

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 1969**

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**TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER, 1969**

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. D. E. Nicholson, Murrumba) read prayers and took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS

SNOWY MOUNTAINS AUTHORITY'S REPORT  
ON CENTRAL QUEENSLAND POWER-HOUSE

Mr. Houston, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Did the Queensland Government receive from the Commonwealth a feasibility report by the Snowy Mountains Authority on the proposed Central Queensland power-house scheme? If so, when and what were the recommendations of the report?

(2) On what date was Queensland's complete submission forwarded to the Commonwealth regarding this scheme?

*Answers:—*

(1) "A report by the Snowy Mountains Authority on the proposed project, in response to specific Terms of Reference, was received from the Commonwealth on Saturday, 9th August. It was not a feasibility report in the strict sense of that type of study. The contents of the Report are confidential to the two Governments."

(2) "Queensland's written submission was made on September 4, 1968 and other major supporting written submissions were made on March 10 and August 25, 1969."

PRESS RELEASE ON CHANGES IN MINISTRY

Mr. Houston, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Who released to the Press (a) the name of the new Minister and (b) the re-allocation of portfolios?

(2) Why was this information given to the Press before being announced in Parliament?

*Answers:—*

(1) "I released the name of the proposed new Minister and the intended portfolio changes to the Press."

(2) "There was no requirement for Parliament to be advised before the public of the Government's intentions. A Ministerial statement formally notifying Parliament of the actual, as distinct from the proposed, changes will be made, as usual, this morning."

#### COMMUTER SERVICE TO GOLD COAST

**Mr. Hinze**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) Has the Brisbane Transport Study Committee completed its survey into the transport requirements of the City of Brisbane and adjacent areas?

(2) Has the committee given consideration to providing a commuter service to the Gold Coast City, as it is the fastest-growing city in Australia and there is no public transport available at present?

(3) Has he given any instructions to the committee to consider a proposal to provide a standard-gauge rail link from Brisbane to the New South Wales border?

*Answers:—*

(1) "No."

(2) "The Gold Coast City has been included in the area to be reported upon by the Consultants. Terms of the study contract require the consultants to investigate and report on public transport requirements, projected to the year 2000, for the City of Brisbane and its environs including Ipswich, Redcliffe, Gold Coast, North Coast and also taking into account long distance intrastate and interstate road services. There are two licensed road passenger services operating between Brisbane and Coolangatta. Between them they provide 23 return trips, Monday to Friday. Additional services are provided on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays."

(3) "No. Such a proposal would be outside the scope of a study of this nature which does not deal with interstate transport other than terminal requirements."

#### WITHDRAWALS FROM TRUST ACCOUNTS OF GERIATRIC PATIENTS, TOWNSVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL

**Mr. Tucker**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) Further to his Answer to my Question on August 26 that \$4,974.03 was withdrawn from the trust accounts of people who occupied beds in the geriatric ward at the Townsville General Hospital, what part of this amount was actually drawn for the patients' own personal use or for use on their behalf?

(2) Of the amount of \$5,658.64, what part was withdrawn for the same reasons?

*Answers:—*

The Secretary of the Townsville Hospitals Board has advised as follows:—

(1) "\$362 was withdrawn in cash for patients' own personal use. \$234.42 was withdrawn for use on patients' behalf. \$4,377.61 was remitted to the Public Curator on the death of various patients."

(2) "Records are not available to allow a similar dissection in respect of this amount. An amount of \$1,646 was however remitted to the Public Curator on the death of various patients."

#### MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF MOUNT ISA MINES LTD. EMPLOYEES

**Mr. Tucker**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

Further to his Answer to my Question on August 27 that \$4,784.65 was paid to the Townsville General Hospital—

(1) Was the private enterprise, Mount Isa Mines Ltd. able to have 1,013 of its intending employees X-rayed and fully examined by the leading medical officer of the Townsville General Hospital for a net amount of \$4.72 per person?

(2) If not, and other amounts were paid, (a) to whom were they paid, (b) what was the collective amount and (c) why was this allowed in view of his statement that only visiting specialists had the right of private practice?

*Answers:—*

(1) "As indicated in my Answer to the Honourable Member on August 27, 1969 the Hospitals Board has not charged a fee for medical examinations and total fees received by the Board for X-ray examinations was \$4,784.65."

(2) "Inquiries made over the week-end reveal that some payments have been made by Mount Isa Mines Ltd. to the Medical Superintendent of the Townsville General Hospital. The matter is being referred to the Townsville Hospitals Board and I shall further advise the Honourable Member when a written reply is received from the Board."

#### DOCTORS ENGAGED FOR WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS

**Mr. Sherrington**, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

(1) What is the number of medical practitioners in the metropolitan area whose services are used by the State Government Insurance Office for purposes of workers' compensation claims?

(2) (a) What are their names and qualifications, (b) what is the nature of the service they perform and (c) how much was paid to each in each of the past two years?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) "Medical fees were paid by the State Government Insurance Office to approximately 800 medical practitioners in the Brisbane metropolitan area for the twelve months ended June 30 last. The information requested is not readily obtainable and to endeavour to collate such information would involve time and expense which I do not consider warranted."

COAL FOR CENTRAL QUEENSLAND  
POWER-HOUSE

**Mr. Marginson**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

(1) Will the Queensland Coal Board, under its powers, be responsible for the allocation of tonnages of coal to be supplied to the proposed new Central Queensland power station and the determination of the price per ton of the coal to be supplied?

(2) What is the anticipated price of the coal (a) at the pithead and (b) delivered to the power station?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Permission has been granted by the Coal Board to the State Electricity Commission for the calling of tenders, if necessary, for the supply of coal to a proposed new power station which may be sited in the Gladstone area. This permission has been granted subject to the requirements of "The Coal Industry (Control) Acts, 1948 to 1965" being complied with. The information with respect to the price of coal at pithead and delivered to power station cannot be disclosed at this stage."

CONSTRUCTION OF IPSWICH BY-PASS,  
CUNNINGHAM HIGHWAY

**Mr. Marginson**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

With regard to the proposed southern by-pass of the Cunningham Highway at Ipswich from Dinmore to Churchill—

(1) Have plans for this road construction been completed? If not, what progress, if any, has been made?

