively over-represented in road accidents. It accounts for about 15 per cent of the population, but represents approximately 35 per cent of road accident fatalities in our State.

As the Minister has pointed out, the purpose of the legislation, basically, is to provide an alcohol ban for 17-year-old drivers and to provide for 12 months' driving experience free from the effects of alcohol. The measure is also extremely appropriate, given the legal drinking age in Queensland of 18, and I trust that the provision will

serve as a greater deterrent to under-age drinking, which is in itself a growing and major community problem of considerable proportions.

I express my support for the special licence provision that has been included in the Bill. It would be fair to say that the matter has been the subject of considerable comment and debate within the community for some time. It is a demonstration of this Government's responding to something that, in my opinion, the community wants us to do.

I, too, hope that it will serve as a deterrent to the professional driver, since a driver who is convicted of a drink-driving offence will not have the benefit of this provision.

Briefly, I comment on the increased drink-driving penalties, which are in line with increases in the cost of living since the review last took place in 1974.

It is important that this Parliament continue to demonstrate, in practical terms, the gravity of the way in which it views the major problem of drink-driving offences. There is no doubt in my mind that the principal fear of a drink-driver is being caught. In fact, this point has been made previously this evening.

It is important that penalties and consequences continue to act as a deterrent to drink-drivers. Although many other provisions in the legislation are important, overall I would commend the Minister for the presentation of a sound piece of legislation. Generally the provisions will enable the more effective and efficient administration of the Traffic Act, and their importance should not be overlooked.

Members of the community are confronted with the provisions of the Traffic Act daily. They have the potential to regulate the conduct of a person every time he steps onto the road, rides a bicycle or drives a car. Indeed, driving a motor vehicle has become an integral part of living in 1984 and will continue to be so for many years. It is therefore imperative that all drivers understand the obligations that they may face under this legislation and be prepared to accept them so that Queensland's road system may become safer than it is today.

I certainly hope that the Minister will arrange for more publicity to be given to the provisions of the Bill upon its enactment to ensure that the wider community is aware of the very important decision that Parliament is making this evening.

In my concluding remarks, I point out that, despite the increase in the number of motor vehicle registrations over the last two years, the road toll in Queensland has been reduced by 25 per cent. In addition to that, over the past 20 years, the death rate per 1 000 vehicles has actually been reduced by two-thirds.

Obviously, Government action has had its effect, and in some cases positive contributions have been made by members on both sides of this Parliament. The decisions that have been made, and particularly the legislation that has been brought forward by the Minister, have had a considerable impact on saving lives on Queensland roads, and that is of vital importance.

I have no doubt that the Minister and the Government are trying to make sure that the momentum is continued and that they get on with the job of responding to the requirements and the demands that are being made by the wider community.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: I have already referred to comments made by the honourable member for Brisbane Central. He made a rather curious speech and took some time to decide whether he was supporting the legislation or not.

Mr Davis: I told you where I stand.

Mr BORBIDGE: With due respect to the honourable member for Brisbane Central, I point out that he was standing all over the place.

I believe that the Bill will have the support of most honourable members. Indeed, I hope that all honourable members will support it.

Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (9.19 p.m.): Tonight I have pleasure in speaking to the very important Bill to amend the Traffic Act. One thing that does concern me is what the Minister said. He said that the purpose of the Bill is two-fold. The first purpose is to introduce a number of new initiatives aimed at further reducing the road toll in Queensland. I repeat, "further reducing the road toll." The second purpose is to introduce a number of machinery amendments to assist in the day-to-day administration of the Traffic Act. I suppose that the real purpose is to raise revenue for the Government and the Department of Transport. That is what the Bill seems to be about.

The proposals are only window-dressing. Nothing will be achieved. The honourable member for Surfers Paradise (Mr Borbidge) contended that one of the principal fears that motorists have is being caught for drink-driving. That would be the joke of the year, considering the number of motor vehicles parked at hotels for long periods. In addition, it would be a well-known fact that the number of patrol cars would not be in the ratio of 1:200 vehicles. Virtually none of the people who drink at hotels for long periods are ever caught.

If the Minister genuinely believes that this legislation will further reduce the road toll, for far too long he has played with the lives of people; it should have been introduced long ago. If the Government is fair dinkum about reducing the road toll, more than one Minister has a very important role to play.

I will start with the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing. Until the roads in this State are built to a sufficiently high standard that will enable motorists to drive on them safely, and until all the danger spots, dangerous sections and soft shoulders are eliminated, road fatalities will continue to occur. Far fewer accidents occur on divided roads, and the greatest contribution the Government could make to road safety would be to build in country areas divided roads similar to the highway from Brisbane to the Gold Coast. Statistics show that the majority of fatal accidents in this State occur on country roads; therefore, the condition of those roads must be one of the main contributing factors to such accidents.

One also read in the newspapers that a large number of accidents occur at intersections. The sign-posting of intersections is also the responsibility of the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing.

The Minister for Education has a part to play. He could introduce a system under which children at school are taught much more road safety than they are at present, particularly in regard to the use of push-bikes. Road safety education has to start at school. It is no use educating people in road safety habits after they have received a licence; they have to be educated from a very early age.

The Minister for Justice and Attorney-General has to police the activities of licensees who serve alcohol to under-age drinkers, who must cause road accidents. If they do not, this legislation relating to 17-year-old drinkers would not have been introduced. If the licensees supposedly under the control of the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General were doing their job, those 17-year-olds would not be drinking.

The Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts also has a part to play. The sale of alcohol is one of the major fund-raisers of any sporting organisation in this State, so the Minister must increase Government funding for sport and recreation bodies to such an extent that they do not have to rely on the sale of alcohol as a means of survival.

The Minister for Welfare Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs is concerned with family education relative to drugs and alcohol. The dangers of the abuse of drugs and alcohol must be brought home to people.

The Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police must be concerned about the current rate of drug usage and drink-driving. At worst, the chance of an offender being caught is one in 200, because insufficient police are available to patrol the roads. The Highway Patrol was set up to do just that, but the roads are still not being patrolled.

Because of who they are, a number of people who commit traffic offences are not convicted. I instance a case in my own electorate in which a Mr Charles Ware, a solicitor, president of the National Party branch in Gladstone—he is now resident in Rockhampton—and a member of a board of a company that is trying to obtain a television licence (a very respectable fellow), was involved in a hit-and-run accident. He knocked a fellow off a motor bike and rolled his own LTD motor vehicle. The police knew the number of the vehicle but could not discover the name of the owner. I discovered it in one minute by telephoning the Main Roads Department. No action was taken because he was Charles Ware, a member of the National Party, the president of a National Party branch and a solicitor in Gladstone. He now wants a TV licence in Rockhampton. For some time, the member for Salisbury has pointed out that, so far as the police are concerned, it does not matter who a person is, but what he is. ♣

The Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs should be concerned about the roadworthiness of vehicles, because lack of roadworthiness causes accidents.

The Minister for Transport has introduced this Bill to overcome the problems, but in my opinion it will be only a revenue-raiser because it will increase fines. All Ministers should show their sincerity by making their Christmas parties non-alcoholic. That could well save lives and it would certainly save a great deal of ministerial expense.

For quite some time I have been saying that the penalties introduced by the Government are only revenue-raisers. Road fatalities will continue until the people are educated. That is the only way to achieve results. More police are needed on road patrols.

In September 1982, the following report appeared—

“District Traffic Superintendent, Bill Anderson, said fatalities had increased during the last four months compared to last year, while the number of injury-causing accidents had decreased.

‘We’ve had a spate of fatalities this year. It was so bad the Assistant Commissioner came here early this year and discussions were held to see what could be done. We tried to reach people through the media but got a very poor response, yet in one weekend, in a blitz on speeding and drink-driving, 31 tickets were issued,’ he said.”

That senior officer was brought from Brisbane to conduct a blitz. Why should it not be an ongoing matter rather than a blitz for one week-end? If the Government is sincere it must put enough police and materials on to the road to catch offenders. It was said tonight that people are scared. They are not in any way scared.

Not long ago, in an article headed “Government points the finger”, the Minister’s comments were reported as follows—

“A new road safety poster launched yesterday points the finger, literally, at individual drivers.

Those travelling at breakneck speeds along Queensland roads soon may be confronted with a roadside poster which should make them think and slow down.

The message ‘Road Safety—Finally it’s up to you’ is combined with a realistic drawing of a hand, finger pointed accusingly.

Launching the roadside poster safety awareness campaign yesterday, the Transport Minister and Queensland Road Safety Council chairman, Mr Lane, said 40 posters would be erected throughout the state.”

Imagine 40 posters for the whole of the Queensland road network being a deterrent! They were supposed to prevent accidents, and they were one of the major issues on

which the Minister went to the press about road safety and the Government's concern about road fatalities.

An article that appeared in the press on 8 November 1984 was in these terms—

“New tougher drink driving penalties and traffic fines approved this week by State Cabinet will only have a limited effect on decreasing the horrific road toll. . .

The increased fines and penalties approved on Monday include a legal blood alcohol content level of .02 for drivers 18 years and under . . . the new laws would have limited affect on the road toll and only serve to increase revenue for the government.

‘It doesn't matter how tough you make it there will always be those people who will disregard the law. Big fines don't mean anything to them,’ he said.

He said the only real answer to the problem was to change the public attitude away from emphasis on drinking.

‘Unfortunately we have a lot of associations and clubs who believe the only way to make a profit is to sell alcohol.’

People's attitudes needed to do a full circle around to remove the temptation of alcohol, particularly from young people who were influenced by adult drink orientated lifestyles.

‘We should not be placing that temptation, possibly too great for them to resist, in front of them,’ he said.

While the national road toll had increased since last year, despite tougher penalties being introduced, the country areas were at a disadvantage to city areas which have a selection of public transport and alternative transport arrangements at their fingertips.”

That is not the case in country areas, where public transport is not provided. Country people cannot leave their car at home and travel by bus or train. They must use their private vehicle. Temptation should not be placed in front of children. Adults are placing that temptation before them, and that is not right.

Mr Elliott: Are you an adult?

Mr PREST: I do not class the honourable member for Cunningham as an adult. I have doubts whether he has the capability to be an adult.

I am very pleased that, on the same day that I made those statements, an expert from the south said exactly the same thing. He claimed that many Australian clubs, including service clubs, only want to place the temptation of drink in front of people.

Children should be educated at school about the dangers of alcohol. I was concerned recently when I read an article entitled “Pupils warned of party danger”, as follows—

“A leading Queensland girls' school has issued a warning to its pupils on end-of-year parties on the Gold Coast. The school's principal told her students to avoid illegal drugs, casual sex and excessive alcohol during ‘Schoolies Week’.”

Mr Borbidge: It is good advice.

Mr PREST: Certainly it is, but it is a bit late to tell them when they are leaving school. They should have been warned at an early age about the effects of alcohol. It seems that Government members condone the use of alcohol. The way Government members act sometimes, one could be excused for thinking that they indulge in alcohol frequently.

I made the point that country areas do not have proper transport systems. In December 1982, the Federal member for Griffith, Mr Ben Humphreys said—

“Laws against drink-driving would never be effective or successful without an up-dated public transport system.”

That is quite so. However, I was concerned to read comments by Mr Stephenson from the RACQ to the effect that he wants a higher level of enforcement of current drink-driving legislation.

Mr Borbidge: Who is this?

Mr PREST: Mr Stephenson. His comments were reported in the 1983 August/September issue of "The Road Ahead". He said that the police cannot do the job, and I am sure that the Minister knows that.

An article entitled "Toll hinges on 'morals'" reads—

"Dr Doug Wilson, the man who introduced the breath alcohol analyser to Queensland drivers, thumped his fist on his desk and said 'People have got to WANT to.'

He was talking about not drinking and driving, about an aggressive or impatient driver.

Dr Wilson, the Queensland Government Medical Officer for the last 15 years, yesterday gave his views on what he calls 'traffic morality'.

He believes that without a better driving attitude—or as he puts it morality—there is no chance of reducing the road toll.

'Morality may be defined as conformity to conventional rules without guidance by religious or spiritual influences, without fear of legal sanction,' he said.

'It's just doing the right thing for the sake of doing the right thing.'

And this is what he believes Queenslanders are not doing, particularly when it comes to the road toll.

To make his point, he quotes the Swedish example: Sweden has more than eight million and has 1000 road deaths a year. Queensland has only two million and around 600 people a year die on the roads.

And of the 1000 Swedish road deaths, alcohol is a factor in only 200; Queensland figures show alcohol levels of higher than the legal limit are found in more than half the drivers involved in accidents causing death or serious injury."

That proves that the law is not being enforced. The .05 blood alcohol limit was introduced in 1982. That was supposed to be a wonderful thing. On 2 April 1983 the press reported that the .05 blood alcohol level had reduced the number of drink-driving charges. I did not believe that. On 17 February 1983 the following article appeared in the press—

"The State of the economy, high unemployment, cutbacks in income and price rises were the reason for a drop in drink driving offences in Queensland, State Member for Port Curtis, Mr Bill Prest, said yesterday.

Mr Prest Opposition spokesman for Transport, said there was no evidence to show the drop was related to the lowering of the alcohol content limit for drivers from .08 to .05 percent as claimed by the State Government.

'People have been forced to cutback drinking because they cannot afford it,' he said.

Mr Prest also said the economic climate was affecting the consumers' spending power in many other areas.

He also called for better dividing of roads in danger areas to prevent accidents."

Not long after February 1983, I read a press report stating that the police feared that the .05 limit was losing its impact. On 20 November 1983 a press report stated that the number of female drink-driving cases had doubled. The report stated—

"More than 300 women have been convicted of drink-driving charges this year.

The Transport Minister, Mr Lane, said the increase in the proportion of female drink drivers had added a new dimension to the road-alcohol problem.

Women were being convicted in greatly increased numbers since the lowering of the minimum blood alcohol level to .05.”

Although initially the reduction in the blood alcohol level from .08 to .05 seemed to be having a good effect, later it was found that drink-driving was still a major problem.

Now the Government seeks to reduce that limit to .02 for those of 17 and 18 years of age. The Minister has said that, although those between the ages of 17 and 25 years constitute only about 15 per cent of the road-users, they make up 35 per cent of those who are involved in fatal accidents. Many people do not remember that those between 17 and 25 years of age are usually single. Some of them do not have a full family commitment. People must realise that many young people are still in that early stage of life at which they are intent on having a good time and do not have the same responsibility as a person who is more than 25 years of age. It is very wrong for people to point the finger at those young people.

Some people have said that the legal blood alcohol limit should be less than the .02 that is contained in the Bill, that it should be zero. I do not believe that zero is the answer. After all, people are affected by taking medication. Those people should not have their licences taken from them because they have been to a dentist or have taken a dose of cough mixture.

Only a short while ago, I read in the press that a horse in Charters Towers was given a drink of Coke. Because of the caffeine in the drink, that horse performed a miracle and won. A horse by the name of Haro, which was trained by Eric Kirwan, nibbled at grass that had the remains of a cup of coffee or a cup of tea thrown on it. As a result of that, the horse showed a positive swab of having caffeine in its system. That was from only the remains of a cup of coffee, a cup of tea or a bottle of Coke. The nibble of grass did wonders for that horse that was called Haro. It was fairly obvious that there was a great improvement in the performance of the horse. The connections appeared before the stewards.

If the caffeine content of the slops from a cup of tea or coffee improves the performance of a horse to such an extent that it attracts the attention of the racing stewards—honourable members know how the QTC stewards acted with the Fine Cotton inquiry in Queensland—I would advise the Premier and Treasurer to put his Ministers on the same fluids, because taking them could improve their performance. If that is possible, the outlays on ministerial expense accounts may be reduced.

I return to the person who, for the first time, loses his licence. The Australian Tram and Bus Union called on the State Government to review drivers' licences that were cancelled, particularly those of persons who depend on a licence for their livelihood. The union secretary, Mr Tom McHenry, said that people caught drink-driving in their private cars should still be allowed to drive their work vehicles so that they could make a living. That report appeared in the press on 8 November 1982, so the Queensland Government does not act very quickly. It cannot say that it rushes into things. Mr McHenry stated—

“We believe the Government is not being honest in allowing a higher concentration of alcohol in beer on the market while introducing legislation reducing the legal intoxication limit for driving a vehicle from .08 to .05.

The higher alcoholic concentration in this beer and the lower legal limit means virtually everybody walking out of a hotel will be above the .05 limit.”

As I said earlier, people are not worried about it. The article further states—

“This could have a disastrous effect on bus, truck and taxi drivers, whose livelihood depends on their licence.”

On 30 December 1983, the State secretary of the Transport Workers Union, Mr Hugh Williams, called on the State Government to allow special licences so that people could still drive for a living after losing their licences. If honourable members are

concerned for the family, they should be concerned about the penalty that is imposed on the family if a husband loses his licence. The magistrate could take into consideration, if he does grant a licence to a person to drive for his livelihood, the duration of the penalty. If honourable members are concerned for the family, they should not be concerned about increasing the period of the penalty. Members should not be Indian givers—give with one hand and take away with the other.

I am certain that this legislation is only window-dressing. It will not meet the needs of the community, nor will it reduce the road toll. If a person is irresponsible enough to drink and drive, and if he is irresponsible enough to drive without a licence—irrespective of the penalty—once he consumes alcohol, he will continue to commit that offence.

This Bill is nothing more than a Government revenue-raising measure. Each Cabinet Minister has a part to play if he is serious about reducing the road toll in this State. Until each Minister plays his part and until the Minister for Police makes certain that the law is enforced on everyone, irrespective of his standing in the community or the political party to which he belongs, road accidents will continue to occur.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (9.45 p.m.): All members of this Assembly have felt the effects of the Traffic Act. Each of us has had constituents or members of the family who have been victims of road accidents or who have caused road accidents because they believed, "It just could not happen to me."

The problem is that the Bill attacks the symptoms and not the cause of road accidents and the carnage on the roads. Only if the cause is attacked can a reduction in the number of deaths be expected.

The member for Surfers Paradise asked, "What have members of this House done to improve road safety?" The only thing that can be done to improve road safety is to educate future drivers. The Queensland Government has failed dismally in that respect.

My children attend schools that conduct cycle safety courses. Only two weeks ago, I tried to teach the children some aspects of road safety through the cycle safety course provided by the Queensland Road Safety Council. The council does not have the money to conduct those courses and give books to the children, the p. & c. associations or the schools for nothing. It has to charge them.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars will be earned from the proposed additional fines. How much will be put back into road safety? If the Government takes money from people who break the rules of the road, it should put that money back into the education of not only the drivers of today but also—and more importantly—the drivers of tomorrow.

Another major problem facing the Government is that it does not understand the problem. Its major advertising was, "Road Safety Starts With You." It is about time that people said, "Road safety starts with me."

Mr FitzGerald: At whom were you pointing?

Mr CAMPBELL: The member for Lockyer should point at himself.

The Government says that it will wave a big stick and that will make all the difference. What is needed is education. Every member of this House must get up and say, "I believe in road safety." That is the whole mistake in the philosophy of the Government's advertising. Road safety does not start over there; it starts over here with me. Government members should point the finger at themselves. Until they do that, they are all deluding themselves, because everybody who gets into a car believes that he or she will not cause an accident.

I will guarantee that everyone who gets into a car from the pub or from their own home drives 50 metres and says, "I am not going to cause an accident." That is why the Government is making a mistake. If Government members get up and say, "Road

safety starts with me.”, they may get something done. Until that time, they will fail, and they will fail with this Bill because all they are doing is waving a big stick.

Education is the only way of solving the problem. If the Government is trying to do the right thing, why is there not proper testing of young drivers? Why are not proper courses held so that, from tonight or from tomorrow, every person who gets into a car knows how to drive? Why do not Government members get up and say, “Every person who gets into a car should have gone through a defensive driving course.”? As responsible members of this House, why have we not been prepared to say, “With this additional money, funds will be provided to train young, inexperienced 17 and 18-year-old drivers so that everyone who gets into a car will know how to drive properly.” Why does the Government not make money available from the fines to be imposed by this legislation?

A Government Member: Why should the Government do everything?

Mr CAMPBELL: The Government ought to make money available. The Government issues licences for people to use the roads. Therefore, it has the responsibility of ensuring that the people who use the roads are competent drivers. The mistake being made in the Bill is that every person between the age of six and 70 considers that he has the right to use the roads. The privilege of using the roads must be won. That can be done only by proving competency, whether as a driver or as a cyclist. How often do we drive on the roads at three o'clock in the afternoon—

Government Members interjected.

Mr CAMPBELL: Government members do not give a damn about their children. They are not prepared to listen. All they are interested in is more money for consolidated revenue. I am attempting to make a contribution that may prevent my children and theirs and our future grandchildren from being killed on the roads. The only interest that honourable members opposite show is in being a rabble in the background. They are merely interested in obtaining more money for a little local road or for grog-ons with a Minister.

Let us teach every child who wishes to use a bicycle on the road how to use it properly and safely. Do I hear Government back-benchers say, “I agree with you.”? How many of them agree that every child who rides a bicycle on the road should be taught to ride properly and to respect road rules?

Government Members interjected.

Mr CAMPBELL: I have everybody in the House agreeing with me. Therefore, I say that, through the Road Safety Council, the training of bicycle-riders should be made compulsory.

Mr FitzGerald: Should we issue them with licences?

Mr CAMPBELL: If the Government were honest and fair dinkum about road safety and were to show consideration for those on bicycles who use the public roads alongside motor vehicles and 20-tonne trucks, it would require cyclists to prove their ability to use the roads. They can do that only by undertaking a course to show the authorities and to show motor vehicle drivers and semi-trailer drivers that they are competent to be on the roads.

Mr Davis: What about safety helmets?

Mr CAMPBELL: The member for Brisbane Central could make no more sensible interjection than that. Only last night—

Government Members interjected.

Mr CAMPBELL: If I am allowed by the rabble to continue, Mr Speaker—if I am allowed by the mob in the background who do not want to listen——

Government Members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CAMPBELL: The interjection by the member for Brisbane Central was very important. My daughter will attend high school next year. She said that she wants to ride to school. As parents, my wife and I said that she may ride to school as long as she is prepared to wear a helmet and show a flag on the back of the bicycle. I will put her through a bicycle safety course. She said, "Dad, no-one else does it. Why should I?" In my opinion, I have the right and a responsibility as a parent to say that my children should be protected on the roads. If Government members, as parents, are prepared to do the same, they should show that they are. It is important that that be done. It is an important measure if honourable members believe in this legislation and if the Queensland Road Safety Council believes in the provisions that relate to drink-driving.

The first thing I suggest is that charges associated with road safety measures be abolished, especially as they apply to road safety courses. The second suggestion is that the Government should be prepared to make safety helmets available to children at cost or at a subsidised rate. That would be one mark of the genuineness of the Government's attitude.

The third suggestion I make is that, within the guide-lines, every new and inexperienced driver should undertake a course in defensive driving. Perhaps in time that provision could be made a mandatory provision of the Act, but it should be introduced today.

More importantly, there should be the widespread provision of driving centres throughout Queensland. A very good driving centre operates in Gympie. Why does the Government not support schemes such as this and establish them throughout Queensland? Those schemes are needed now, and the additional revenue that will be derived from penalties that are provided for under this legislation could be applied to that purpose.

Mr Stephan: Who put that one in at Gympie?

Mr CAMPBELL: The Lions club, the Rotary club and the general public.

Mr Stephan: The general public put that centre in because they were prepared to do something for themselves. That was a living example of people who are prepared to do something for themselves.

Mr CAMPBELL: All I say to the honourable member for Gympie is that I must compliment the people of Gympie for what they have done.

It is a pity that the Queensland Government could not have provided more assistance to other communities so that the establishment of such centres could get off the ground. That is a very important aspect of road safety. More funds collected by way of penalties paid by the people who break road rules should be applied to this purpose.

It is about time the Queensland Government took a responsible attitude and reduced the road toll next year. Until the Government accepts that responsibility, it will not get anywhere. It is certain that waving the big stick is not the answer, but education of drivers could be. Education of future drivers should also be undertaken.

I ask the State Government to consider the following proposals: (1) an increase in the education of drivers through the provision of defensive-driving courses and the education of future drivers who are now the bicycle-riders, our children; (2) the provision of additional funds for safe cycling pathways; (3) the provision of funds for cycle safety courses, so that all children can undertake the courses in schools at no cost; (4) the provision of driver-training courses, such as the course that operates in Gympie, along with the allocation of funds, in all major areas; (5) the requirement that all new drivers undertake a defensive-driving course.

The Minister can achieve a great deal in the future if he directs more money towards the education of future drivers. The money for the provision of additional measures will come from revenue collected from penalties that will be imposed. The steps I have outlined should be taken for the benefit of our children and future generations.

Mr SMITH (Townsville West) (9.59 p.m.): Although I have reservations about implementation procedures, the scale of penalties and perhaps the need for penalties in certain sections of the legislation, I am not in disagreement with the overall intention of the Bill. I take the view that any law or provision in the Traffic Act must be enforceable. Indeed, there is no point in introducing legislation or amending laws if there is no practicable prospect of enforcement, or if there is a lack of will associated with enforcement.

Far too many Bills are redundant, and this has resulted in a lack of will to enforce the provisions of legislation. The Bills might as well not be introduced.

I can only endorse the comments that have been expressed by honourable members on both sides of the House who spoke of the great tragedy in death and injury to young people and the loss of potential to the nation.

I touch on a couple of points raised tonight by other members. They relate to the general attitude of drivers. The member for Port Curtis talked about traffic morality, and I thought that that was a fairly good expression. I have noticed that two different attitudes seem to be adopted by drivers. As one travels through country towns—I certainly do not mean to offend any member who represents a country electorate—one sees drivers who are incompetent with respect to the traffic laws. They have a very relaxed way of driving, and, although they would not deliberately drive dangerously, they constitute a risk to other people, who are perhaps conditioned to people driving according to the rules of the road and to certain standards.

The other attitude is reflected in the aggression that is shown by certain drivers, not only young people but motorists right across the community—except women, who are generally less aggressive than men. I think most members would agree with me on that point. The proportion of accidents caused by women is certainly lower than that caused by male drivers. It is terribly important that an investigation be made of driver attitudes.

The question of driver education has been raised, and as the Opposition spokesman on Education, I would have to say that I support the concept, and have done for many years. I am also conscious of the difficulty of widening the education curricula. However, I find it rather remarkable that out-of-hours human relationships courses were introduced recently. I did not particularly agree with that, but, if the Government can argue that such courses are effective, I think it can be just as easily argued that out-of-hours driving courses could be arranged on the same basis. If it can be argued that it is not feasible to introduce such driving courses, obviously one or the other argument must fail. So if it is not possible to have a widening of the within-hours school curricula, something could be done outside. At least it could be given a go.

Another point that strikes me is that a great many sports clubs rely on the sale of alcohol for their basic funding, so that really, in the name of sport, the Government is encouraging young people, and their friends and associates, to go along to a club and drink far more alcohol than they would otherwise drink. Not only do they then cause problems to themselves but they also cause nuisance problems to people who live in the vicinity of club premises.

The Government has to look at the overall cost of road accidents. If the Government suddenly sees that the loss to the community through death and injury to young people and people generally is some astronomically high figure—the statistics were quoted tonight—it has to decide whether it should spend money in other ways and encourage more leisure activities. I refer not only to sport, but obviously sport is what springs to mind because of its relationship with the sale of alcohol. In that event, there is a very

clear responsibility on the Government to look at the entire question of alcohol-related road accidents.

While I am on the subject of young people—this debate presents a good opportunity to mention a couple of instances of traffic problems. A couple of high schools in the State, one at Redcliffe and the other at Pimlico in Townsville—I know it well—have a divided campus, so the situation arises in which hundreds of children have to cross the dividing road. I know both schools quite well, but I drive past the Pimlico school every second day. Regardless of how hard the teachers try to control the students, it is really like a game of Russian roulette as one drives down that dividing road with children, some of them obviously senior students up to 18 years old, dodging through the traffic. It is only a matter of time before a fatal accident occurs. It is in a situation such as that that I become concerned at the apparent inflexibility of some of the traffic rules and regulations.

The main impediment to installing a crossing at Pimlico is the traffic lights that are in the immediate vicinity. I suppose it is the same at Redcliffe. Under the Traffic Act, crossings cannot be placed within a certain distance of traffic lights. Because of the inflexibility of the Act, young people are being exposed to danger when a crossing cannot be provided with a traffic warden or lollipop lady on the job. An overpass or an underpass could well be provided. I know that I will be told that such a facility could cost \$500,000, but if the Government is really sincere about the safety of young people, that possibility should be investigated.

Some time ago the Minister spoke about the power of cars and motor cycles. I am keenly interested in this subject. A few years ago legislation was introduced to prohibit motor-cyclists, in their first 12 months, from riding motor bikes with an engine capacity of more than 250 cc.

I do not think that my next suggestion will be popular with motor-cyclists, but motor cycles are very dangerous to ride because of the scant regard paid to them by other road-users, and their tremendous capacity for speed. The Government should seriously consider preventing people under 25 years of age from owning or using motor cycles with an engine capacity of more than 250 cc.

A motor cycle is wonderful for riding to work and for getting from one place to another and, because of sheer economic necessity, many people have to use them. No valid reason can be advanced for allowing on the roads machines with a capacity of more than 1 000 cc, which develop 70 or 80 kW of power. I was delighted that registration fees for smaller motor cycles were reduced recently, but if the Government were to introduce legislation banning the use of the larger machines by immature riders, it would be doing the community a great service.

Passenger cars should also be looked at closely. Today more and more vehicles have turbo-chargers and fuel injection, and the motors develop tremendous power. The number of such vehicles is increasing. I read an article tonight which said that next year many of the popular vehicles will have fuel injection and turbo-chargers. One car that was referred to that shocked me was the moderately priced Mitsubishi Cordia turbo. A car that costs \$12,000 was referred to as being moderately priced.

Mr Elliott: A wealthy man like you would probably think it was moderately priced.

Mr SMITH: Many people consider vehicles in that price range to be moderately priced.

That vehicle is so powerful that it is dangerous in the hands of anyone but a very skilled driver.

The sale of modifications is virtually unpoliced. In accessory shops, a little sign that no-one takes any notice of reads, "Certain equipment may be illegal if fitted to your vehicle. Please check." Of course, nobody does. Many people fit wide tyres. Anyone who has any engineering knowledge knows that when wide tyres are fitted to a vehicle,

traction and control are lost. Many young people regard their cars as naked if they do not carry four headlights. Many have attached aircraft lights and any honourable member who has encountered them while driving on the highway would know just how dangerous they are. The sale of this type of equipment is not controlled by the authorities, and a dangerous situation is developing. It is available on what is termed the "after market".

I admit that it is probably difficult for State Governments alone to do much about my next concern, but something can be done in conjunction with the Federal Government. I refer to the wide use of passenger-type vans or derivatives of commercial vans that do not meet the safety standards of passenger vehicles. At this point no requirement is placed on the distributors of such vehicles to make them conform to safety standards. I wonder how many crashes will have to occur before something is done. I know that the State Ministers have discussed these matters with the Federal Government, but the issue should not be let run on. It must be addressed soon.

The introduction of a blood alcohol limit of .02 for 17-year-olds is unnecessarily discriminatory. Very little argument can be put forward for not applying that blood alcohol level to the entire community. I can see no reason why any driver coming up for his licence should not be bound by that provision. Many young people will consider this provision as being discriminatory and it may add to the alienation that the youth of today experiences and complains about.

I certainly will not make my speech political, but I suggest that the Government's policy of allowing the development of hotels with car-parking facilities for thousands of cars is wrong. Smaller hotels should be developed in more locations. The Government's policy has contributed to the current drink-driving problem.

The aspect of the Bill that provides for the granting of provisional licences will attract most media attention and will be of great interest to those in the community who may benefit from it. I am sure that, if people were honest, they would say when someone else is convicted of a drink-driving offence, "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

I count myself among those who share a very grave concern for families affected by the loss of the driving licence of the bread-winner. In support of this provision, I contrast the case of a company director or office worker who is comparatively well paid and loses his licence to that of a person who drives for a living and loses his licence. The effect on the company director or office worker and his family is minimal compared with that on the bread-winner, who drives for a living, and his family. Many people have come to me expressing the hope that the legislation will be enacted soon.

Many of those people are in their late forties and early fifties and are holding down fairly ordinary sorts of jobs. Admittedly some of them have tolerant employers who are able to give them other duties, but if they are put off the road and out of a job, the job competition is such that the great majority of them will not be re-employed for a long time. That has a very dramatic effect on the person convicted and the members of his family. I support that part of the Bill.

Overtime provisions in the Bill that go with the one I have just mentioned will have to be amended by the Government. One is the discretion available to a magistrate to double the period of disqualification if the provisional licence is granted. I do not see that that serves any worthwhile purpose. I will not argue the point at any great length, but I think time will prove that.