(2) When is it expected that its construction will commence?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The by-pass is at a preliminary planning stage only, with only working surveys complete."

(2) "In view of other urgent works, no firm date for commencement of construction can be given."

RAILWAY OVERPASS BRIDGE, CHERMSIDE  
ROAD, EAST IPSWICH

**Mr. Marginson**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) Is the Railway Department considering the demolition of the traffic bridge over the railway at Chermiside Road, East Ipswich?

(2) If the bridge is to be demolished, will he give an assurance that a replacement bridge will be constructed immediately after the demolition?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes."

(2) "It is proposed immediately the existing bridge is demolished to replace it with a new bridge."

EDUCATION HOUSE FOR MARYBOROUGH

**Mr. Davies**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) In view of the rentals being paid for accommodation for departments under his administration in Maryborough, will he consider the erection of an Education House in that city?

(2) Is he aware that the accommodation provided for adult education activities is inadequate?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) "In view of other priorities no action can be taken at the present time for the erection of new accommodation in Maryborough. The matter will be kept under review."

PRAWN-PROCESSING PLANTS FOR  
AURUKUN AND WEIPA

**Mr. B. Wood**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Primary Industries,—

(1) Did the Government call applications for the establishment of prawn-processing plants at Aurukun and Weipa?

(2) If so, (a) how many applications were received for each site, (b) who were the successful applicants and (c) when are the plants likely to be built?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Tenders were called at Aurukun. Land is not yet available at Weipa."

(2) "(a) One application was received for a site at Aurukun. (b) The successful tenderer was Regional Resources Pty. Ltd. (ex Kimberley Fisheries (W.A.) Pty. Ltd.). (c) The tenderer has withdrawn because he was unable to obtain finance."

MIGRATION TO MAINLAND OF TORRES  
STRAIT ISLANDERS

**Mr. B. Wood**, pursuant to notice, asked  
The Minister for Lands,—

What is the estimated number of Torres Strait Islanders who have left their homes for the South in the last ten years?

*Answer:—*

“Torres Strait Islanders, whether assisted or non-assisted persons, have freedom of movement from the Torres Strait area and there is no requirement for the Department to approve or check movements to and fro. The Honourable Member will therefore appreciate the information sought is not available.”

REDLYNCH RAIL-MOTOR SERVICE FOR  
SCHOOL CHILDREN

**Mr. B. Wood**, pursuant to notice, asked  
The Minister for Transport,—

(1) Is the number of children attending primary and secondary schools in Cairns, who travel on the Redlynch rail motor, in excess of 150?

(2) Is he considering cancelling these rail motor services and, if so, for what reasons?

(3) Is he aware that parents along the route desire the services to be continued?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) “There has been an investigation of the Cairns-Gordonvale-Aloomba and Cairns-Redlynch rail-motor services as a result of strong representations for an extension of the Cairns-Edmonton bus service to Gordonvale. Because of the considerable advantage bus travel affords school children, the Commissioner for Railways has no objection to the proposal. With the introduction of the extended bus service, however, the rail-motor services between Cairns and Aloomba cannot be justified and will be withdrawn at the end of the 1969 school year. The licensee of the Cairns-Redlynch Bus Service is prepared to operate additional buses to cater for school children and with the introduction of these services at the end of the 1969 school year, it is also intended to withdraw the rail-motor services between these points.”

MANUFACTURE OF SYNTHETIC MEAT

**Mr. Thackeray**, pursuant to notice, asked  
The Minister for Primary Industries,—

(1) Has he noted the remarks of the Australian Meat Board Chairman, Mr. J. L. Shute, when addressing the Angus Forum in March this year, concerning meat substitutes and their deception of the uninitiated?

(2) As “artificial” meat is made extensively in the U.S.A. and Japan, two of Australia’s best export markets, has his Department any knowledge, or has a departmental study been made, of the substitutes?

(3) As meat substitutes would have a grave effect on graziers and the many workers engaged in the meat industry, are there any legislative safeguards operating against their introduction?

*Answers:—*

(1) “Yes.”

(2) “Yes—The position has been constantly under review during the past year and has also been brought to the attention of the Australian Agricultural Council.”

(3) “The Commonwealth has full powers of control over imports into Australia.”

EXPENDITURE ON OFF-SHORE OIL  
EXPLORATION

**Mr. R. Jones**, pursuant to notice, asked  
The Minister for Mines,—

Since 1961, which companies, at present holding Authorities to Prospect for petroleum off Queensland’s eastern coast, have spent two million dollars or more in such search and what is the total amount spent by each of the companies?

*Answer:—*

“Details of expenditure incurred on an Authority to Prospect are confidential between the holder and the Department. This has always been the policy since the title was introduced. However, at present expenditure on these exploration activities is at a rate approximating two million dollars per year.”

COMMONWEALTH APPROVAL OF OIL  
EXPLORATION PERMITS, GREAT  
BARRIER REEF WATERS

**Mr. R. Jones**, pursuant to notice, asked  
The Minister for Mines,—

(1) Has any Commonwealth approval been given for any exploration permits covering any Great Barrier Reef waters, subsequent to the enactment of the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act and, if not, why not?

(2) If so, does the granting of such permits indicate Commonwealth acquiescence in oil exploration on the Reef?

*Answers:—*

(1) “All applications made under the provisions of Division 7 of “*The Petroleum Submerged Lands) Act of 1967*” and the corresponding Commonwealth legislation for the transition of an Authority to Prospect to an Exploration Permit have

been dealt with in accordance with clause 11 of the Agreement of October 16, 1967, between the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Government of the State of Queensland. All applications were referred to the Commonwealth and the consent of the Commonwealth obtained before the Exploration Permits were granted. The conditions specified by the Commonwealth have been incorporated in the Exploration Permits or have been issued to the permittees in the form of directions under the joint legislation. No other Exploration Permits for Petroleum have been granted covering any Great Barrier Reef waters."