Under the legislation, an applicant before the court must nominate the particular class of vehicle that he will be operating during the period of operation of his provisional licence. I take the view that that part of the Bill is defective and that that matter should be taken out of the hands of a court.

Certainly a magistrate should have the discretion to grant a provisional licence, but other means ought to be available to nominate the class of vehicle, so that, if a person changes his employment and needs to operate a different class of vehicle, that can be

done by regulatory means rather than by going back to court. That is a very serious practical objection and I hope that it receives some consideration.

I note that the Bill increases the penalty for leaving the scene of an accident in the case of death from \$400 to \$800 and, in the case of injury, from \$200 to \$400. As I understand it, at present no penalty applies if someone leaves the scene of an accident in which no injury is caused. In recent years I have noted an increasing incidence of social irresponsibility when someone who has caused damage to another person's vehicle refuses point-blank to give his name. Usually he tells the affected person where to go in no uncertain terms. Unless a person is prepared to take civil action, no redress can be had. That is very unfair to the careful people in the community. They should be able to more readily identify the people who, perhaps through carelessness or other reasons, cause damage to their vehicle. If somebody as much as backs into another vehicle, these days the damage will cost \$100 to \$150 to repair.

One part of the Bill that makes little sense to me is the scale of penalty for leaving the scene of an accident in which someone has been injured, which varies from \$200 to \$400. Somebody could be very, very seriously injured—perhaps he or she might even die at a later stage—but the maximum fine is \$400. By the same rule, if somebody received a sprained wrist in the accident, the magistrate is entitled to impose a penalty of \$200. Those penalties are totally inappropriate. As I said, that there is no provision for a penalty when no injury is sustained, and that is quite iniquitous.

The Minister and his department should consider further the problem of unregistered motor vehicles. One does not want to increase the economic difficulties of people in the present economic climate, but it is a widely recognised fact that more and more unregistered cars are being driven. In an accident that occurred recently, the number plates on the vehicle were not registered plates. I am informed—those honourable members who keep their ears to the ground would know—that number-plates come from all sorts of areas.

When cars are dumped, the less honest but perhaps more enterprising people in the community are not too far behind the ball in quickly whipping the registration plates off the wrecked or abandoned vehicle. Those plates can be sold for a price. For that reason, I suggest that the time when registration plates are available for a nominal fee has well and truly passed. Admittedly, nobody wants to increase the cost of motoring to anyone, but it seems that motorists must pay for their plates. There must be a substantial deposit system so that people will not indiscriminately dispose of plates or throw them away. At the same time, if registration plates are lost or if they are stolen, some sort of mechanism, even if it is a statutory declaration, should be implemented so that the registration plates can be replaced without great cost.

Under the present system, the lack of value of registration plates is adding to the illegal use of motor vehicles and the problem of identifying them. People involved in accidents cannot be traced. Very often, the people who drive unregistered vehicles are not very careful. Someone can easily find himself bearing the full cost of damage caused to his vehicle by the driver of an unregistered motor vehicle.

I hope that the Government will reconsider its attitude to the type of driver's licence that is presently on issue. No matter how well a licence is looked after, it is not a substantial document and very often it does not last for the period for which it is issued.

Statements have been made about the difficulty of providing the type of licence that is now available in Victoria and other States. If the whole problem of road safety and driver responsibility is to be addressed, the Government has a large role to play. It should be to the fore, even if it has to establish special centres throughout Queensland. That would be an important step towards driver accountability and driver responsibility. Ultimately, it would provide some contribution to the reduction in the loss of life and injury on Queensland's roads.

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (10.23 p.m.), in reply: I have listened to the contributions made by Opposition members. They contained almost nothing worth commenting on.

Mr Prest: There is nothing in the Bill.

Mr LANE: I could not help noticing how everyone wanted to identify with some of its provisions. That is understandable, because the Bill contains some very worthy provisions. The provisions will prove to be very popular in the community, particularly those providing for provisional or limited licences. I am sure that if I pick up "The Gladstone Observer", I will read that the member for Port Curtis will be claiming credit for that provision. People will walk into his office and say, "I will be out of work because I lost my licence. Mr Prest, what can you do to help me?" If the honourable member has any sense, he will say to his constituent, "You have the right to make an application to the court when you appear for sentence. If you can convince the magistrate that you need the licence during working hours, the magistrate has a discretion to issue you with a limited licence so that you can still enjoy your employment and feed your wife and kids." I am sure that the honourable member for Port Curtis will be one of the first honourable members to say that. There is nothing wrong with that. The legislation is very popular.

The Opposition spokesman, the member for Mackay, said that he offered guarded support for the legislation. I thank him very much for that. He did raise one matter that I will straighten out just in case other honourable members misunderstood the intention of the Bill. The member for Mackay talked about the provision for a form to be tendered in court under oath. That provision is contained in clause 12 of the Bill. An application for a provisional licence may be received in writing. A defendant will give evidence under oath when making the application.

That provision in the legislation is to keep defendants honest. Experience in other States shows that applications have been made from the floor of the court by defendants, not under oath and with no statutory obligations to tell the truth, or by their legal representatives. Magistrates have tended to take the word of defendants in those circumstances and they have been released in sausage-machine fashion on limited licences. It has not been effective when it has been tried in other States for the same reason. The Queensland Government has a different approach. Such an application is to be made under oath so that at the time of sentence defendants are subject to cross-examination by the magistrate as to the veracity of their claim that they need a licence.

Mr Shaw: Can they come back later on?

Mr LANE: I was about to say that honourable members will see in the Bill that defendants have a once-only opportunity to make that application. If they were given the opportunity to come back again and again to the court because their shifts changed at work, they changed employment or moved from town to town, the court would end up in an unholy mess; the administrative burden would be enormous. There would also be a large margin for error in administration. Therefore the Queensland Government thought it wise in the introduction of this new scheme that an application be made once only at the time of sentence.

Motion (Mr Lane) agreed to.

Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Row, Hinchinbrook) in the chair; Hon. D. F. Lane (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 7, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—Amendment of s. 16; Driving etc., whilst under influence of liquor or drugs or with prescribed concentration of alcohol in blood—

Mr CASEY (10.29 p.m.): The most important point in clause 8 is the first of its provisions, which places certain restrictions on one group of people and one group of

people only in this State, that is, people aged 17 to 18 years, if that is their age when they obtain their licences, and that would cover the majority of young people. These days 17 years is the magical age at which young people want to get their drivers' licences. The legislation clearly states, "Any person who has not attained the age of 18 years" The clause imposes a restriction on one group of people. It is discriminatory legislation at its worst. As members, we often receive complaints from our constituents about the treatment that 17-year-olds receive from police; in some instances harassment is alleged. Some might be young larrikins and warrant the attention of the police, but does that justify legislation that discriminates against everybody in that age group?

As I said at the second-reading stage, I believe that the Government looks upon this provision as another source of revenue. It will encourage police to stop young kids who think that, because they are able to drive, they can have a drink and be as right as rain.

The Opposition has given guarded support to the Bill. The Minister referred to that in his reply. Opposition members would like statistics to be issued in the future to prove that the legislation is working in the way in which the Minister claims it will work. Some 17-year-olds are a darned sight better drivers than most honourable members. The young people of today are very skilled, but they require practical experience. That is why they should not become affected by alcohol in any way. However, the Opposition believes that that observation applies equally to all who are granted a licence for the first time.

For that reason, I move the following amendment—

"At page 3, line 28, omit the words—

'has not attained the age of 18 years'

and substitute the words—

'during the first twelve months from the date of the issue of that person's first licence'."

The .02 restriction will still apply to inexperienced drivers. That is really the proposal that is put forward as an amendment.

Mr Davis: "Inexperienced" is the key word.

Mr CASEY: It is indeed.

Recently I was acquainted with the experience of a person in my electorate who obtained a licence for the first time at 50 years of age. After two months, he had nine points and lost his licence. I guarantee that, if the police had followed him, he would have lost it within two hours. He was a completely inexperienced driver. He was not even .002, much less .02. A skilled driving instructor had enabled him to pass a driving test. Before he was too much older, he had lost his licence again.

The Government ought to be looking beyond ripping fines off 17-year-old kids who may have been a little silly or frivolous and given a member of the police force an opportunity to harass them. The Government ought to be directing its attention to the inexperienced driver, who causes problems on the roads.

Mr LANE: The amendment moved by the honourable member for Mackay is not acceptable to the Government.

Mr Davis: Why not?

Mr LANE: For very good reason. There is no need for the member for Brisbane Central to jump down my throat. I will tell him about it.

The .02 provision for 17-year-olds was inserted quite deliberately. First, an abnormally high percentage of young people are killed on the roads. As I said in my second-reading speech, the age group between 17 and 25 years is over-represented in road

crashes. Although only 15 per cent of the population is in that age group, it accounts for 35 per cent of all road deaths. The Government thought that it would start somewhere, so it put forward the modest provision of virtually zero blood alcohol for the first year's driving of young people only.

Honourable members would be aware that the Liquor Act and other laws of this State prohibit the serving of alcohol to people under the age of 18 years. That is a very sound law. The Government would not wish to concede, to adopt the word used by the Opposition spokesman, that 17-year-olds drink and that therefore there ought to be latitude given in their allowable blood alcohol level. The Government does not accept that contention, and so the provisions virtually apply to the 17-year-old age group.

I mention that the provisions are supported by the largest motoring organisation in the State, the Royal Automobile Club of Queensland. That organisation has very firmly expressed the view that the provisions relating to first-year licence-holders should not apply to mature people. The RACQ said that the zero alcohol provision should not be applied to people who have reached their late 20s, 30s, 40s or middle-age and have obtained a driver's licence. That opinion was based on the fact that people in those age groups could be expected to be more responsible. Officers of the Department of Transport canvassed the opinion of that organisation, and the honourable member for Mackay is therefore off side with the State's major motoring organisation. The honourable member is probably very happy to hear that, but I felt that I ought to let him know. For those reasons, the amendment is opposed.

Mr PREST: I am unable to accept the Minister's reason for retaining clause 8. He stated that the age group mentioned in the clause makes up 15 per cent of all drivers to which the provisions of the Bill will apply, while at the same time being involved in 35 per cent of all the fatalities that occur on Queensland's roads. Even if the alcohol level is .02, .05 or .125, if the driver is of age but is irresponsible, no section of the Act can effect an immediate change in a road accident situation.

Mr Elliott: That is the kind of negative thinking that honourable members have come to expect from you.

Mr PREST: The honourable member for Cunningham would not understand. He is a dill, and that is why he lost his LTD and has been sour on the world ever since. But the honourable member will grow up.

The amendment moved by members of the Opposition does not discriminate against 17 and 18-year-olds. Opposition members pointed out the inexperience of people of that age, and there is ample evidence in media reports to support the contention that a large number of people over the age of 25 years are obtaining a driver's licence. The provisions of the proposed amendment place such people on the same footing as a 17 or 18-year-old person. However, Government members, not Opposition members, are discriminating against the 17 and 18-year-old group.

Some people do not obtain a driver's licence until they reach approximately 55 years of age and for the first time acquire a motor car and find someone to teach them to drive. Opposition members recognise the lack of experience associated with that group of older people but recognise also that the blood alcohol level of people in that group can be .02 or .05 with no detrimental effect. Young people of 17 years of age who have a blood alcohol content of .02 are being classed as irresponsible. However, I believe that a young person would be more capable of handling a car than older people with a similar blood alcohol level.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr PREST: The honourable member for Lockyer has not demonstrated very much ability, and probably does not understand the matter being discussed. He should go back to his green frogs and go to sleep again.

The Minister should not dwell on the statistics that show that people in the age groups of 17 and 18 years, or under the age of 25 years, have a high fatality rate. The Government should attempt to provide a fair chance in the world for people who are alive, and it should not discriminate against a particular age group.

Mr DAVIS: As the other two Opposition speakers have said, surely the basic purpose of this clause is to act as a deterrent. It could not have been inserted for any other reason. Public opinion has forced the Government to do something——

Mr Borbidge: The statistics prove that the Minister's proposal is correct.

Mr DAVIS: The cut-out cardboard coppers referred to by the member for Surfers Paradise are about the limit of his concern for road safety. As far as I am concerned, that statistic is a lot of garbage.

What is the difference between a 17, 18 or 19-year-old? The basic point is that the Government must educate persons not to drive after they have consumed alcohol, and the best way to educate them is to introduce some sort of deterrent. It should not matter whether a driver is 17, 18, 19 or 20 years of age; any driver who has been newly issued with a licence should not drive after having consumed alcohol. The Government reduced the blood alcohol limit from .08 to .05 only because of the public reaction to the extremely high road toll.

Mr FitzGerald: Do you agree with it or not?

Mr DAVIS: I said to the member for Lockyer that although he might not agree with the reduction, I do. Within the next 10 years, because of public reaction to the mounting road toll, no alcohol consumption will be allowed. That change will be forced on politicians. The Opposition sees the proposed amendment as a sensible way to begin that process. We say that no newly-licensed driver should be able to consume alcohol for the first 12 months. We believe that it is an education process so that all drivers will learn not to consume alcohol before they drive. I believe that there should be a zero blood alcohol limit, not .02. I support the amendment.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted from clause 8 (Mr Casey's amendment) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided—

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Austin	Lickiss
Bailey	Lingard
Bjelke-Petersen	Littleproud
Booth	McKechnie
Borbidge	McPhie
Cahill	Menzel
Chapman	Miller
Cooper	Muntz
Elliott	Newton
FitzGerald	Powell
Gibbs, I. J.	Randell
Glasson	Simpson
Goleby	Stephan
Gygar	Stoneman
Harper	Tenni
Henderson	Turner
Hinze	Wharton
Innes	White
Jennings	
Katter	<i>Tellers:</i>
Knox	Kaus
Lane	Neal

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Burns	
Campbell	
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Comben	
De Lacy	
Eaton	
Fouras	
Goss	
Hamill	
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Mackenroth	
McElligott	
McLean	
Milliner	
Prest	
Price	
Scott	
Shaw	
Smith	
Underwood	
Vaughan	
Veivers	<i>Tellers:</i>
Warburton	Davis
Warner, A. M.	D'Arcy

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 8, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 9 to 11, as read, agreed to.

Clause 12—New s. 20A; Issue of provisional licence to disqualified person—

Mr CASEY (10.51 p.m.): As to the division—the Opposition could move a number of other amendments, but it will not proceed with them.

Another major principle incorporated in the Bill is embodied in clause 12. I accept the Minister's assurance in reply to my remarks at the second-reading stage that the Bill does state that the prescribed form shall be available or an application for a provisional licence can be made in the prescribed form by a person before the court. However, the clause states that an application for an order under this new section may be made; that is as far as the legislation goes.

As the Minister stated clearly in his second-reading speech, and as I mentioned, a person may make an application for a provisional licence on only one occasion, and that is when he appears before the court. Irrespective of circumstances, an application cannot be made at a later time. That is one of the dangers in the Bill.

I can visualise circumstances in which a provisional licence may have to be taken back. Must a driver appear before a court in that case? That is not clear in the Bill. Once a driver is given a provisional licence for a prescribed time under clause 12, great difficulty will arise in changing that order. What the Bill must ensure is that the defendant or the person who is before the court must be informed of his rights prior to the case being heard.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr CASEY: Thank you, Mr Row. It is unfortunate that many of the new members on the Government side are absolutely rude. They do not know the rules of the Chamber. If they want to talk, they should go outside and talk. They chit-chat on all day long, for all their worth, hard and fast. Unfortunately, some of the new Ministers set a bad example.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I called the Chamber to order. I remind the honourable member for Mackay that I do not need any assistance.

Mr CASEY: You could have fooled me, Mr Row, with the noise in the Chamber.

The point that I clearly make is that people do have rights and should be informed of those rights by the court. The prescribed form will be introduced with the regulations. It is insufficient that that form is the only thing on which the granting of a provisional licence hangs. The Minister should give the Committee a further assurance that, in the regulations, the prescribed form will be outlined and the procedure to be adopted by the court will be shown clearly. Power exists under the regulations to do that, without moving an amendment to the legislation. The Bill should provide, however, that the magistrate, the policeman in charge of the court, or the superintendent of traffic or his nominee—whoever is in charge of the court—must outline the offender's rights to him when he first appears, so that he knows what to do before the court. After that, it will be too late to apply for a provisional licence.