(2) "I refer the Honourable Member to section 28 of *"The Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act of 1967"* and the *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1967-1968* of the Commonwealth of Australia."

#### FISHERIES CONFERENCE, DARWIN

**Mr. R. Jones**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Primary Industries,—

(1) What Minister and/or representatives of the Queensland Fisheries Department attended the discussions with Commonwealth and other State Ministers and fisheries officials at Darwin in June this year?

(2) What was the extent of the conference and the terms of reference directly affecting Queensland?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The Minister for Primary Industries, the Director-General of Primary Industries and the Chief Inspector of Fisheries."

(2) "The occasion was the first meeting of the Australian Fisheries Council which comprises the Commonwealth Ministers for Territories and Interior and Ministers charged with fisheries administration in each State, with the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry, as Chairman. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss fisheries matters of common concern to the Commonwealth and the States."

#### CLOUD-SEEDING OPERATIONS TO INCLUDE BURRUM RIVER AREA

**Mr. Blake**, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) With reference to a report in *The Courier-Mail* of September 4, will cloud-seeding operations begin later this month under a State Government three-months' contract let to a Queensland-based air company operating from bases at Longreach, Charleville or Brisbane?

(2) If so, will operations from these bases include coverage of the Burrum River catchment area, where there is a dire shortage of reticulated water-storage supplies, and other drought-stricken areas of the Isis electorate?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Cloud-seeding operations are due to commence about September 15 and continue for three months. The period covers the months of maximum thunderstorm activity when clouds capable of being seeded should be more frequent throughout Queensland. Supply bases for the operation are Longreach, Charleville, Rockhampton and Brisbane. It was necessary to select bases which would give adequate coverage of drought-affected areas in relation to the range of the aircraft and the location of weather forecasting centres."

(2) "Indications of clouds likely to respond to silver iodide seeding which will generally have cloud-tops in excess of 15,000 feet, will be obtained from Bureau of Meteorology forecasts. The Department of Civil Aviation is arranging for cloud and weather reports to be supplied by pilots of aircraft operating in drought areas so that the cloud-seeding officers will be aware of suitable conditions in other areas. The aircraft being used for the operation has a range of over 1,000 miles and a cruising speed of 225 miles per hour so that the Bundaberg region, including the Burrum River catchment, which is less than an hour's flying time from Brisbane or Rockhampton, could be seeded should suitable cloud conditions occur. Within the limitations imposed by the aircraft performance, the object of the operation is to give maximum possible coverage to all drought areas."

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF BUNDABERG IRRIGATION PROJECT

**Mr. Blake**, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

As Press reports indicate that no Cabinet Minister or senior departmental officer will be included in the delegation to the National Development Committee in Canberra to present a case for the implementation of the Bundaberg and District Irrigation scheme, will he, in view of the major importance of the scheme, (a) accompany the delegation himself or direct a Cabinet Minister to do so, or (b) appoint a senior departmental officer for this purpose?

*Answer:—*

"Official submissions to the Commonwealth stating a case for financial assistance for the Bundaberg Irrigation Project have been made on a Premier to Prime Minister level and must continue on that basis. The delegation arranged by the Bundaberg

Irrigation Committee is to meet the Commonwealth Parliamentary National Development Committee to inform and seek the support of this Committee on Commonwealth finance for the Bundaberg scheme. The delegation, comprising the Honourable Member for Burnett, representatives of the Bundaberg Irrigation Committee and the Canegrowers Council, is fully conversant with the scheme and the local conditions and problems which have created the need for it. It is not proposed that myself, the Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs, or a senior departmental officer will be included. However, I am available at any time for further discussions on the scheme either with the Prime Minister or his nominees."

#### FREE PERMITS FOR ROAD TRANSPORT IN DECLARED DROUGHT AREAS

Mr. Aiken, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) What are the conditions covering the issue of free permits for road transport of livestock and fodder in drought-declared areas?

(2) Is it one of the conditions that the road journey for the transport of stock in backward store condition, either for slaughter or for agistment, will be less than 25 per centum of competition with rail?

(3) How many free permits have been issued to graziers and pastoralists for (a) road transport of stock in backward store condition and (b) transportation of drought fodder in areas more than 200 miles from the coast?

Answers:—

(1) "The conditions are:—(i) For livestock—(a) the road transport of all stock in any condition from a property in a drought-declared area for sale, slaughter or agistment. Should re-consignment for agistment be necessary the stock are again eligible for a further free road permit for the journey; (b) the return of the survivors of agisted stock and their progeny by road; (c) the road transport of stock purchased for restocking on account of drought losses by deaths or enforced sales provided that this represents 20 per cent. or more of the property's stock. (ii) For fodder—The road transport of fodder from anywhere in the State to a property in a drought-declared area."

(2) "No."

(3) "Free permits are issued at police stations throughout the State for both the transport of stock and fodder and are of a continuing nature and the exact number of such permits issued is not available but since the inception of the scheme in 1965 over 23,000 of such permits have been issued."

#### TINAROO FALLS DAM LEVEL AND PROPOSED FLAGGY CREEK DAM

Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

(1) What is the present level of the Tinaroo Falls Dam below the spillway level?

(2) What was the level on September 9, 1965, 1966, 1967 and 1968?

(3) What is the present outflow for the (a) irrigation channel and (b) Barron River?

(4) Will there be any need for a curtailment of water supply for irrigation or power supply?

(5) Has any consideration been given to the construction of Flaggy Creek dam to provide an assured supply for power generation?

Answers:—

"As this Question was obviously intended for me in my capacity as Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs, the Answer is as follows:—

(1) "On September 3, the water level in Tinaroo Falls Dam was 17 feet 6 inches below spillway level and the volume in storage is 206,200 acre feet. (Capacity at full supply level is 330,000 acre feet.)"

(2) "Actual levels in the dam in previous years were as follows: September 9, 1965, 1 foot below spillway level; September 9, 1966, 18 feet 9 inches below spillway level; September 9, 1967, 4 inches below spillway level; September 9, 1968, 6 feet 9 inches below spillway level."