Mr SHAW: I support the remarks made by the member for Mackay. Some of the honourable members who did not take much notice of his remarks will, when young people come into their offices in the future stating that not only have they lost their licence but also, as a result of that, they have lost their job, remember that he spoke on this subject. The Bill very clearly states that the granting of a provisional licence is a once-only opportunity. This part of the Bill will mainly affect very young people, the very ones who are suffering a great deal from a lack of job opportunities. They are also very inexperienced.

Just as I am sure other members do, I know of cases of young people who have been picked up on a Saturday night for drink-driving. Now they can be picked up for

having a blood alcohol content over .02. As the Minister has said, that is virtually zero alcohol. A person can get to .02 without having any alcoholic drinks whatsoever. Even with very, very careful drinking, a person can still get to .02. So I am not speaking about blatant criminal activity; I am speaking of a minor indiscretion. As these people are young and inexperienced, sometimes they do not realise what is involved. The people who are picked up on Saturday night appear in court at 9 o'clock on Monday morning and have lost their licence by Monday night. It is not until the end of the week that they realise the implications of that. By that time, the opportunity to gain a provisional licence will be lost. I have grave concern that the major benefit of a very worthwhile reform that is being introduced will be lost. I know that the Minister has said that this measure will cause a great deal of inconvenience, but I think it is an inconvenience to the Government that could be well borne for the sake of young people, because the loss of a job so early in their careers will be a great tragedy for them.

Mr SMITH: The Minister did not reply when I raised this point at the second-reading stage. The court is required to nominate the class of vehicle that is to be driven during the period of the provisional licence. I certainly accept that the court grants the provisional licence, but I believe it could be left to the machinery processes to specify what type of vehicle can be driven where and when. Those machinery processes also ought to be able to take account of a person's changed employment circumstances. The Minister has talked about a once-only provisional licence, but there ought to be some flexibility and it ought not to have to go before the court.

Mr LANE: I think the Government has made its intentions fairly clear on this provision. I am proceeding with caution on this matter because experience in other States has shown that the provision has become just a rubber stamp. Therefore, the Government is being very careful to put some restraint on it while at the same time leaving to the magistrate the ultimate discretion to exercise in compassionate cases.

Clause 12, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 13 to 37, as read, agreed to.

Long title—

Mr LANE (10.59 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

“That the title of the Bill be amended by omitting the words ‘in certain particulars’ where they first occur.”

The printing of these words in the Bill was either a printing or drafting error. There is nothing controversial or difficult about their removal. In order to correct that error, I ask that honourable members support the amendment.

Amendment (Mr Lane) agreed to.

Long title, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amended title.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Lane, by leave, read a third time.

URBAN PUBLIC PASSENGER TRANSPORT BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 31 October (see p. 2109) on Mr Lane's motion—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (11.2 p.m.): During the debate on the Traffic Acts Amendment Bill many members referred at great length to road safety and traffic problems. One of the most prevalent causes of traffic problems and congestion throughout the length and

breadth of Queensland, particularly in the metropolitan area, is the lack of urban public transport.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister clearly outlined the problem that arises in those areas. Only one in 10 persons in the south-east corner of the State uses public transport to travel to and from work. The remainder use private vehicles.

The cash returns outlined by the Minister must alarm everyone. For instance, the Brisbane City Council, which operates the major bus service in this State, receives only a 39 per cent annual return on its operating costs. The figures relating to the railways are even worse. The Minister confessed that only 27 per cent was returned to the people of Queensland on the capital outlaid and work involved in operating the railway transport system in the south-east corner of the State. Consequently, legislators need continually to upgrade legislation that relates to urban public passenger transport.

The legislation, which has been introduced by a National Party so-called free enterprise Government, is one of the best pieces of socialist legislation that I have seen introduced since I became a member of this Assembly. Mr Speaker, I know that that statement has shocked you. I sincerely hope that, when you return to your room during the debate at the Committee stage, you will examine the Bill and see exactly what I mean. In some respects, it is not good socialist legislation. As the debate continues, I will point out some of the problems with it.

My first concern arises in the definitions outlined in the Bill. "Urban centre" is defined as being a place that has "a population of more than 10 000 persons or such other area of the State as the Governor in Council by Order in Council declares to be an urban centre;". I do not think that this State will ever again have a Liberal Government. However, a Labor Government after the next election will be able through the Governor in Council to declare any area of this State as an urban centre. That could mean the smallest town. The commissioner could override the clause insofar as an urban passenger service is concerned. Those things will have to be watched because of later provisions in the Bill.

The Commissioner for Transport is being given sweeping powers. That is why the legislation causes concern. Under the principles incorporated in the Bill, the Commissioner for Transport can do virtually anything "to provide, develop, encourage and promote a properly integrated and co-ordinated system of urban passenger services generally" anywhere in the State of Queensland. So it is open slather from go to whoa. The commissioner can "operate by himself or in conjunction with any other person" He can "assist any other person in the operation of an urban passenger service by the provision of monetary assistance", which, of course, will have to come from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, "passenger transport vehicles, business or storage premises," etc.

With these powers the Commissioner for Transport can "acquire, use, sell, lease, let on hire land, premises, rolling-stock and facilities connected with the efficient operation of an urban passenger service" There is no question about it. The commissioner can take over the Brisbane City Council bus service in Brisbane. He can take over the bus service in Toowoomba, Townsville, Rockhampton, Mount Isa and even Kingaroy, if it has one—and I do not think that it has. That is the sort of thing that could happen.

The Commissioner for Transport can, if he so desires, start forming a completely socialist enterprise bus system right throughout the length and breadth of Queensland. He has that power under the Bill. I would be the first to admit that that power would also enable a Labor Government to introduce policies that it desires to see implemented in relation to an integrated transport system in the south-eastern corner of the State and in other areas.

The legislation is great stuff and it looks great stuff. However, one of the provisions gives the Commissioner for Transport virtual power to provide open-ended subsidies for any bus service anywhere in the State. That must be looked at very carefully. I know

that many bus operators in this State—small, struggling bus operators in country areas—would be very concerned about the power that the commissioner will have over bus services in their areas—school bus services, licensed bus services and, of course, the major through transportation bus services.

The commissioner also has the power to occupy any road or construct any facility on any road. The legislation gives the Commissioner for Transport perhaps the greatest overriding powers of any public servant in this State.

Under the powers and functions that I mentioned earlier, the Bill contains the power to provide an urban passenger transport scheme. Page 14 of the Bill says—

“the provisions of an urban passenger transport scheme shall apply notwithstanding any provision to the contrary contained in a by-law under the Local Government Act . . . , the Harbours Act . . . , the Port of Brisbane Authority Act . . . , the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act . . . , the Railways Act . . . , the City of Brisbane Act . . . or the City of Brisbane Town Planning Act . . . ”

Mr Miller: He is the Commissioner for Transport.

Mr CASEY: True. Nobody is denying that. However, because of the way in which his powers and functions are set out in the Bill, he may completely override any local authority or any harbour board in the State. Under an urban passenger transport scheme, he may waltz in and impose his will, irrespective of what may be said by the Commissioner for Railways. We all know that under the Railways Act the Commissioner for Railways has imposing overriding powers. However, he is pushed aside by the powers given by the Bill to the Commissioner for Transport.

Mr Davis: What about the Minister?

Mr CASEY: I will come to that in a moment. That touches on many other matters in the Bill that we are not happy about.

If the construction of a transport terminal, for instance, is deemed to be part of an urban passenger transport scheme, the local authority, the electricity authority and the water authority have no say whatsoever in the matter. Because of his overriding powers, the Commissioner for Transport has his way.

Two Acts are deliberately written into the Bill—the City of Brisbane Act and the City of Brisbane Town Planning Act. One of the reasons why I believe the overriding provision and other important provisions are written in is that, with the Metropolitan Transit Authority out of the way, the Minister may complete negotiations with a person or persons for the construction of a building over the Roma Street Railway Station. That is what this Bill is all about. If I can discover the full sordid story on that, the Minister will have a very rough and uncomfortable time. Unquestionably, one of the reasons for the sacking of the Metropolitan Transit Authority was that it tried to have a say in what was happening at Roma Street. That authority has now been pushed out of the road so that the Minister can control the matter completely through the Commissioner for Transport.

That brings me to the interjection of the member for Brisbane Central. Clause 17 contains a principle embodied in most legislation introduced by the Minister. The commissioner shall be subject to the Minister's directions. The Commissioner for Transport has powers which completely override the Local Government Act and the City of Brisbane Act, which are administered by the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing, the Harbours Act, administered by the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services, and the Railways Act, which is administered by this Minister. Clause 17 then vests in the Minister for Transport an overriding power of direction over the Commissioner for Transport. That gives him authority to override the Ministers I have mentioned. That is one of the big dangers that Opposition members see in the Bill. At a later stage, therefore, we will move that that power of ministerial direction be deleted and that the commissioner be subject to the Governor in Council.

Such overriding powers as are given to the Commissioner for Transport under the Bill ought to be the subject of Cabinet consideration, not of approval by an individual Minister. Under the powers conferred by the Bill, the Minister for Transport can do anything he likes and get away with it.

Mr De Lacy: Power drunkenness at its worst.

Mr CASEY: I agree.

Mr De Lacy: Power corrupts!

Mr CASEY: How true. That might be the story behind the way in which the contract has been let for the Roma Street Railway Station.

In addition to the powers contained in clause 16 of the Bill, clause 18 incorporates the principle that capital works will not be undertaken and the commissioner shall not exercise his powers without the approval of the Governor in Council having first been obtained. The effect of that is that the Commissioner for Transport cannot construct a building without having obtained the permission of the Governor in Council; but, under the other powers that are given to him, he can certainly contract and negotiate the terms of a lease agreement. That is a distinction with a difference.

Upon examination of the commercial transactions that have been entered into by the Queensland Government relative to the construction and reconstruction of the premises at the Roma Street Railway Station, it can be seen clearly that the contract has been let to a firm in Brisbane. The premises will be constructed by that firm, and they will be leased back on a basis that will be determined by the Commissioner for Transport in this State.

Many things tie in together once an examination is made of what is happening in Queensland at present and of the activities and objectives of the Minister for Transport and some of his friends. Why did the former chairman of the Metropolitan Transit Authority fall out with the Minister on that particular matter, and why was the former chairman then sacked by the Government, or given the golden handshake to move him out?

It also is interesting that the Metropolitan Transit Authority Act is to be completely repealed. The Opposition does not oppose the repeal of that Act, because the Labor Party opposed its introduction in Queensland. Opposition members felt that the work could have been continued by the Commissioner for Railways under the provisions of legislation that was available already. However, that was not to be the case, and the particular power to which I referred was taken away from the Commissioner for Railways.

In a rather wishy-washy way, the Minister tried to indicate in his introductory remarks that the Metropolitan Transit Authority did not have sufficient powers to move ahead with what the Government wanted to do, and that was why the Act was being repealed. What a lot of rubbish! The powers can be provided by amendment of the Act, if that is all that is required. That is the excuse offered by the Minister for doing away with the Metropolitan Transit Authority, which was another quango that had been set up and was doing quite well. Unfortunately, it did not perform to the satisfaction of some of the friends of the Minister in the business community.

Mr Scott: That is what you were talking about, and he could not face up to your charges.

Mr CASEY: That does not worry me. The Minister for Primary Industries ran away today, too, as soon as an attack was made on him in this House. But that is what happens with this Government. The Opposition will keep the Government on the run until the next election day.

Mr Gygar: Wishful thinking again.

Mr CASEY: Well, hello! Charlie Chaplin is awake at this hour of the night. Goodness! It will not be long, Terry. The honourable member always goes to bed at midnight, anyway, as honourable members know. We will probably see him heading off again, like Cinderella, as soon as the clock strikes 12. However, the honourable member for Stafford does not have to turn into a pumpkin; he acts like one all the time.

Mr Gygar: You have not lost that line of attack.

Mr CASEY: No. It is a fine sense of knowing how to give a good kick in the you-know-where every now and then.

I return to discuss the provisions of the Bill. A cloud is hanging over the provision to which I have referred. The Minister for Transport has a responsibility to inform the House clearly about what is happening. I mentioned earlier that, under the old overriding powers, the commissioner is given certain powers. On page 11 of the Bill, a principle is incorporated that gives power to the commissioner, with the prior approval of the Minister, to from time to time make any gazette notification in relation to fares payable by persons using prescribed urban passenger services for specific journeys. That provision operates contrary to the provisions contained under the Railways Act, as the powers of the Commissioner for Railways are specified. The provisions under that Act state that whenever there is an alteration in fares that pertains to railways in Queensland, those fares must be approved by Cabinet and must be acceded to by the Governor in Council before they are gazetted by Order in Council. That is a well-known fact, and I am sure that the Leader of the House would be fully aware of that. There can be merely a notification in the Government Gazette, and not necessarily an Order in Council. It might be just a departmental instruction that is handed out, and there is no way that that would be tabled in this Parliament—which, after all, does represent the people who will be affected by fare increases. The Opposition feels that that provision should also be altered so that, instead of the Minister approving the increase, the prior approval of the Governor in Council is required.

While on the subject of fares—bus fares are perhaps one of the biggest transport problems in Queensland today. There are two different types of bus operators, the usual urban passenger service proprietors and those who are supported by this Government through the school conveyance system. In Queensland today, there would not be one bus operator who carries students on licensed routes and who makes what could be termed a decent living commensurate with the capital that he has had to invest.

Mr Miller: Running costs are very high.

Mr CASEY: Running costs have increased tremendously over the past few years, and a lot of them are due to increases in Government charges. One has only to look at the huge increases in registration fees imposed on bus operators by this Government, the huge increases in the registration fees for business names imposed by this Government and the huge increases in charges that the Transport Department itself has imposed. The bus operators are being hit to leg by this Government.

Mr Miller interjected.

Mr CASEY: It was this Government that caused an increase in fuel prices. The honourable member for Ithaca has introduced the subject of fuel. I remind him that if he crosses the border to a State that imposes a fuel tax, he can still buy fuel there cheaper than he can in Brisbane. Four or five months ago, there was supposed to be a fuel price war in Brisbane and in north Queensland, yet at the same time I was able to buy fuel in Victoria cheaper than I could in Queensland. So the sooner the honourable member can persuade his Government to introduce controls on the price of fuel in Queensland, the sooner bus operators will be able to make some sort of a profit.

To return to the point I was making about the problem with bus fares—the Government has to do something. I know that people do not like paying higher fares,

but the fares charged have to be sufficient to enable the private and public bus operators to achieve some sort of reasonable return. That has been clearly shown by the recent investigation conducted by the Federal Government into transport throughout Australia.

Still on the same subject, I must once again point to this Government's blase attitude towards the overcrowding on school buses. I have asked questions in this place, and the Minister, with tongue in cheek and with that stupid grin on his face under his nose——

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CASEY: I could have said some other rude things about his nose, Mr Speaker, but I did not. The Minister says, "There are no problems so far as overcrowding on school buses is concerned. They are all operating in accordance with their licences. If the honourable member has any evidence of overcrowding, he should present it to me."

I have presented the evidence to him. I have sent letter after letter. I know that the Commissioner for Transport is sitting in the lobby and cannot answer me, but he would confirm that he has an enormous pile of letters. He would not have the hide to say that there is no overcrowding on school buses. There would not be one member who has not received a complaint from his constituents about the overcrowding of school buses. I know that you, Mr Speaker, would nod your head in the affirmative and confirm that, over the years you have served as a member, you have received complaints from people about overcrowding on school buses. The community is concerned that the Government is sitting on a time bomb, and that one day a school bus will be involved in a major accident. That will be a catastrophe, and this Government will have blood on its hands. The Government is responsible for these problems because it does not enforce the rules applying to school buses and for not allowing bus operators to make a reasonable return.

The second matter of concern relates to the cut-throat operations of long-distance bus companies, which sell to travellers, for instance from Cairns to Brisbane, tickets from Cairns to Tweed Heads on a straight run through basis. As a result the licensed intrastate operators lose business and these smart companies, under section 92 of the Constitution, pay no fees to the State Transport Department. In addition their drivers were working very long hours. Deluxe Coachlines Pty Ltd and VIP Express Coaches were two companies that got in on the act. What did the Government do? Instead of taking appropriate legislative action and co-operating with the Federal and other State Governments, the Queensland Government simply authorised an additional firm to participate on the run. It issued an extra licence and the fiasco developed further.

Unions are now protesting about what is going on. I have received complaints about drivers working split shifts, which cause driver fatigue. Opposition members have also been told about what is termed two-up drivers on the one bus. That is a very dangerous practice. Under this system two drivers are put on the one bus. It travels continuously other than for very brief stops to pick up or set down passengers. Whilst one driver works, the other rests in a seat. Some drivers even lie in the aisle to get a little sleep before taking over on the next section of the run. Long-distance passenger buses are another time bomb waiting to explode. Drivers are forced to work long hours by the greedy companies in their cut-throat competition, which the Government considers to be private enterprise. Eventually, a fatigued driver will run off the road or, worse still, collide with another bus or semi-trailer. If that should happen, God forgive us; it will be an awful catastrophe. Every hour of every day in Queensland the potential is there for a major disaster.

A number of people have expressed concern. The trade union movement is very concerned for its members and the travelling public. The union movement has made constant approaches to the Government and the companies, but it has got nowhere because the Government will not enforce the loading regulations or the drivers' shift regulations. Transport inspectors are not pulling up buses to check the time-sheets on the split-shift and two-up bus services.

Mr Davis: The bus drivers must have log books.

Mr CASEY: Log books must be carried at all times to protect the public.

The regulations provide a margin for problems on the road. I have referred to some of the problems that need attention in the legislation.

A number of small bus operators who have had considerable dealings with the department are worried about what will happen when the regulations are framed. They are interested in many of the small bus operators who, in order to make an extra quid, take a group of pensioners over the week-end to the poker machines across the border. These trips are popular because the antiquated Queensland Government will not allow pokies in Queensland for the entertainment of the people. I could say that, because the mountain will not come to the people of Queensland, they must go to the mountain, and they do so by travelling interstate by bus. Because of the high cost of the bigger, air-conditioned coaches, small clubs in the south-eastern corner charter small buses. In provincial cities, pensioners going on picnics use the smaller buses because they cannot afford the luxury coaches.

As I understand it, indications have been given to small bus operators in Queensland that the licensing system will be tightened up so that they cannot operate any sort of tourist transport enterprise. I agree that a high standard of passenger bus must be available to cater for tourists. I am referring to tourists who travel through Queensland on package tours and who look for and expect a luxury air-conditioned coach for those trips. Surely the little battler who looks after his bus, keeps it in good condition and tries to pick up enough money from these chartered trips to overcome the losses that he incurs in providing a local service will not be carved out by the Government under this legislation. He will be hit to leg if the Government introduces its bus classification system.

The Government is made up of super optimists. I suppose that it can be optimistic because it knows that the Liberals will usually vote with it. However, I was surprised to find in the Queensland Government Gazette of 27 October—which was issued some weeks before the Urban Public Passenger Transport Bill was introduced—that all the jobs for the Division of Urban Public Transport were advertised. I know that the Minister wanted to proceed with haste but surely those provisions cannot be classified properly until the regulations are introduced. The Minister might be jumping the gun a little by advertising them before the Bill has been passed.

I have spoken with the former Metropolitan Transit Authority. I am quite sure that the Minister can enlighten the House about the blue between him and the chairman of the authority about the architect and the builder. If I am informed correctly, the Minister may also outline the special considerations that were given so that the builder could win the contract.

Mr KAUS (Mansfield) (11.34 p.m.): I will pass a few remarks about this Bill. The speaker who preceded me in the debate must remember that a commissioner must have power and control over future planning.

The honourable member for Mackay mentioned that future planning would involve urbanised areas. I am pleased that the Bill has application in all urban centres throughout the State. One of the shortcomings of the Metropolitan Transit Authority was that its operations were limited to the declared area of the south-east corner of the State. In effect, that meant that the planning, co-ordination and integration of urban public transport was confined to the Brisbane area, the Gold Coast and the North Coast. The Bill defines an urban centre as an area having a population of more than 10 000 persons, or such other area as the Governor in Council declares. That means that cities such as Townsville, Rockhampton and Gladstone can now be incorporated in urban public transport planning. No doubt that will be of great help to local authorities.

Mr Casey: I hope that this brief is a better one than the brief on mining.

Mr KAUS: That was a good brief; I was asked by many people for a copy of it.

The assistance from the department should be of some assistance to the urban areas of towns and provincial cities.

Clause 28 of the Bill provides that the Commissioner for Transport, with the approval of the Governor in Council, can determine that a single fare can be charged for a journey that involves more than one means of public transport. Clause 22 allows the commissioner to set the fare. Overseas experience has shown that the travelling public prefer to pay a single fare for a journey, even though part of that journey may be on a train and another part on a bus. The essence of public transport is that it must be convenient for the user. If the aim of this Bill is to help integrate the co-ordinated services, the public cannot be expected to queue for tickets every time they arrive at an interchange between one mode of transport and another.

When I was travelling in Canada a few years ago, I happened to see that sort of thing, particularly in Vancouver, where one can travel by bus, by ferry and even on the new train with only one ticket. Because of the ideal and beautiful shopping centres on the other side of the bay, I travelled across the bay on many occasions. I commend the commissioner for introducing that sort of a system.

The legislation contains a commonsense proposal that will benefit the travelling public. I am pleased to see that the Bill makes provision for transport operators and the public to have a direct input into the planning of urban public transport, by way of the provision to establish advisory committees, which are charged with the responsibility of advising the commissioner on any matter in the Bill. The Minister has indicated his desire to make these committees regionally based, which is quite sensible. When those committees are organised, I will have a few proposals to make, particularly for my area. When the new train line is constructed to Fisherman Islands, I would like to see an electrified three-line track so that it can cater for freight, which will be carried on the standard gauge of 4 feet 8½ inches, as well as for passengers to the port of Brisbane. That would be a service to quite a few people in the area. If it is to respond to the needs of the people, urban public transport must have public participation. That is fundamental. The advisory committees will play an effective part in that planning process.

The Bill introduces a new concept in the form of an urban passenger transport scheme that can be declared by the Governor in Council and published in the Government Gazette. The scheme will then become binding on those to whom it applies. One of the difficulties confronting urban public transport-planners is that, for their efforts to come to fruition, there must be some form of agreement that proposals for integrating or co-ordinating services are adhered to by the operators. It is no good proposing an integrated service and building the facilities if the operators refuse to use it. A classic example is at Enoggera, where the Metropolitan Transit Authority built a bus/rail interchange for the purpose of introducing an efficient feeder system to minimise the number of council buses travelling to the city. The council gave the interchange its tacit support. In fact, it continued to operate many bus services that the interchange was meant to reduce. That demonstrates the thinking of the council officers and their approach to modern-day co-ordinating services. I see this new scheme as being an effective means of ensuring that unnecessary duplication of services and facilities can be minimised through planning that ensures that the operators use their resources in the context of a properly co-ordinated plan.

A critical part of urban public transport is the facilities available to the public that will encourage them to use public transport as opposed to their own cars. I commend the commissioner for providing well-lit and well-maintained car-parks, clean and up-to-date railway stations and functional bus sheds. I regard them as important as the vehicles themselves, particularly when they are well-lit late at night. Every time I pass railway car-parks in my electorate, I notice that they are full or that there is not a great deal of room for parking. I would like to see those facilities expanded.

Mr Davis: Have you tried the new public transport yourself?

Mr KAUS: Yes. I like it. I have travelled on the electric trains. They are the best in the world.

I note that the Bill makes the Commissioner for Transport a constructing authority. Included in his functions under the Bill is the ability to develop or assist in the provision of facilities connected with the use of urban passenger services. I hope that the Minister continues the program of upgrading and building new car-parks, particularly those at suburban railway stations.

The suburban rail electrification program has given Brisbane a fleet of electric trains second to none in the world. I am aware that since their introduction the growth in patronage has exceeded all expectations. The annual report of the Railway Department shows that since 1979 the downward trend in the number of suburban rail journeys has halted and that the number has, in fact, increased, from 26 million passenger journeys to 36 million.

As I have said, whenever I pass a railway car-park, it is packed. Recently I tried to park at the Coorparoo Railway Station car-park. My efforts proved fruitless. I was pleased to see that the car-park was being used to such an extent. I dare say that the construction and upgrading of more car/rail interchanges will result in even more commuters using rail as their principal mode of transport to and from work.

I support the Bill.

Mr McELLIGOTT (Townsville) (11.43 p.m.): There are only three points in the Bill that I wish to raise. In his second-reading speech the Minister referred to the extension of the jurisdiction of the proposed authority to regional centres. Naturally, I readily accept and endorse the regionalisation of Government services. This is no exception.

To my knowledge, the debate concerning the provision of urban or public transport has been going on in Townsville for many years. I am sure that is happening in other provincial cities throughout the State. As communities have expanded to the outer suburbs, residents have found themselves without adequate transport and returned to private cars. It is catch-22 situation. The world-wide trend indicates that most people prefer, if possible, to use their own transport. So, as I said, it has been a catch-22 situation.

To some extent, local authorities have aggravated the problem by insisting on the provision of, and in many cases providing, car-parking facilities in the centre of a city. So again, people are encouraged to use their own private transport to get to and from the city. That provides no incentive to private operators of public transport to invest the moneys necessary to purchase capital equipment to provide adequate services. Nevertheless, the problem exists. Some people do not have access to private vehicles. That causes many social problems. The suburban housewife with children cannot get out of her home environment to take advantage of whatever facilities or activities are available in the city. That matter cannot be ignored.

The Townsville City Council, in a submission to the Federal Minister for Transport, identified 11 basic issues in relation to a public passenger bus system in the Townsville urban area. These included the obvious problems of declining patronage, rapidly increasing operating and overhead costs, and increases in route kilometres per passenger. As I mentioned, these would certainly be repeated in major provincial cities throughout the State.

I was very interested to hear the recommendation made by the honourable member for Lytton earlier this evening in regard to the planning of access corridors and so on. If the authority has one priority, it ought to be to come up with the urban transport plans for each of our provincial cities, not necessarily as a commitment for the immediate future but to indicate where public transport systems of various modes will operate in the future. That would enable all authorities, including local authorities and State Government instrumentalities, to plan around those systems.

The second point that I want to make is in regard to school bus services, particularly on major highways. Again, that is a State-wide problem. Every day in my electorate, at the northern extremity, six passenger buses collect schoolchildren from up and down the Bruce Highway in the vicinity of the Bohlevale State School. They congregate at that school at about 8.30 each morning. The primary school children attending Bohlevale State School disembark from the buses. The high school students get out of the buses and move onto other buses that are destined for the various State high schools in the Townsville city area. This incredible movement of schoolchildren in buses takes place on a very busy Bruce Highway.

Incidentally, the situation at Bohlevale State School is aggravated by the presence of the main northern railway as well. It is a very dangerous situation. I am concerned also about the inadequate provision of bus stops along the highway itself. In every instance the bus stops are not marked. There is no indication to motorists that bus stops are a short distance ahead, and in a number of cases insufficient room is provided on the road shoulders for the bus to actually move off the highway, so that the bus is parked in a dangerous position. That causes danger not only to the schoolchildren on the bus but also to motorists using that highway.

I have taken the matter up with local Main Roads and Transport Department officials, and I have been promised that certain action will be taken. However, in view of the seriousness of the matter, I raise it in the House in the hope that some action will be taken. Because of my particular interest in my area, I have taken note of the situation in other areas of the State, and I must say that the same dangerous situation exists elsewhere. Many members who represent country electorates would have similar problems.

The third point that I want to raise will probably not be seen as being relevant to this debate. It relates to the public jetty at Picnic Bay on Magnetic Island, which is in my electorate. I understand that some years ago the Department of Harbours and Marine made a decision to relinquish all responsibility for tourist-type jetties up and down the coast. The Picnic Bay jetty has usually been placed in that category, and therefore is not receiving any support from the Government. The Townsville Harbour Board and the Townsville City Council have been arguing for some years as to whose responsibility it is.

The people of Magnetic Island make a good point when they say that the jetty is a vital part of their public transport system. I am inclined to agree with them. There are now approximately 1 200 permanent residents on Magnetic Island, many of whom commute to and from Townsville each day. Among those people, of course, are schoolchildren attending high schools in Townsville and workers who have positions in the city. In many weather conditions, embarking and disembarking at the jetty can be very dangerous. In my opinion, the only real solution is the development of a still-water harbour at Picnic Bay. A number of suggestions have been put forward about how the jetty can be improved. Quite frankly, none of those suggestions will ensure safety in all weathers.

The cost is of the order of \$5m, so it is not a minor project. However, it would provide an assured public transport link for permanent residents of Magnetic Island between the island and the mainland. In addition, it would create a magnificent tourist facility and relieve the pressures on Ross River for the anchorage of private craft. It would establish itself as one of the principal stop-over points for private vessels moving up and down the coast. The benefits, therefore, would be twofold.

Although that would normally not be regarded as relating to urban public transport, I repeat that it is critical to the public transport of Magnetic Island residents and, as such, deserves the consideration of honourable members.

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (11.51 p.m.): Government members are very interested to hear discussion about buses——

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr Scott: Do you think he's on the wrong bus, Brian?

Mr ELLIOTT: Some people are on the wrong bus—members of the Opposition, in particular.

I congratulate the Minister, not only for this Bill but also for his achievements in the time that he has been responsible for the portfolio. In the time that I have been in the Parliament, no Minister has come to grips with the portfolio as well as he has.

In view of the record of the Metropolitan Transit Authority, the Bill is a sensible one. The Minister has been prepared to employ consultants and avail himself of their expertise. In my opinion, it became obvious that the authority was not really necessary. Perhaps the Minister is too polite to say so. The necessary powers are now being vested in the Commissioner for Transport. The provisions under the Bill will be adequate for any future planning of public transport in this State, whether in Brisbane or in provincial areas such as Toowoomba and Townsville. As a result of the use of P A Australia and with the backing of the Cabinet, the Minister has come to grips with all of this State's railway operations, not simply passenger transport.

All honourable members realise that it is well-nigh impossible to operate public transport profitably. However, it is interesting to observe the build-up in passenger numbers since the introduction of electric trains. At the moment, rail services cover only 194 km, or 7.2 per cent, of the available area, yet they are carrying 36.8 per cent of the available passengers. On the other hand, Brisbane City Council buses travel 648 km, or 24 per cent, of the potential area, but carry only 48 per cent of all commuters.

In a very short time, the electric train system has become extremely successful. The Government, through the Minister, has done a tremendous job in giving members of the public a service, making them aware of it and encouraging them to use it. That is no mean feat. When electric trains were first introduced, numerous prophets of doom on the other side said that they were years too late and that various systems ought to have been introduced. If that had happened, Brisbane would not have today's efficient system.

Mr Vaughan: It came in 25 years too late.

Mr ELLIOTT: That may be so. In the historical context, that is often a fact of life that gives better results in the end.

Mr Vaughan: We waited for 25 years.

Mr ELLIOTT: The best service is now being provided.

Before the electrification of the railway system, diesel locomotives were used. Although the Government's action was criticised, it should be pointed out that at that stage diesel locomotives and diesel fuel were economical in comparison with present costs. The cost of diesel fuel is now going through the roof, and the Government has elected to use electricity, an inexpensive commodity that is available in vast quantities from coal-fired power stations, to operate the railways system in general.

When the commissioner becomes a corporation sole, I will be interested to note how far the seal is placed on the Commissioner for Railways. One wonders whether there is a conflict between the Commissioner for Railways and the Commissioner for Transport. However, I am sure that, between the Minister and the commissioners, various niggling problems will be resolved and no great conflict will arise.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Minister briefly on his fortitude in grappling with problems that many people have avoided in the past. Despite the cutting comments made by honourable members on the opposite side of the House, in particular

comments made by the old babbling brook, the honourable member for Brisbane Central——

Mr Lee: He keeps himself awake. The honourable member for Brisbane Central talks to himself.

Mr ELLIOTT: That would be about right. He tends to do that all night, for some unknown reason. I am sure that it is the only way he manages to stay awake.

No honourable member can say truthfully that the Minister has not been at least game to take on various factions and members of trade unions——

Mr Scott: He has put off a lot of men.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is not correct. The Minister has not put people on when others have left. That is a very negative way in which to regard the Minister's activities when soon Queensland will have the only railway system in Australia that even comes close to paying for itself.

It is typical of the conduct of honourable members of the Opposition to knock everything. However, I again congratulate the Minister on having the fortitude to grapple with that problem. I am sure that he will prove the efficiency of electric trains in the urban transport system. With the expansion of the electrification program, more and more people in the Brisbane area will use the railway service to a greater extent. The electrification program will bring nothing but good, because there are far too many motor vehicles in the city area.

It is interesting to note that, in places such as Singapore, at certain times of the day a toll is imposed. The babbling brook on my right, the honourable member for Brisbane Central, accompanied me and other Government officials on a tour that was arranged to examine urban transport problems.