(3) "The present rate of release to the irrigation channel and Barron River are: Irrigation channel, 128 cusecs = 256 acre feet per day; Barron River, 100 cusecs = 200 acre feet per day."

(4) "No."

(5) "The construction of Flaggy Creek Dam is a matter for the Northern Electric Authority, but as far as I am aware its early construction is not likely."

#### NORMAN RIVER CHANNEL MARKINGS, KARUMBA

Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

In view of the large increase in the number of prawn-processing plants at Karumba and the need for an all-weather access to the Norman River from the Gulf of Carpentaria, will he consider the provision of a gaslight fairway buoy and improvements to other channel markings between the fairway buoy and the river?

*Answer:—*

"All existing buoys, including the fairway buoy at Karumba, are to be replaced by four new lighted buoys by the end of this month at a cost of approximately \$3,600. The lights on the new buoys will have a visibility range of four to five miles."

#### NEW BARRON RIVER BRIDGE, MAREEBA

**Mr. Wallis-Smith**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

(1) When will the new bridge over the Barron River at Mareeba be completed and open for traffic?

(2) Has any decision been made as to the name for the new bridge? If not, will he seek suggestions from the people of Mareeba and surrounding areas?

*Answers:—*

(1) "It is anticipated that the bridge will be completed early in November, and the approaches completed and bridge opened to traffic in December."

(2) "No decision has yet been made as to the name of the new bridge. Suggestions from the Local Authority are always considered."

#### NEW ENROLMENTS, QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY

**Mr. P. Wood**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

What was the number of new students enrolled at the University of Queensland for each of the years 1966, 1967, 1968 and 1969?

*Answer:—*

"Year	Full-Time	Part-Time Internal	Part-Time External	Total
1966—				
Brisbane	1,946	1,126	426	3,498
Townsville	189	36	..	225
Total ..	2,135	1,162	426	3,723
1967—				
Brisbane	1,944	981	431	3,356
Townsville	159	30	..	189
Total ..	2,103	1,011	431	3,545
1968—				
Brisbane	1,926	841	327	3,094
Townsville	179	44	..	223
Total ..	2,105	885	327	3,317
1969—				
Brisbane	2,133	670	321	3,124
Townsville	265	99	..	364
Total ..	2,398	769	321	3,488"

#### ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS (CYCLAMATES) IN FOOD AND DRINK

**Mr. P. Wood**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) Does his Department exercise any control or supervision over the amount of artificial sweeteners used in food and drink sold in Queensland?

(2) Does his Department have any information concerning the effects of an excessive intake of cyclamates and, if so, what is such information?

(3) Do any of the Acts under his supervision require that food or drink containing cyclamates be so labelled? If not, will he arrange for such a provision to be inserted in the relevant Act?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes, the Food and Drug Regulations contain the relevant provisions."

(2) "The Food Additives and Contaminants Committee of the British Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food reported in 1965 that 'since cyclamates do not appear to produce any toxic effects, since the amounts likely to be ingested will not be of an order likely to produce a significant laxative effect and since they will be to a great extent self-limiting, there would be no risk to health in allowing the use of cyclamates in food without statutory limitation, except for that already laid down in the Soft Drink Regulations'. The same committee confirmed its previous report in 1967 but suggested further scientific examination of the subject."

(3) "Yes, the Food and Drug Regulations set out specific declaration and labelling requirements."

#### LAND FOR NEW STATE HIGH SCHOOL, TOOWOOMBA

**Mr. Bousen**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

Has ground been acquired for a fourth State high school at Toowoomba? If so, where is it situated and when is it expected that building will commence?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Reserve Wilsonton (R1174), County of Aubigny, Parish of Drayton. The reserve faces North Street and is 25 acres 2 roods in area."

(3) "No plans have been made for a fourth high school in Toowoomba."



RESIDENCE FOR GENERAL MANAGER,  
RAILWAY DEPARTMENT, TOOWOOMBA

**Mr. Bousen**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) What was the cost of construction or the purchase price of the new home located in the Picnic Point area, for the General Manager of the Railway Department, Toowoomba?

(2) What is the department's intention in regard to the residence formerly occupied by the General Manager?

*Answers:—*

(1) "\$15,600."

(2) "The previous residence occupied by the General Manager was sold on October 29, 1968, to the tenderer who submitted the highest tendered price as a result of public tenders which were invited."

DECLARED AREAS UNDER CLEAN AIR ACT

**Mr. Hanson**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) What are the declared areas of the State under "The Clean Air Act of 1963"?

(2) When were these areas declared?

(3) Are further areas to be declared under this Act and, if so, when?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The cities of Brisbane and Ipswich."

(2) "May 8, 1965."

(3) "In a letter dated August 5, 1969, the Air Pollution Council of Queensland recommended the extension of the Act to other areas immediately upon the appointment of at least one engineer to the Division staff. Applications for this position are currently being considered."

DENTAL FELLOWSHIP HOLDERS

**Mr. Melloy**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

How many dental fellowship holders (a) were appointed to country clinics or hospitals, (b) have failed to complete their compulsory service and (c) were compelled to make a monetary payment in lieu of their service and what was the total amount paid in this regard, in the years ended June 30, 1967, 1968 and 1969, respectively?

*Answer:—*

"(a) Five fellowship dentists were appointed in the year ended June 30, 1967; five fellowship dentists were appointed in the year ended June 30, 1968; ten fellowship dentists were appointed in the year ended June 30, 1969. (b) All fellowship dentists appointed since July 1, 1966, are

still employed. Of those fellowship dentists appointed prior to July 1, 1966, four terminated duty during the year ended June 30, 1967, three terminated duty during the year ended June 30, 1968, and six terminated duty during the year ended June 30, 1969—all failing to complete their bond of service. (c) Repayments of moneys following the breaking of bonds by fellowship dentists were: \$1,977.11 in the year ended June 30, 1967; \$4,307.64 in the year ended June 30, 1968; \$3,867.80 in the year ended June 30, 1969. The above figures relate to dental fellowship holders employed in dental hospitals, hospital dental clinics and the School Health Dental Services."