Mr Davis: You know that I was there.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is right; I do know. It was interesting to note that the Singapore Government imposed a levy upon anyone who drove into the centre of the city without bringing in a certain number of passengers.

I support the action that the Minister has taken. I consider that he is doing an excellent job, and he deserves the support of all honourable members on both sides of the House.

Mr GYGAR (Stafford) (11.58 p.m.): In this debate, members of the Opposition have come up with a mish-mash, grab-bag of what can only be generously described as rubbish.

The Bill before the House contains provisions the effect of which will be crucial for years to come, particularly in south-east Queensland. If the Bill meets the expectations of the Minister and his departmental officers, its impact will be significant throughout the State. It will have the effect of recasting the entire method of considering and controlling public transport operations in urban areas in Queensland.

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It is in fact a significant move that has been mooted many times, but never before grappled with. It is most unfortunate that the MTA failed. One has to come straight out and say that it failed, and that is the reason for its being abolished. One heard over past years that it did not have the teeth to do what it wanted, that it could make recommendations that could be ignored by the people to whom they were made and that it could put together packages that could be co-ordinated but in which the co-ordinated people would not co-operate. It just could not work. It either had to be given some teeth or go out of business. Well, it went out of business.

The recognition that there was a need for some transport supremo over urban areas may perhaps have gone just a fraction too far. That will not be known, unfortunately, until this legislation has seen the light of day and the new commissioner has had the chance to exercise the powers that he will be given. His powers will be significant, to put it mildly. He will be the transport supremo. He will be able to do what he likes. He will be able to tell everyone else to do what he wants, by using the mechanism in Part III of the Bill to introduce urban passenger transport schemes, and they will have to comply. I find a little mystifying the reference to consultations and all the rest of it, and the power to receive information. But the crunch comes in Part III, where it says, "What the heck. If that doesn't work he can tell them what to do and they will have to do it."

It concerns me a little with this Bill that the Government has bitten off so much in one hit. I would have thought that the correct procedure would be to perhaps hasten a little more slowly. I would be interested to hear the Minister explain why, for example, he has extended the Bill to every urban area in the State in one hit. I would have thought that the logical approach would be to set up a system, try it out in the most difficult urban transport area, which is Brisbane, and, when it is found to work, expand it. What the Government has done is to institute a radical new system, a whole new approach to public transport planning, and impose it on the whole State right across the board. That action might be a little precipitate. I hope that the Minister will give an assurance that the hastening in that regard will be done slowly.

There is no doubt that something has to be done about Brisbane's traffic. It is pretty obvious that new mechanisms, new approaches and new controls are required because the Brisbane City Council, to put it bluntly, has failed, and failed miserably, in its approach to public transport.

Mr Davis: How stupid can you get?

Mr GYGAR: When the ropes are pulled by the ALP, the honourable member in front of me dances to its tune.

Let me cite just a few statistics to prove to even that honourable gentleman that the Brisbane City Council transport system is not obtaining what is called in ordinary business terms a market share. In fact, the Brisbane City Council buses are managing to attract, in their drawing area, fewer than a quarter of the regular commuters. Fewer than a quarter of the people who commute day by day decide to use Brisbane City Council buses. That is bad enough, but fewer than one-sixth of the transient passengers—the shoppers and the occasional visitors to the city area—are using them.

Everybody knows what traffic is like in this city—it is absolutely chaotic, especially at peak times. People being prepared to put up with traffic jams—more than three out of four of them are prepared to use means other than council buses—says more than I can say in half an hour about the standard of that service. It is just not good enough. A number of reasons can be advanced for why it is not good enough.

If one wants to find out, one has only to look at the way the council has approached the transport interchange system. The Enoggera rail interchange was a bold and daring experiment; one that I applauded at the time, and still do. It is a terrific idea. There ought to be more of them. But as soon as that interchange was set up so that feeder buses could transport commuters who used trains, which are universally recognised as the most effective method of urban transportation, the council set up parallel bus services in competition. Good common sense from the Brisbane City Council! That one incident alone is good enough reason for the commissioner under the powers given in this Bill to require that that sort of nonsense stop.

However, let me also refer to a few other nonsenses that will hopefully be looked at. The first is interchanges. What a wonderful term. They are terrific. They work wonderfully, except that in recent years they have regrettably degenerated into a mere cosmetic exercise perhaps, one might speculate, with some political component built

into them. I say that because in the car-park it is first in best dressed. If one does not arrive early one just doesn't obtain a parking space. Anyone who drives past the Enoggera interchange any day finds the surrounding streets packed with parked cars. It is a very successful interchange, but it would be three times more successful if three times the number of car-parking spaces were provided. The other little interchanges being provided adjacent to the railway line have minute car-parks. Interchanges are OK, but they should be designed so that they work.

Mr Comben: Where do you think they will put the cars?

Mr GYGAR: The honourable member for Windsor cannot work out where the cars should be put. I suggest that, if the cars cannot be put side by side, they should be put one on top of the other. That is called "multi-level parking." Undoubtedly that is a new concept in the century of thinking of ALP members, but it is a method that is being used commonly round the world. Perhaps it is an alternative that might be considered in Brisbane.

Without doubt, interchanges are a great mechanism for keeping cars off the road and increasing the patronage of public transport services. However, they must be made to work. The people who want to use the interchanges must have car-parks. The people who want to catch buses to the interchanges must have buses to catch. I will not talk as long as I could about the vast problems that have been created in my area by the inadequate, incompetent service provided by Brisbane City Council buses.

I am glad that I am not the alderman representing my area because continually I have to refer to the Brisbane City Council complaints from would-be commuters in my area about the way the buses do not connect with the trains. The system will not work if that happens. Who will catch a bus if buses consistently arrive at stations late and passengers see trains disappearing into the distance? If our transport supremo can do one thing—make buses connect with trains—he will do a heck of a lot for the people in my area. I wish him good luck.

I also wish him luck with clause 28 of the Bill, under which he can introduce a scheme and give directions to the council that it will take note of and will not try continually to sabotage the interchanges and co-ordinated public transport system.

We as members must not limit our efforts to bandaid solutions of existing problems. We must think a little more boldly about urban public transport if we are to get people to come back to it. The public transport system has to be efficient, timely and economical or people simply will not use it. Light rail systems are recognised round the world as being by far the best, most reliable and most economical means of transport. We must look a little further than electrified trains. If Alderman Roy Harvey, who is now Lord Mayor, stands condemned for any one thing that he has done, it must be the part he played in the removal of trams from Brisbane. That was the worst move ever made in Brisbane public transport. We had an excellent tram system.

Mr Comben: You don't believe that.

Mr GYGAR: I remind the honourable member that I used to live about 100 yards from the Stafford tram terminus. All the people who lived there remember the morning when Harvey's raiders turned up on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning and ripped down all the tram wires so that no-one could restore the system. Yet Opposition members have the gall to talk about this Government acting stealthily in the middle of the night! Everything Government members know, they learnt from Roy Harvey ripping down the tram wires and ripping up the tram tracks or pouring cement over them. He is a past master in that field. That is the star in the Brisbane City Council's contribution to public transport in this city.

Light rail systems should be examined, and so should small feeder lines. If this Bill gives the commissioner, the new supremo, the power to examine such measures, the power to experiment with them—as I note that it does—and the power to introduce

pilot schemes and bring about some radical, effective changes in the transport system, I have no hesitation in enthusiastically supporting it.

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (12.9 a.m.), in reply: Concern has been expressed by various members of the Opposition about the powers of the commissioner under this Bill. I draw to the attention of honourable members the fact that, in many important areas of administration under the principal Act, the Commissioner for Transport is subject to the Minister for Transport, who is an elected member of Parliament, who must stand the test of the electorate every three years and who faces questioning and examination before Parliament on a daily basis.

The commissioner is subject also to budgetary constraints and to the ongoing supervision of the finances of the department under the Financial Administration and Audit Act. The Commissioner for Transport, therefore, is subject to control or sanction over what he may or may not do under this legislation.

It would be nonsensical if legislation were enacted that did not make provision for a person with authority in an endeavour to integrate and co-ordinate urban public transport services in this State. Someone had to be selected to carry out that role, and the obvious person was the Commissioner for Transport, who is a very responsible and senior officer. He is subject to the constraints that I have mentioned. That was the major point raised by the honourable members who spoke to the Bill, and I have replied adequately to their comments.

Motion (Mr Lane) agreed to.

Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Row, Hinchinbrook) in the chair; Hon. D. F. Lane (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—Interpretation—

Mr LANE (12.13 a.m.): I move the following amendment—

“At page 3, line 17, omit the words—

‘Bureau of Census and Statistics of the Commonwealth’

and substitute the words—

‘Australian Bureau of Statistics’.”

Amendment agreed to.

Mr LANE: I move the following further amendment—

“At page 3, lines 43 and 44, omit the words—

‘Bureau of Census and Statistics of the Commonwealth’

and substitute the words—

‘Australian Bureau of Statistics’.”

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 16, as read, agreed to.

Clause 17—Commissioner subject to Minister’s directions—

Mr CASEY (12.15 a.m.): During my speech at the second-reading stage, I clearly indicated the intention of the Opposition to seek this change. Certainly the Opposition accepts that somewhere along the line someone must have responsibility for particular actions. However, in this case, with the sweeping powers that have been given to the

Commissioner for Transport, particularly over many other Acts of this Parliament, the Opposition believes that to have the commissioner subject purely to the Minister's discretion is not sufficient. In fact, the very next clause of the Bill clearly states that the power can only be in the hands of the Governor in Council. The Opposition believes that the collective Ministry of the State should be responsible for the actions of the Commissioner for Transport. I therefore move the following amendment—

“At page 9, lines 40 and 41, omit the word—
‘Minister’

twice occurring and substitute in each case the words—
‘Governor in Council’.”

Mr LANE: The Government cannot accept the amendment moved by the Opposition, which calls for the replacement of the word “Minister” by the words “Governor in Council” I point out to the Committee that Executive Council approval is provided for in several parts of the Bill. The capital works carried out by the commissioner have to be approved by the Governor in Council. Examples of the sorts of capital works that are carried out are bus and rail interchanges, ferry sheds and interchanges, and car-parks. Of course, all of those have to be approved by the Governor in Council.

In addition, annual budgets are prepared for the authority and are subject to the provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act for continual checking by in-house auditors. Those accounts are tabled in the Parliament and are open to inspection by members. In addition expenditures of any kind by the authority are subject to the approval of the Governor in Council.

The proposal to have ministerial control over the Commissioner for Transport is a traditional authority that preserves the right of democratically elected members of Parliament to have the supreme say over permanent officers. If that was not the case, parliamentary accountability would not exist. That is the proper way to do things. I do not think any other explanation is required.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted from clause 17 (Mr Casey's amendment) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided—
In division—

Mr Mackenroth interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr Mackenroth interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Chatsworth under Standing Order No. 123A.

AYES, 44

Ahern	Lee
Alison	Lester
Austin	Lickiss
Bailey	Lingard
Bjelke-Petersen	Littleproud
Booth	McKechnie
Borbidge	McPhie
Chapman	Menzel
Cooper	Miller
Elliott	Muntz
FitzGerald	Newton
Gibbs, I. J.	Powell
Glasson	Randell
Goleby	Simpson
Gygar	Stephan
Harper	Stoneman
Harvey	Tenni
Henderson	Turner
Innes	Wharton
Jennings	
Katter	<i>Tellers:</i>
Knox	Kaus
Lane	Neal

NOES, 27

Burns	Warburton
Campbell	Warner, A. M.
Casey	
Comben	
D'Arcy	
De Lacy	
Eaton	
Fouras	
Goss	
Kruger	
Mackenroth	
McElligott	
McLean	
Milliner	
Palaszczuk	
Prest	
Price	
Scott	
Shaw	
Smith	
Underwood	<i>Tellers:</i>
Vaughan	Davis
Veivers	Hamill

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 17, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 18 to 21, as read, agreed to.

Clause 22—Fares on urban passenger services—

Mr CASEY (12.27 a.m.): I raise the need for responsibility of the department through the Governor in Council collectively to the Parliament and to the people of Queensland rather than just to the Minister. Once more, in clause 22, the same principle is involved.

The Minister in reply mentioned that the principle is contained in a number of other Acts that he administers. That is certainly the case, but I point out that this has been the case only since he became Minister. Most of those principles were not embodied in legislation prior to his having responsibility for the portfolio. It is a trend that ought to be carefully monitored by the Parliament. I raise this matter now as I realise there is no point in having a further division on it. The Opposition clearly indicates that it does not agree to the provision that is contained in clause 22.

Mr LANE: The Government hears what the Opposition says. However, it intends to proceed with the legislation in its present form. The Government believes that it will prove itself in due course.

Clause 22, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 23 to 30, as read, agreed to.

Clause 31—Other advisory committees—

Mr CASEY (12.28 a.m.): The point I raise in relation to clause 31 is the establishment of what is known by the clause as other advisory committees. The previous clause sets up the Urban Public Passenger Transport Planning and Advisory Committee, which I sincerely hope will be fairly representative. It merely states that the committee shall consist of the Commissioner for Transport, the Commissioner for Railways, the Commissioner for Main Roads and such other persons as from time to time the Minister thinks fit. That is a pretty broad-brush approach.

Clause 31 states—

“The Commissioner may, with the approval of the Governor in Council, establish and maintain such number of committees, consisting of such persons as the Commissioner thinks fit, to advise him in relation to any matter under this Act.”

The Government has gone to a great deal of trouble to spell out the provisions of clause 30. The Opposition wants to know what the intention of the Government is with these other advisory committees. I sincerely hope the Government will not set up a series of quangos throughout the length and breadth of Queensland by creating an advisory committee in every little town or place which has an urban passenger service as defined in this Bill.

Mr LANE: By way of explanation, the first committee that is mentioned, the committee consisting of the senior public servants—the three commissioners—is, of course, a technical committee of the public service to advise the Minister direct on a State-wide basis. That is not uncommon. In fact, the Planning and Advisory Committee under the old Act fulfilled this role. Clause 31 merely provides the power to establish and maintain provincial advisory committees in areas such as Townsville and the Gold Coast. A committee already exists in Townsville that is chaired by the regional officer of the Department of Transport to advise on transport matters in the city of Townsville. One exists on the Gold Coast also. It may be necessary to establish similar committees elsewhere. The two committees I have referred to are basically voluntary committees representing the community and groups interested in transport, including taxi-drivers, bus-operators, the Railway Department, the city council and all sorts of non-political

people such as committees of public servants. That is what is envisaged in the clause. It is a good thing, since it involves the community where necessary.

Mr CASEY: Contrary to the expression used by the Minister, I think it is a bad thing. He has indicated that there will be a series of quangos. I suggest that it is simply so that the commissioner can maintain powers that override the instrumentalities governed by the Acts referred to in clause 28—the Local Government Act, the Harbours Act, the Port of Brisbane Authority Act, the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act, the Railways Act, the City of Brisbane Act and the City of Brisbane Town Planning Act. Those bodies will not be given a say. Unless advisory committees that are established in provincial cities are properly representative of the area—and I include the local authority—what confidence can we have in them? The Minister has just referred to non-political people. With his political philosophies, he would not want the mayor or aldermen of the Townsville City Council on an advisory committee. Because the Minister has overriding powers, he can determine all transport matters in that city as he requires, without any reference whatsoever to the local authority. That is one of the great dangers of the Bill. It is a provision that the Opposition will be watching very closely.

Clause 31, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 32 to 37, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Lane, by leave, read a third time.

MOTOR VEHICLES SAFETY ACT AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Motor Vehicles Safety Act 1980, the Inspection of Machinery Act 1951-1982, the Motor Vehicle Driving Instruction School Act 1969-1984, the Motor Vehicles Control Act 1975, the State Transport Act 1960-1981, the Tow-truck Act 1973 and the Traffic Act 1949-1982 each in certain particulars and for related purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Lane, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (12.36 a.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Because of the proposed amendments to the Motor Vehicles Safety Act 1980, it is necessary to amend the other Acts outlined in areas affected by those amendments. The principal objective of this Bill is to improve control over inspection procedures in relation to commercial-type motor vehicles, particularly buses, heavy trucks and articulated vehicles.

It has been evident for some time that greater emphasis needs to be placed on the inspection and surveillance of such vehicles, in view of their capacity to cause the greatest degree of damage and injury on our roads. It is proposed that all vehicles with a gross vehicle mass in excess of four tonnes, buses, and specially constructed vehicles, be subject to compulsory inspections. To assist in the control of these inspections, it is proposed that the owner of a vehicle for inspection must forward a current certificate of inspection to the Commissioner for Main Roads before the registration of that vehicle will be renewed.