SPECIAL GOLDEN CASKET LOTTERIES FOR  
NEW QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY

**Mr. Bromley**, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

Further to the Answer to my Question by the Minister for Education on August 20 in relation to the progress of plans for a new art gallery, and in view of the Premier's refusal to agree to and institute a series of special lotteries to help finance the building of a new art gallery, will he authorise the appropriate department to conduct special lotteries for this purpose? If not, why not?

*Answer:—*

"I assume the Honourable Member is referring to the Golden Casket, which is administered by me. The net proceeds from the Golden Casket Art Union are credited to the Hospital, Motherhood and Child Welfare Trust Fund and I am not prepared to divert the funds so used for humanitarian purposes towards the construction of an art gallery."

MINISTERIAL NEWSLETTER TO PARENTS  
AND CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS

**Mr. Bromley**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

With regard to the parents and citizens' newsletter, headed "From The Minister's Desk", and printed over his signature—

(1) How many parents and citizens' associations proposed this measure?

(2) From what schools did the proposal emanate?

(3) How often will the newsletter be printed?

(4) To how many schools and other institutes of learning will it be circulated?

(5) How many will be forwarded to each school?

(6) What is the cost of this expensive-looking newsletter with respect to (a) each single issue, (b) total issue when under full production and (c) monthly cost and postage?

(7) How many staff will be engaged in compiling and distributing each issue?

*Answers:—*

(1) "During the course of visits to schools, and meetings with parents and citizens' associations, the idea of a direct link between parents and citizens' associations and myself was proposed to me on numerous occasions. I have kept no accurate count or list of the number of people or associations who proposed the newsletter."

(2) "See Answer to (1)."

(3) "Once per term, i.e., three times a year."

(4) "To every State school."

(5) "Up to six copies, depending on the size of the school."

(6) "(a) 4.5 cents per copy; (b) approximately 5,000; the first issue printed totalled 5,380; (c) The cost of the first issue was \$243.96. Postage will henceforward be minimal, as newsletters will be enclosed with normal items of correspondence going to schools."

(7) "One officer will be helping me produce the newsletter as part of his general duties. Distribution will be handled within my Department in conjunction with the distribution of other material."

#### TOONDAH HARBOUR PROJECT, CLEVELAND

**Mr. Baldwin**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

Further to his Answer to my Question on August 21 concerning the Toondah Harbour project—

(1) What were the terms, conditions and cost of the land acquired by Stradbroke Ferries Pty. Ltd.?

(2) From whom was the land acquired?

(3) Is the land to be resold to any other body or resumed by any State or local government body? If so, (a) which body, (b) at what cost and (c) for what purpose is it to be purchased or resumed?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) "The land being reclaimed by the company at Toondah Harbour is Crown land over which a special lease has been offered to the company. As the lease is still being negotiated the terms and conditions thereof have not been finalised."

(3) "The Corporation of the Treasurer of Queensland desires to obtain part of the reclaimed land as a trailer boat park-

ing area abutting a concrete boat launching ramp proposed to be constructed by the Corporation if the land is acquired. This matter is under negotiation with the company."

#### BREACHES OF BOATING REGULATIONS

**Mr. Bromley** asked The Minister for Local Government,—

(1) How many people have been (a) charged with and (b) prosecuted for breaches of the boating regulations during the years 1966-67, 1967-68 and from July 1, 1968, to the present date?

(2) What were the breaches and the outcome of the charges?

(3) In what areas were breaches most commonly detected?

(Originally asked on September 4, 1969)

*Answers:—*

(1) "(a) and (b) The details in respect of the years 1966-67 and 1967-68 are contained in the annual report of the Department of Harbours and Marine for those years. For the period July 1, 1968, to August 31, 1969, there were 211 prosecutions against the Motor Boat and Motor Vessel Regulations."

(2) "The prosecutions in the latter period were in respect of the following breaches:—Using an unregistered motor boat, 44; failure to register motor boat, 12; registered numbers not painted on vessel, 6; exceeding speed limit, 37; not being the lawful holder of a speed boat driver's licence, 51; not being the lawful holder of a water-ski boat driver's licence, 18; engaging in water-skiing without a permit, 3; water skiing outside approved area, 11; failure to carry observer in water-ski boat, 15; permitting water-ski boat to be used by a person not the lawful holder of a licence, 6; carrying persons in excess of number permitted in a water-ski boat, 1; operating motor boat without a launch master's certificate, 2; operating hire vessel without a survey, 2; failure to keep proper lookout, 1; overloading of motor vessel, 1; collision with another vessel, 1. All persons prosecuted were found guilty with the exception of one case which was withdrawn."

(3) "Southport, Brisbane and Townsville."

#### MINISTERIAL EXPENSES

##### RETURN TO ORDER

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Return to an Order made by the House on 19 August last, on the motion of Mr. Cory, of expenses of Ministers for the period 1 July, 1968, to 30 June, 1969, inclusive, showing each separately and in detail.

## PAPERS

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

Report of the Police Superannuation Board for the year 1968-69.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Order in Council under the Water Act 1926-1968.

Regulation under the Apprenticeship Act of 1964.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

## MINISTRY

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (11.30 a.m.): I desire to inform the House that, on 4 September, 1969, His Excellency the Administrator of the Government—

(a) appointed—

Wallace Alexander Ramsay Rae, Esquire, to be a member of the Executive Council of Queensland;

(b) appointed—

The Honourable Ronald Ernest Camm, to be Minister for Mines and Main Roads of Queensland;

The Honourable Neville Thomas Eric Hewitt, M.M., A.F.M., to be Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs of Queensland;

The Honourable Wallace Alexander Ramsay Rae, to be Minister for Local Government and Electricity of Queensland.

I lay upon the table of the House a copy of the Government Gazette Extraordinary of 4 September, 1969, containing the relevant notifications.

Whereupon the hon. gentleman laid the Government Gazette Extraordinary upon the table.

## MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

## INITIATION

**Hon. S. D. TOOTH** (Ashgrove—Minister for Health): I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Medical Act 1939-1968 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

## ADDRESS IN REPLY

## RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 4 September (see p. 402) on Mr. Hungerford's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

**Mr. CAREY** (Albert) (11.54 a.m.): It is a particular pleasure for me to be on my feet today to join in this most important debate for the 10th consecutive time.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. CAREY:** If my friends on the Opposition benches will kindly be patient, they will be able to hear my speech and judge for themselves whether or not I am the best representative that Albert has ever had.

On behalf of the people whom I have the honour to represent, I reaffirm our loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, and I should also like to join in congratulating Prince Charles on his elevation to the high and honourable position of Prince of Wales.

I join with other hon. members in thanking His Excellency the Administrator, Honourable Joseph Sheehy, for his Opening Speech.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! There is too much noise in the Chamber.

**Mr. CAREY:** I think all hon. members agree that it was wonderful for the Acting Chief Justice to be given the opportunity of opening Parliament at his time of life, and I am sure that he appreciated it. Naturally, all members of this Assembly trust that the Chief Justice, Sir William Mack, will soon be restored to his usual good health, and I join with other hon. members in saying “Thank you” to Sir William for his work for the State.

I am confident the people of Albert, and Queenslanders as a whole, are looking forward to the return of His Excellency the Governor, Sir Alan Mansfield, and Lady Mansfield. I hope that they will return with much information of value to Queensland and that they will be able to resume their duties immediately on their return.

My congratulations go to the hon. member for Balonne, Mr. Harold Hungerford, on his moving of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, and I am very happy to congratulate also the seconder, Dr. Arthur Crawford, the member for Wavell. A little later I shall be expressing my thoughts on Dr. Crawford's speech, but I shall do so in a very friendly way.

**Mr. Tucker:** Say what you said out in the corridor.

**Mr. CAREY:** The interjection from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is, of course, totally incorrect. I have not said anything on this matter in the corridor.

During my term in Parliament, maiden speeches sometimes have been very dreary, and I compliment many of the new members on both sides of the House upon the way in which each of them has presented his first speech in Parliament in this debate. Those of us who have been in the House a little longer than they have know that a maiden speech is the only occasion on which

an hon. member is listened to without interjection if he attacks the Government or Government members from the Opposition benches, or if a member on this side of the Chamber attacks hon. members opposite. I say to those hon. members who have made their first speech, "You have had your day. From now on we will be at you."

I welcome to this Assembly all new members, and I am very glad to see a number of old faces, although there are relatively few here now. I congratulate the Premier on again leading his team to office and the Deputy Premier upon the contribution he made to the return of the Government. There are always some casualties in an election—one cannot enter an election campaign and expect that there will not be casualties—and I feel a little sad that I have lost a couple of my colleagues from the last Parliament.

In particular, I congratulate the hon. member for Hawthorne, Mr. Bill Kaus, whom I have dubbed the "Four-square man". I think we are kindred spirits or, at least, have kindred thoughts. At the election held in 1966, hon. members will remember that I won Albert by only 49 votes and that I was hanging by the throat for a fortnight awaiting the result. I thought my experience was bad until the recent election, when I thought of the hon. member for Hawthorne mowing grass that was not there and chewing his fingernails while waiting to hear that he had won by four votes. I say to him, "Congratulations, Mr. 'Four-square man'. You are four-square in your efforts to help your constituents; you are four-square behind the Government."

I thank all my friends on the Gold Coast, but particularly my campaign committee, for the wonderful support they gave me. Never before have the people rallied to assist me as they did on this occasion; they were particularly good and did a wonderful job. I also want to thank the 7,081 wonderful people who gave me their No. 1 votes. I really did not need the Labour Party preference votes which the Labour voters were so generously going to give me, although in fact they were told to give them to one of the other candidates.

**Mr. Bromley:** Who told you that?

**Mr. CAREY:** The Labour "boys" told me. My Labour constituents told me they were going to give me their preferences.

**Mr. Hinze:** For the wonderful work you had done for nine years.

**Mr. CAREY:** Of course. If some of the hon. members who are interjecting had visited the wonderful electorate of Albert they would have seen that the hoardings put up by my campaign committee read, "Carey works for everyone". This, of course, is true.

This will probably shock hon. members on the other side of the Chamber because they do not like to give thanks. In the main, they like to knock down; they are not builders. But I like to give thanks where thanks are due, and I very sincerely thank most of my opponents in the last election in Albert. Although there were six candidates in the field, there was really only one who tried to stir up a little strife. I sincerely thank the others.

**Mr. Bromley:** Was the one you speak of Mr. Chalk?

**Mr. CAREY:** No, it was not Mr. Chalk.

I want to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on again being elected to the high and honourable position of Speaker of this Parliament, and also the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Keith Hooper, on his re-election to that position, in which he is always ready to assist the Speaker in the affairs of Parliament.

Speaking late in the debate has its advantages because now I can congratulate the newly elected Minister, the Honourable Wally Rae, on his elevation to the Ministerial portfolio of Local Government and Electricity. Mr. Rae has always been a friend of mine, and will remain a friend of mine.

**Mr. Davies** interjected.

**Mr. CAREY:** I will not accept provocative interjections from the other side of the House.

I should also like to congratulate the Honourable Neville Hewitt on his election to the Ministerial portfolio of Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs. Marine is a very important portfolio to my area and I am looking forward to receiving much support from him.

Strangely, I believe some Ministers can forecast what one is going to speak about. I had made up my mind to speak last Thursday but time ran out and I was forced to take the call for today. I have frequently requested the Minister for Main Roads to expedite the painting of speed limit signs on bitumen road pavements. Those hon. members who have been in the House for some time will remember that it was my suggestion and my thought—

**Mr. Bromley:** It was my suggestion three years ago.

**Mr. Hinze:** The original idea came from you.

**Mr. CAREY:** I thank the hon. member for South Coast. As a matter of fact, when I first tried to have it made law in this State I wrote to many organisations who I thought would support me but they turned the idea down. However, I continued in my endeavours to get the Government to look at this means of informing the motorist of permissible speeds, and today I have the pleasure of being able to say that this morning I was handed by the Honourable

Ron Camm a Press release issued by him today. I shall read it, as I want it to go into "Hansard".