Provision is made to exempt from the inspection requirements vehicles located in remote areas in which inspection facilities are not readily available. These vehicles will, however, be subject to snap inspections by Transport Department inspectors. Similar provisions presently apply in respect to certificate of roadworthiness requirements for second hand motor vehicles.

The Bill also provides that garages and workshops licensed as approved inspection stations will be used for the purpose of inspecting vehicles with a gross vehicle mass greater than four tonnes, but less than eight tonnes. Transport Department inspectors will then be able to concentrate on vehicles with a gross vehicle mass of eight tonnes and over, as well as buses and specially constructed vehicles.

In view of the rigid standards applied to new vehicles through the introduction of design rules for motor vehicle safety, as endorsed by the Australian Transport Advisory Council, inspection requirements will not apply to new vehicles during their first 12 months of registration. Honourable members will agree that it is unnecessary to burden commercial vehicle-owners with the obligation of having practically brand new vehicles inspected, particularly when they are still under warranty.

It is also proposed that the maximum penalties for breaches of the Act be increased from \$500 to \$1,000, and from \$10 to \$25 where a daily penalty for continuing non-compliance is applied. These penalties have not increased since 1972.

The Motor Vehicles Safety Act is presently administered by the Minister and the Chief Inspector of Motor Vehicles. To be consistent with other Acts administered by the department, it is proposed to have the Motor Vehicles Safety Act administered by the Minister and the Commissioner for Transport. The Bill makes provision for the inclusion of a new part in the Motor Vehicles Safety Act to control alterations to and modifications in new commercial-type motor vehicles.

At the time of construction, new motor vehicles are required to comply with design rules for motor vehicle safety. It is necessary at times for these vehicles to be altered to suit a particular purpose, and it is important that action be taken to ensure that any altered vehicle maintains compliance with the design rules.

Provision is therefore made to appoint authorised officers from within private industry to certify that all work on these vehicles has been done in a satisfactory manner. Existing requirements with regard to certificates of roadworthiness will remain basically unchanged, but, because of the additional responsibilities that inspection station personnel will undertake in relation to the compulsory inspection of commercial-type motor vehicles, it is necessary to place greater emphasis on the importance and recognition of being licensed for that purpose.

Departmental transport inspectors will monitor the activities of approved inspection stations to ensure that their staff are complying with the requirements of the Act and that they are conducting vehicle examinations in a satisfactory manner.

Upon conviction for non-compliance with the provisions in relation to the issue of certificates of roadworthiness, the licence of an approved examiner, or, as the case may be, the certificate of approval of an inspection station, is automatically cancelled. It is becoming the practice in the industry for proprietors of approved inspection stations to make application for additional premises to be licensed, particularly when it is evident that they will be convicted for a breach of the Act. This practice allows the person involved to continue issuing certificates of roadworthiness, even though he has been convicted of an offence, and the certificate of approval of the inspection station responsible for the offence has been cancelled.

To control this problem and to prevent unscrupulous persons from being involved in the issue of certificates of roadworthiness and also certificates of inspection, provision is made for all certificates of approval of an inspection station held by an individual to be automatically cancelled upon conviction for non-compliance with the Act. It is also proposed that if a proprietor of an approved inspection station is also an approved

examiner, both the certificate of approval of the inspection station and his examiner's licence will be cancelled by virtue of a conviction.

The certification of motor mechanics is presently provided for in the Inspection of Machinery Act 1951-1982. Following discussions with my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs, who is responsible for the administration of the Inspection of Machinery Act, it was agreed that the authority to control the issue of motor mechanics' certificates should be transferred to the Motor Vehicles Safety Act.

A new part is therefore to be introduced into the Motor Vehicles Safety Act to provide for the responsibility and authority to issue motor mechanics' certificates. The requirements in this regard will basically be similar to those already provided in the Inspection of Machinery Act, but certificates will be approved by the commissioner and not a board of examiners. This procedure will be consistent with other legislation administered by the Commissioner for Transport.

An appeal tribunal will be provided as a new innovation to the Motor Vehicles Safety Act. The tribunal will adjudicate in disputes concerning certificates and licences provided for in the Act and will be formed along similar lines to appeal tribunals established under other Acts administered by the Transport Department. The tribunal will comprise a stipendiary magistrate, the Commissioner for Transport (or his nominee) and depending on the nature of the particular appeal, a person who is suitably qualified to be representative of the person and licences or certificates that are the subject of the appeal.

As outlined in my previous comments, it is necessary for the Inspection of Machinery Act to be amended to allow for the transfer of responsibility for the certification of motor mechanics from that Act to the Motor Vehicles Safety Act. It is further proposed to remove all references to motor mechanics and motor mechanics' certificates from the Inspection of Machinery Act.

The board of examiners provided for in the Inspection of Machinery Act requires an A grade motor mechanic to be a member of the board. In view of the concern which has recently been expressed regarding the competency of crane-drivers following a number of accidents on construction sites, it is proposed to replace that member with a qualified crane-driver.

Also incorporated in this Bill are amendments to other Acts administered under my portfolio and which make specific reference to the need for a certificate of inspection issued under the Inspection of Machinery Act before particular licences or permits may be issued.

As certificates of inspection are now issued under the Motor Vehicles Safety Act and some vehicles that are subject to licence or permit provisions will not be subject to compulsory inspection under the proposed new vehicle inspection scheme, it is proposed that reference to the Inspection of Machinery Act be removed from relevant Acts and replaced by reference to the Motor Vehicles Safety Act.

It is also proposed that provision be made to recognise any other safety certificate approved by the Commissioner for Transport in respect of those vehicles not subject to compulsory inspections.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Casey, adjourned.

RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Railways Act 1914-1982 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Lane, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (12.44 a.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

In the course of the last two years, the Railway Department has been progressing towards its goal of achieving its now clearly defined corporate objectives.

They relate to the provision of services, business direction, the use of resources and the introduction of initiatives.

The department has moved in a more commercially oriented direction. That is evidenced from the commissioner's annual report for 1983-84, which shows record revenue earnings of almost \$718m, or a 30 per cent increase over the previous 12 months. Although the greatest contribution to the increased revenue was from coal, increases were recorded in almost every category of freight traffic as well as passenger journeys.

In line with the implementation of those changes, a review of the Railways Act 1914-1982 became necessary, both to accommodate new developments introduced in the areas of administration, marketing and operations, as well as to update some now very outmoded sections of the Act.

The amendment proposed to section 17 (4) (a) provides the commissioner with increased authority to penalise breaches of railway by-laws and regulations.

The new proposed maximum penalty is \$100. Likewise, proposed amendments to clause 10 section 23 (1) provide for an increase from \$10 to \$50 in the maximum fine that may be imposed by a head of branch on an employee for misconduct. The proposed increase reflects in some way the changes in money values since the fines were set in 1888.

Proposed amendments to section 17 (4) (c) and section 23 (2) cover existing anomalies in relation to temporary employees. Permanent employees are currently obliged to undergo six months' probation before being able to appeal against punishment imposed by the commissioner. Temporary employees with not less than one month's service in the department are able to appeal. The amendment proposes that temporary employees be placed on the same footing as permanents. This would also apply at head of branch level under section 23 (2).

An additional provision under section 17 (4) covering the reinstatement of any suspended employee not convicted of an offence is in accordance with a recent Cabinet decision and brings railway employees in line with the general public service.

Amendments proposed to section 17 (4) (A), which deal with employees who have been convicted by the courts and placed on probation, will give the commissioner the power to deal with them having regard to the punishment imposed by the court. Once again, permanent and temporary employees would be placed on the same footing.

A new subsection 17 (4) (B) is proposed which will empower the commissioner to deal with an employee who has been convicted in a civil court of a drink-driving offence when in charge of a train or on-track vehicle, or other motor vehicle used in his employment, and has his driver's licence cancelled. The commissioner will be empowered to disqualify a person from driving a train or on-track vehicle during the period for which his or her driver's licence is cancelled. That employee could be required to perform other duties whilst continuing to be paid the award rate applicable to his or her classification.

Provision will also be made for an avenue of appeal against the decision of the commissioner. In its report into the efficiency of the Railway Department, PA Australia said that the system of promotion should be changed to ensure that managerial competence and potential management ability are taken into account.

An amendment in clause 9 under section 21 (subsection 1) concerning appointments involving promotion is to be reworded. The present working of the Act does not necessarily permit the promotion of the best applicant to fill the vacancy. The ability to select the best applicant is most important, particularly in supervisory positions and higher grades. The proposed amendment is in line with that which applies to the public service. It places primary emphasis on efficiency and it is only when efficiency of one or more applicants is equal that seniority is taken into account.

The table of positions under subsection 6 originally appearing in the Act has been added to by Orders in Council. Some of the original offices have been superseded by others with a different title. The new table sets out the positions which will not be subject to appeal and to which appointments will be made by the Governor in Council.

For the benefit of honourable members, I will list the number of non-appealable positions both when the subsection was last amended in 1982 and in the proposal in these amendments.

Non-appealable positions	
Prior to 1982 amendment	43
Additions in 1982 amendment	21
	<hr/>
Total	64
	<hr/>
Listed in proposed amendment 1984	117
Increase since 1982	53

In a total staff of 26 000, the total non-appealable positions of 117 would be 0.45 per cent, that is, less than half a per cent.

A new section 24 is proposed under clause 11 of the Bill. At the present time, an employee suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or a drug can refuse to undergo a medical examination to determine fitness for duty. If he declines the examination, it creates a default. By default he is open to be dealt with under the appropriate section of the Railways Act.

If an employee is found to be under the influence of alcohol or a drug, he will be able to be suspended from duty until the head of his branch is satisfied that he or she is fit for duty. If the suspected employee refuses the medical examination, he or she will be guilty of misconduct and could be dealt with accordingly. All members should realise that this provision is required to prevent employees from jeopardising the safety of themselves, workmates and the general public.

In clause 13 of the Bill amendments are proposed to subsections (1) (3) (4) (5) of section 101. Again, PA Australia, in its report on railways, said that in the freight and parcels area rail should be able to compete on equal terms with road transport through selective marketing policies.

The amendment to subsection (1) is to enable the commissioner to enter into any special contracts for the carriage of passengers and goods and which may not necessarily involve transit on rail. This flexibility is necessary to meet the competitive market situation and to ensure that services can be maintained by the most cost-effective means.

The alterations to sections (3) and (5) are necessary to cover any carriage by the commissioner other than by rail. The original wording of subsection (4) limited the commissioner's liability to that of a common carrier.

This limitation is to be removed and the remaining wording amended to enable the commissioner to limit his liability in any contract.

As I mentioned at the outset, a 30 per cent increase in revenue earnings shows the common-sense attached to deregulation.

In some circumstances, the commissioner may have to operate a road service in lieu of a train service and the present wording of section 106 subsections (a), (b) and (c) could prevent such a practice. Clause 15 amends that section. The commissioner is limited currently to use road to and from a station only and not necessarily between stations.

Clause 16 of the Bill will provide for the removal of the no preference provisions under section 108 of the Act. As the commissioner will no longer be a common carrier, he may enter into any contracts for the conveyance of freight under any suitable conditions. Accordingly, the no preference provisions are inconsistent with this competitive thrust.

Clause 18 of the Bill proposes amendments to the commissioner's limit of liability under section 122 of the Act in respect of animals. The limit of damages that might be recovered from the commissioner in any action will be increased substantially to reflect changes in monetary values.

Recently I have stepped up the campaign by Queensland Railways against vandalism and hooliganism to and on railway property. In recent weeks, the police squad attached to the railways has been joined by the task force in an attempt to reduce the incidence of damage to railway property and, sadly, attacks against railway personnel and members of the public.

Guns have been fired at trains on suburban lines, rocks thrown through windows, points jammed and obstructions deliberately placed across the tracks. I recently received a report that detailed more than 100 incidents of vandalism in a two-month period.

The proposed amendment to section 139 contained in clause 21 (1) will increase the penalty for damage to railway property to a maximum of \$1,000.

The proposed new section 139A contained in clause 22 has been inserted to give members of the police force suitable powers to act on railway property in case of offences against the Railway Act. These powers exist in relation to other legislation.

Other amendments are proposed, including one that will empower the commissioner to deal with vehicles illegally parked or otherwise abandoned on railway land.

Other proposals include—

- The method of fixing the commissioner's salary;
- The final winding-up of the Mount Isa railway project; and
- The right of the Commissioner for Railways to lease land.

Queensland Railways and its 26 000 employees have a much brighter future to look forward to.

Much uninformed comment has been made in recent times about the future of the jobs of railwaymen and women. I inform the House that the best means of ensuring their continued employment is for Queensland Railways to continue to improve its operating result and its efficiency overall. In the first four months of this financial year, Queensland Railways produced an operating profit of \$45m. I ask honourable members to compare this with a loss of \$2m for the corresponding period in the previous financial year.

Queensland Railways is carrying record tonnages of coal and grain. New markets are being actively sought and, where possible, new freight rates struck in an attempt to attract new business.

The Queensland Government's continuing commitment to rail development has been documented adequately in recent months and can be seen in the refurbished Central Railway Station, the newly commissioned electrified rail line between Kingston and

Beenleigh, progressive work on the electrified section from Petrie to Caboolture, the \$34m transport terminal to be built at Roma Street and a similar proposal that is under consideration for Toowong.

The PA report and its implemented recommendations, contrary to the opinion of some trade unions, has not cost railwaymen or women their jobs and has resulted in a saving of more than \$30m of tax-payers' funds in its first years.

These amendments are designed to improve the working arrangements within Queensland Railways and to allow railways to look confidently to the future.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Casey, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

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

“That the House do now adjourn.”

Sugar Industry

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (12.55 a.m.): Tonight I wish to speak about the plight of the sugar industry. Although much has been said about it, I do not think that the community is really aware of the extent to which people in the sugar industry are affected. I will also highlight the lack of State Government assistance to the industry. Criticism has been levelled by the State Government at the Federal Government, and the Federal Government has been blamed for many of the ills in the community today.

To make my point I shall quote from the “Innisfail Advocate” to show how people are prepared to go public on their plight. The article states—

“The wife of an Innisfail cane farmer who was driven off the land through debt has pleaded with the people of Innisfail for understanding.

‘We don’t want sympathy—just a little understanding’ said Mrs Mavis Sugden, wife of Larner Sugden, who was forced to sell his family farm earlier this year.

Mrs Sugden was reacting to suggestions in some quarters that cane farmers were a pack of ‘whingers’.

‘If people only realized how serious the situation is, I’m sure they wouldn’t say these things’ said Mrs Sugden.

‘I know, I’ve been through it.

Farmers are not asking for a handout—they’re fighting for survival,’ she said.”

How true that is for all the people in the sugar industry today. I wish to emphasise the impact that the decline in the sugar industry has had on local communities. Small businesses are going broke and, rather than put staff off, some businesses have had to employ their staff on only three or four days a week. Those sorts of things have to be highlighted. One of the things that I am very cranky about is the fact that the private banks have let the communities down. Only last week the three big banks in Australia recorded huge profits. The Westpac Banking Corporation made a profit of \$306m, the Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd made a profit of \$269m and the National Commercial Banking Corporation of Australia Ltd made a profit of \$227.75m. If those banks were not putting the pressure on cane-farmers, their plight would not be half as bad as it is. The banks have not abided by the rules of the institution of banking. To my way of thinking, with the approval of the previous Federal Government, the banks have gone outside the guide-lines of banking. Even though the banks are trying to plead poverty, in these hard economic times the three major banks have made huge profits. What profits would they have made in the good times?

The Government and the private banking system have let the sugar industry down. As I said earlier, if the banks were not putting pressure on the cane-growers they would

not be in their current position. In some cases the banks talked the farmers into borrowing money when they did not really want to. Now that the crunch has come the banks are putting pressure onto the farmers, which is compounding the problem.

On 9 November the Premier went north and suddenly discovered that the sugar industry was facing disaster. The report in the "Townsville Bulletin" was similar to that in many other north Queensland newspapers. It mentions Mr Michael Dineen, who is the spokesman for a women's organisation and is also a farmer who knows the troubles that are affecting him and many others like him in the sugar industry. The article states—

"A spokesman for the women, Mr Michael Dineen said that the Premier gave them a 'good hearing'.

'He was caught unawares and although he knew about the problems the industry faced, he was not aware of their extent' Mr Dineen said.

The Premier called for a sugar crisis meeting to be held in Cairns to address the problems faced by growers."