It states—

"A proposal to introduce a system of markings on road pavements throughout Queensland has been approved. These markings will be primarily speed limit markings but provision had also been made in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for additional legends and a pavement marking alphabet," said Mr. Camm."

So hon. members will see that we have been successful in our efforts.

**Mr. Wallis-Smith:** What date is that letter?

**Mr. CAREY:** This is a Press release dated 9 September. It is strange that the hon. member for Tablelands does not seem to be able to hear. He should get one of those switch-on, switch-off mechanisms.

The final paragraph in that statement says—

"Driver reaction to the markings during the trial was good," said Mr. Camm, "and it is my and my Traffic Engineers' belief that the adoption and extension of this marking scheme will effect improvement in the observance by drivers of speed limits."

That is exactly what I advocated.

**Mr. Tucker:** Wouldn't you think that he would put your name in that?

**Mr. CAREY:** I do not think that hon. members look for a tremendous amount of praise. I am quite happy as long as I have achieved something for the motorists.

I turn now to the registration of builders. It may be a little premature for the Government to give the matter consideration, but the present time seems to be opportune for registering builders. I know that the Master Builders' Association has made many overtures to the Government to register its members and all other persons who are capable of carrying out the work of a builder, building contractor or carpenter. The association is happy to have registered any building worker who can pass a prescribed test. There is no shutting of the door. Doctors, electricians, drainers and dentists are registered, and now the Minister for Health is intending to have chiropodists registered. If chiropodists, who look after the people's feet, are to be registered, it is more important that builders are registered so that some control can be exercised over the construction of homes for people who, in the main, can afford to have only one home built in their lifetime. Admittedly each person has only one pair of feet, but generally speaking a home is built by a person who puts the whole of his life savings into its construction, and he makes it his castle. Therefore, we should ensure that only tradesmen with the ability required by registration should be given a licence to build, and only the best available materials should be used in the construction of homes. I presume that the registration of builders will

be a matter for the Minister for Labour and Tourism, and I hope that Cabinet and the Government parties will give earnest consideration to this matter.

**Mr. Lonergan:** Are you in favour of prohibiting subcontractors?

**Mr. CAREY:** I have not gone very deeply into the matter of subcontractors, but I was very disappointed when this Government—and I was a party to it—repealed the Contractors' and Workmen's Lien Act, because little opportunity is now given to subcontractors to obtain their payments from snide builders.

I do not favour willy-nilly registration of everybody. I like to see freedom of the people and not too much interference with their rights. I have made a fairly careful survey in my own electorate, and I have copies of letters from old people, pensioners and others who live on the Gold Coast complaining that the builders they had employed were not doing a good job. In fact, a number of the people who complained said they could not even get the builder to complete the job because he thought he was going to lose money on it. This sort of thing goes on, and the home-owner is faced with hardship. I am interested more in giving my support to the home-owner than to registering the builder and the contractor.

**Mr. Tucker:** Wouldn't it be preferable to have better inspection rather than registration?

**Mr. CAREY:** The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has raised a very good point, but I think we should first have registration, and then the Government may see fit to appoint inspectors—

**Mr. Miller:** An army of them?

**Mr. CAREY:** No, not an army of inspectors. I do not like the thought of an army of inspectors.

**Mr. Miller:** There would have to be.

**Mr. CAREY:** Inspectors are employed on Housing Commission buildings and I think they are needed. If a builder does not do a worth-while job he should lose his licence. When we provide protection to an organisation it should shoulder its responsibility and ensure that anyone who is licensed does a good job. I will not try to give details of a registration scheme. We have very capable departmental officers who could draft a suitable scheme.

Probably all hon. members read an article which appeared in "The Courier-Mail" this morning relating to two roof repairers who were charged with fraud. I do not propose to say what is right and what is wrong, but I am sure that you, Mr. Speaker, will permit me to read a small portion of the article, even though the court case is continuing. If these men have done what is alleged—I am neither the judge nor the jury—it is essential that registration should

be provided as quickly as possible. The article is headed, "Two roof repairers deny fraud charge." It then continues—

"A widow, 72, claimed in the District Court yesterday she paid out \$1,000 in cash to two men after she let them start work on an \$80 sparrow-proofing job at her Rocklea home."

The Press article contains the following statements in reply to questions—

"Downs had agreed that neither he nor Deen were qualified carpenters, plumbers or drainers."

**Mr. Lee:** Men of that type would not get into the Master Builders' Association for registration.

**Mr. CAREY:** They would have no chance of getting in.

The article continues—

"Asked if Amalgamated Roof Repair Service ever employed any qualified tradesmen, Downs had said: 'You don't need qualified men. We can tell them what to do.'"

"Asked about equipment, Downs had said: 'You don't need much equipment. Just a ladder and hammer and saw and nails.'"

Hon. members can realise that anyone with the barest knowledge of building practice can advertise in the Press, go where he likes, and try to set himself up as a fully-fledged carpenter or builder.

**Mr. Hinze:** And then skip out of the State after he has done a very poor job.

**Mr. CAREY:** That is so. These people frequently skip out of the State with the money.

If registration was implemented, no doubt the Government would incorporate a provision preventing anyone from advertising that he was a building contractor or capable of doing certain work unless he had the qualifications necessary for registration. As apprentices have to serve their time before becoming tradesmen, surely it is only fair to protect them so that unqualified people cannot enter their field of operations, especially as apprentices receive lower wages than a journeyman. If apprentices have to pass examinations, it is essential to register building contractors.

**Mr. Lee:** Give the master builders the say and they will keep this element out of their association.

**Mr. CAREY:** That is a pretty good point, although I do not know that I favour this. I am not building up their regulations. I am merely suggesting that regulations be introduced by the Government and that they be implemented. I do not believe that every builder, contractor or carpenter should have to join the Master Builders' Association. In my opinion, that smacks of regimentation.

**Mr. R. Jones:** You are precipitating the registration of master builders?

**Mr. CAREY:** Evidently the hon. member for Cairns has not the intelligence to comprehend what I am suggesting when he asks such a question. That is all we can expect from that hon. gentleman.