Whenever a member of the Opposition has spoken in this House about the sugar industry he has been subjected to interjections by Government members asking why the Queensland Labor Party does not speak to the Federal Government. I have heard many National Party members speak in this House and I want to know why they have not, before now, brought this matter to the notice of the Premier and Treasurer. He should have been told of the crisis in the sugar industry.

I wish to quote as follows from a telex that was sent to the Premier and Treasurer by Mr John Kerin—

"'One of Sir Joh's requests was for the Commonwealth to drop the interest rate charged to the State on funds lent for part A of the RAS from 8% to 4%. Sir Joh doesn't say that he intends to pass any cost-savings to the State on to growers, and on the basis of the way in which Queensland currently administers RAS, I am sceptical.

'The Commonwealth currently provides funds to Queensland at 8% over 20 yrs, with a two year repayment holiday, with the State required to repay only 85% of the principal.

'Qld is currently on lending these funds to canegrowers at 10% for terms typically ranging from 10-15 years . . ."

Time expired.

Intimidation of Women in Car-parks

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (1 a.m.): This evening a great deal of time has been spent on road safety and safety in motor vehicles. It is surprising to what lengths people will go to scare and intimidate other people, usually women, in motor vehicles. I want to alert the general public to some activities which have occurred in the not so distant past and which have been almost taken for granted. There are many hidden dangers in areas surrounding shopping complexes, particularly in the car-parks.

I have heard of two instances, possibly involving the same person, in which cars have been left locked in car-parks by women on their own. When they have arrived back at their cars, they have found what appeared to be an old lady sitting on the front passenger's seat waiting for the owner to return. The procedure was that the supposedly old lady asked to be driven home. The excuses given were many and varied. For instance, she complained either that she had an accident, or that she had a sore leg, had found the car unlocked and thought she would sit in it and rest for a while. She asked the owner of the vehicle to relieve her of some of her pain and to take her from that locality.

However, in each instance the driver, when she started the car, looked down and noticed that the legs of that supposedly old lady had quite a few hairs on them. In fact,

it was not a lady but a gentleman—if one could call such a person a gentleman. Many situations could arise out of such an incident, which occurred in the middle of the day. Both of those women were frightened. However, they retained a clear mind and realised that they could be placed in a very difficult position.

In one instance the owner of the motor vehicle pointed out that she had to back out of the parking bay before she could continue on her journey. She said that her reversing was not very good, and asked, "Would you please get out and direct me so that I can reverse the car without hitting another vehicle?" Under those circumstances, she was able to convince the person to get out of the car and direct her while she was reversing her vehicle. That gave the lady an opportunity to reverse out of the parking bay and to drive away. She was in a frightened state and in fear of what might have happened.

Following the incidents, the ladies went directly to the police station, which was not very far away, and the police were notified as to what had happened. On examination of the car, a tomahawk was found underneath the front seat of the car. That person meant business.

I am not sure whether it was done to scare or to intimidate the women. An opportunity to use the instrument to inflict injury did not arise, mainly because of the fast thinking of the women concerned.

I highlighted that matter because I feel that the public should be notified as to what they can expect and what has, in fact, happened in car-parks and what could eventuate as a result of it.

Mr Scott: You could have put this in the local paper and saved the time of the House.

Mr STEPHAN: I could have put it in the local paper and saved the time of the House, but if I had done that the honourable member would not have read it. I believe that it is the responsibility of members of Parliament to inform the public of such incidents. If the mother of the honourable member for Cook drives a motor vehicle, she could be placed in the situation of returning to her vehicle and finding somebody sitting in the front passenger seat. I point out that it could happen to anyone, including our mothers or wives.

It must be remembered that a tomahawk has a sharp edge. If it is used, it can inflict serious injury.

Mr Scott: Can you tie it into the Federal Government somehow?

Mr STEPHAN: I am not trying to tie it into the Federal Government. I am not trying to be political or ridiculous; I am trying to alert the general public to the dangers that exist.

Time expired.

Aid to Bangladesh; Assistance to Sugar Industry

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (1.5 a.m.): Today the selfish Christians of the National Party State Government showed the depths of their despair and deceitfulness when both the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer and the honourable member for Mulgrave criticised humanitarian aid and care given to Bangladesh by the Federal Government on behalf of Australians.

The despicable actions and attitude of the National Party towards the less-fortunate and starving to score cheap political points on the severe financial position of the sugar industry are totally rejected by the Opposition. The fantasies of the member for Mulgrave concerning the proposed sugar-mill to be given to Bangladesh must be put right.

The project of giving help to Bangladesh is the responsibility of the Australian Development Assistance Bureau, which is part of the Foreign Affairs Department. That

project was started in 1977 by the Liberal-National Party Government on humanitarian grounds. A critical food shortage had to be overcome. The project will cost a total of \$20m, of which \$13.7m, was provided to June 1984.

The aim of the project was to improve productivity in the growing and milling sections of the sugar industry in Bangladesh. In fact, the Queensland Government has played a part in this project. Through the Sugar Research Institute at Mackay, it has made a technical input to improve the technology and efficiency of the sugar-mills in Bangladesh. The Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations has sent personnel to Bangladesh to improve the technical skills and productivity of its sugar crops.

This aid is granted on a humanitarian basis. It is to help starving people in a country that does not have a sugar exporting industry and cannot afford to import sugar. It cannot afford to import any food. Yet, the Queensland Government is critical of the aid being given to these starving people. I support the self-help program of the Australian Government, which is designed to assist the starving people of Bangladesh to feed themselves. I totally reject the selfish and uncaring attitude of the National Party State Government.

The hypocritical and deceitful action of the Queensland Government is further demonstrated by a brochure that it published outlining the facts about sugar. The State Government was taking credit for assistance given to the sugar industry by way of funds approved by the Commonwealth Government.

It is a fact that \$10m in loans to co-operative mills was provided from the Rural Adjustment Fund and the Rural Reconstruction Fund of the Queensland Rural Reconstruction Board. Proof of that is to be found in the Auditor-General's report of 1982-83, at page 171.

It is also a fact that 90 per cent of the combined Government advances to the Rural Adjustment Fund and Rural Reconstruction Fund were provided by the Commonwealth Government. The 1983 Rural Reconstruction Board report shows that the Commonwealth Government has provided a total of \$71.2m to these funds, whereas the Queensland Government has advanced \$7.78m.

The brochure I referred to is full of lies and deceit. That is proven by the information that I have just given. The Opposition has said that 90 per cent of the funds from the Queensland Rural Reconstruction Board were provided by the Commonwealth Government.

The document states that the first Hawke Budget slashed outlays under the Rural Adjustment Scheme from \$45m to less than \$28m, whereas the Hawke Government actually increased rural adjustment funds, from \$17.4m in 1982-83 to \$46m in 1983-84. In the next year the funds were reduced from \$46m to \$31.5m. What is stated in the document that was given to cane-growers is totally false and has no credibility.

ALP Policies on Maintenance of the Family Unit

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (1.10 a.m.): I bring to the notice of the House what I can only call the danger of ALP policies to the maintenance of that very precious part of Australian life, the family unit. During my campaign, I raised the danger of those policies. My opponents were quite emotional in their reaction to my arguments but were unconvincing in their reply. I accept that there are very many sincere members of the ALP. However, unfortunately the party's policies are not formulated by those genuine people. The policies are a sad reflection on the trendy academics and hard-core socialists who strive to overthrow basic and traditional values.

The policies thrown up by the ALP give respectability to antitraditional, unacceptable levels of public homosexuality and the so-called rights of the individual. I wish to refer

to points made in a document entitled "Australian Labor Party—Principles of Action" Under "Origins", it says—

"The Australian Labor Party had its origins in:

the aspirations of the Australian people for a decent, secure, dignified and constructive way of life "

That is highly commendable. Further in the document, however, is a—

"Commitment to and participation in the international democratic socialist movement as represented by the Socialist International."

Over the page, the document slips further by stating—

"In keeping with modern needs and requirements, Labor will review existing procedures and forms of Parliament and will eliminate out-dated modes of dress and practice."

I suppose that before too long the member for Bundaberg (Mr Campbell) will be wearing a Jacky Howe singlet.

Suggestions contained in the so-called Bill of Rights are frightening. This is what the State ALP would do—

"In the absence of a Federal Labor Government, a State Labor Government will act to have a Bill of Rights entrenched in the Queensland constitutional framework.

The Bill of Rights will guarantee the basic rights of:

(v) freedom of sexuality "

Society is structured on the example of its elders. Where are policies and attitudes such as that heading?

Under specific measures, a Labor Government would—

"Give equal rights to homosexual couples in terms of State taxation probate benefits, ownership and transfer of property, pensions, superannuation and other fiscal benefits

Immediately release from detention all held under anti-homosexual laws, and ensure that all fines be refunded to them and others previously prosecuted under such laws

Legislate to remove criminal sanctions against homosexual acts between consenting adults in private in line with A.L.P. philosophy that it is improper for the State to intrude into the privacy of the individual."

Mr Miller: Does it sound hypocritical when Opposition members are attacking a police officer?

Mr STONEMAN: Exactly.

What example is the ALP suggesting that our children follow? I do not suggest that the ALP is responsible for AIDS, but its so-called enlightened attitude makes AIDS so much more difficult to control. One wonders what would be revealed by figures from States such as New South Wales and Victoria, which are governed by the ALP.

I call for a return to traditional values and the Christian role. I call on the decent people in the Labor Party—and I emphasise that—for the sake of the nation and its families to reject these self-proclaimed liberated policies before irreparable damage is done.

Ethanol; Queensland Science & Technology Limited

Mr McELLIGOTT (Townsville) (1.14 a.m.): All honourable members are well aware of the troubled times in the sugar industry. During recent discussions, growers in my electorate made a number of valid points. A problem facing the industry is that the only products derived from sugar-cane are sugar and molasses. They were very keen on the establishment of an ethanol industry in Queensland to enhance unleaded petrol which, by regulation, is to be introduced in Australia in 1985. They pointed out that an investigation into ethanol in 1980 revealed that a 10 per cent blending of ethanol would require the establishment of five major ethanol plants throughout the State to produce an estimated 250 million litres of ethanol annually.

Fortified by that, I was delighted to read a newspaper report of the establishment of a public company called Queensland Science & Technology Limited and its entry into a partnership with Uniquist, the commercial arm of the University of Queensland, in two major projects. The first was a process that involved the use of a micro-organism that would biologically convert common sugar to ethanol; the second one was a process that converts common organic waste into a high-value protein additive for animal fodder. As I said, I read the report with interest and was delighted with the progress.

However, I was very disappointed—indeed, shocked—to learn that the general manager of the newly-formed company was to be none other than Mr Alan Metcalfe. Quite frankly, Mr Metcalfe is one of the greatest con men to have resided in north Queensland.

Mr Scott: Is he a member of the National Party?

Mr McELLIGOTT: He is the Townsville chairman of the National Party.

He first came to my notice when he moved to Townsville from Mount Isa. Apparently, he left substantial debts in Mount Isa, and he arrived in Townsville as something of an authority on Rugby League. He established a publication entitled "Rugby League North", which subsequently went broke.

Mr Metcalfe then became an expert in the film-making industry, and produced what appeared to be some reasonable films about north Queensland. However, I have been advised recently that most of the people who worked on the films, including Malcolm Florence, who provided expert guidance and commentary, did not receive any payment.

It is therefore somewhat surprising that Mr Metcalfe is cited in the article as the general manager of a new hi-tech company. He is the same person who stood for election in the seat of Townsville South in 1980 and made no impression on the vote of the sitting member, Mr Alex Wilson. Mr Wilson still retains that seat.

Members on the opposite side of the House may wish to correct me, but I am aware of a strong rumour that circulated in Townsville to the effect that Mr Metcalfe owed the National Party \$17,000 as a result of that campaign. I place credence on the veracity of that rumour because, as honourable members will recall, that campaign was a very expensive one. To be candid, Alan Metcalfe could not have paid for it.

He is now the general manager of a public company, and he is appealing to members of the public in Queensland to subscribe approximately \$3m to that company. I point out that the newspaper report also indicates that the company has a planned initial issued capital of \$3.38m, with the vendor, Metcalfe Holdings Pty Ltd, receiving an allotment of 750 000 shares, with an option over another 2.6 million shares, exercisable by 1 November 1989. I am not very familiar with company law, but I am very concerned about Mr Metcalfe's record in business.

Because of two aspects of the matter, the Government ought to examine the situation carefully. The first is that the ethanol industry certainly deserves a measure of support, and the University of Queensland certainly deserves support. Secondly, and most importantly, the public of Queensland needs to be assured that if money is invested in this company, it will be under better management than Mr Metcalfe can provide.

Gallup Polls on Federal Referendums

Mr McPHIE (Toowoomba North) (1.19 a.m.): At this early hour of the morning, I wish to draw the attention of honourable members to the misinformation that is distributed by public opinion polls at certain times, and to how inaccurate the polls can be. In this case, I do not intend to refer to the big majority of votes that Mr Hawke seems to have, because it is well known that the Labor Party will not reflect that support on 1 December. Rather, I draw attention to the opinion polls that have forecast the outcome of referendums over the last 10 or 12 years.

I have some figures taken from the Morgan Gallup Poll that appeared in "The Bulletin" in 1973. At that time, two referendums were held. One dealt with price control; the other dealt with income control. The forecast by the poll indicated that the "Yes" vote for the price control referendum would be 65 per cent and the "No" vote would be 23 per cent. When the referendums reached the stage of voting at the ballot box, the figures indicated a "Yes" vote of 43.8 per cent and a "No" vote of 56.1 per cent. The difference between the two sets of figures is staggering. It demonstrates in a very definite way how inaccurate the opinion polls were in that instance. Similar percentage variations were reflected in all other referendums. In the referendum on incomes control the polls indicated that the "Yes" vote would be 51 per cent and the "No" vote 35 per cent. When the "Yes" votes were counted they totalled 32.4 per cent and the "No" votes totalled a massive 65.6 per cent.

Mr Eaton: They were a couple out.

Mr McPHIE: Too right they were a couple out.

In 1974, another series of referendums were held, and again the same sort of result was achieved, although in one instance the poll figures were almost accurate. One of the referendums dealt with the setting up of the Northern Territory. The poll indicated that the "Yes" vote would be 47 per cent, and the actual vote was 47.9 per cent. That is the one exception; otherwise, the system has been consistently wrong. That poll suggested that the "No" vote would be 34 per cent, and the actual vote was 52 per cent.

Another referendum related to democratic elections, in which the polls indicated that the "Yes" vote would be 62 per cent. The actual vote was 47.2 per cent. The "No" vote was forecast to be 21 per cent, which was again way out with the actual vote being 52.8 per cent. Another referendum relating to local government was also held at that time. The polls indicated that the "Yes" vote would be 64 per cent, but the actual vote was 46.8 per cent. The "No" vote was forecast at 20 per cent, but it actually achieved a handsome 53.1 per cent.

One of the referendums on which the people will vote on 1 December is coming up for the third time in the last 10 years. The proposal for simultaneous elections was first put forward in 1974 under an ALP Government. The polls forecast that the "Yes" vote would be 63 per cent, whereas the actual vote was 48.3 per cent. The "No" vote was forecast to be 20 per cent, but it turned out to be 51.6 per cent. In 1977, with a Liberal-National Party coalition Government and the ALP backing the referendum, the polls forecast a "Yes" vote of 66 per cent, but the actual vote was 61.1 per cent. The "No" vote was forecast to be 34 per cent and the actual vote was 38.9 per cent. That referendum was lost, however, because three States—Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania—voted against it. As members would know, a majority of all the States is required for a referendum to be carried. Those figures show that the surveys are consistently wrong. Probably one of the reasons for that is that people often tell the pollsters what they think they should answer, whereas when it comes to voting they put forward their real opinions. That is what the people of Australia will do on 1 December, because any attempt to change the Constitution is not a gift offered by a generous Government, which this mob in Canberra is not. There is always a price to pay. If the people of Australia vote "Yes" on 1 December they will find that the referendum has nothing to do with the Senate. It is the fault of the party controlling the House of

Representatives that simultaneous elections are not being held. That party called the early election.

The other referendum relating to the exchange of powers is quite unnecessary, because, as Opposition members know, the States and the Commonwealth can negotiate to exchange powers.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr McPHIE: If Opposition members disagree with that assertion, what do they say about the case of the South Australian railways? If the people of Australia have any sense, they will vote "No" on 1 December.

Time expired.

Motion (Mr Wharton) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 1.24 a.m. (Wednesday).