I ask that all hon. members support me in my next suggestion. We have heard a good deal about varying our Standing Orders and altering the time limit on speeches. Prior to the election, the Leader of the Opposition claimed that Parliament did not meet often enough or for long enough. My suggestion is completely different. I suggest that the Government—perhaps I should say "Parliament"—should consider extending the elected term of each Parliament to four or five years instead of three years. Do many of the newly elected members feel confident and know exactly where they are going? Judging from some of the questions they are asking, I doubt whether they know anything at all about government.

**Mr. Lee:** A parliamentarian, in his first three years, is nothing but an apprentice.

**Mr. CAREY:** That is so, and then, at the end of that three years, he must face the public again.

**Mr. Davies:** Government members would like 10 years.

**Mr. CAREY:** The hon. member is entitled to his opinion. I am making my speech in my own way.

Senators are elected for six years. Queensland abolished its Legislative Council. I sometimes doubt that Australia needs a Senate. It is not the watchdog it claims to be. Six years is probably too long, because members elected for such a period could become too complacent and feel too secure. The British Parliament is elected for five years.

**Mr. P. Wood** interjected.

**Mr. CAREY:** The hon. member is probably thinking of France, where there is a change of Government every day. He should study his history.

**Mr. Lee:** You are talking about Mr. Wilson and the Labour mob in England.

**Mr. CAREY:** Yes.

The Tasmanian Parliament is elected for five years. Elections are costly to the State, the taxpayer and the candidate; they are a nuisance in many ways to the electors, and I suggest that an extension to four years would be well received. I have conducted surveys not only in my own electorate but also in Brisbane and other places I have visited, and they show that the electors would welcome such a step with open arms because they are sick and tired of elections. Many claim that Governments, irrespective of party, are election happy. There has just been a State election, and in October there is to be a Federal election. Then there will be a Senate election, and then local authority

elections. It goes on and on and on, till by the time it next gets round to another State in three years, if that remains as the term of office, the people will be so sick and tired of the whole thing that many of them will not even want to vote.

**Mr. P. Wood:** You just don't like elections.

**Mr. CAREY:** The hon. member for Toowoomba East is in his second term of office, and he is now starting to throw his weight about. I wish he would confine himself to saying sensible things.

**Mr. Davies:** You are jealous.

**Mr. CAREY:** I am not; I certainly could not be jealous of the hon. member for Toowoomba East.

I now wish to deal with hospitals. I would say that nothing on earth that has been made by man cannot be bettered and, of course, our hospital system can be improved. I think all recognise the importance of the noble profession of the members of the Australian Medical Association. I do not know whether, as a body, the A.M.A. supports everything that has been said in the recent Press publicity concerning Queensland hospitals. It may be that a few of its members support it. I believe that the hon. member for Wavell is to be admired for bringing this matter before the House, but I think that he could have been a little more temperate. I would not appreciate the hon. member's telling me how to run a store, which is something I have been doing all my life, so I suppose I cannot criticise what he is doing in the medical field. I frankly admit that I am no authority on the running of hospitals. We must therefore take advice on the matter, as long as it comes from all the people concerned with this noble profession, or who are as near to being concerned with it as it is possible to get.

I know that there is plenty of room for improvement in the Southport General Hospital. Only a couple of weeks ago I led a deputation consisting of the members of the board, the secretary and the medical superintendent to the Minister for Health asking that, because of overcrowding, an additional ward be built immediately. Certainly the overcrowding is not as bad as shown in the picture accompanying the article in the last edition of "The Sunday Mail" on hospital conditions by John Bragg, who was at least prepared to put his name to what he wrote. I am certain that the additional wing will be provided at Southport at an early date; I have had private conversations with the Minister, and I feel confident that we can look forward to its construction very shortly. I have a submission of five foolscap pages which was given to me by one of the leading doctors on the Gold Coast. Although I have permission to table it in

the House, I do not intend to do so. It contains a wealth of information, and it certainly has assisted me to understand exactly what is needed.

As one would expect, I have had quite a lot to do with the people in my area, and so many have received the benefits of free hospitalisation and so few have been inconvenienced that, so far as I am concerned, anything that would diminish the confidence of the people in the free hospitalisation system must be criticised. One hears everywhere stories of wonderful things done by doctors and nurses in general hospitals. Queensland has a free hospitalisation system, and only yesterday I was told that no-one requiring urgent medical or surgical attention has ever been turned away. A gentleman told me that he took a very urgent case to one of the big hospitals in Melbourne and was told to go to Geelong, that there was no room in the hospital.

**Mr. Davies:** You will acknowledge that the Labour Party set it up, won't you?

**Mr. CAREY:** If the hon. member waits a little while, I shall tell him what the Labour Party did.

The people who, because of illness or hardship, have to go to Queensland hospitals for free treatment are very grateful for the service that is provided, and many of them have appealed to me not to allow anything to interfere with the free hospitalisation system. I am very concerned and worried that the present controversy may be the thin end of the wedge being used by some people to try to end free hospitalisation or to make people pay a certain amount for treatment, as is done in other States. It is very easy to destroy things; it is very difficult to be constructive and to build.

Instead of highlighting shortcomings that really do not count, I think one should try to impress upon the people of this State who use free hospitalisation the good points of the system. I draw the attention of hon. members to an article written by Mr. John Bragg that appeared in "The Sunday Mail" on Sunday last. One paragraph said—

"It was easy to share the embarrassment of a woman who had to call for a bedpan in this confined space. But at least she had a wall bed and was screened by curtains."

Although over-crowding brings inconveniences, that woman was prepared to accept it in order to receive good medical attention in hospital rather than stay at home and perhaps die.

A little further down, under the heading "Patients satisfied", the article continued—

"A Wickham Terrace physician said: 'A tremendous number of patients are satisfied with the public hospital service and they do get a more thorough investigation than a lot of general practitioners are able to give.'"

"And another physician after criticising the system, added: 'But acute care here is as good as I've seen anywhere in the world.'"

Hon. members should not forget the words "anywhere in the world". The physician said also—

"Those that need and deserve treatment get as much as they want."

A little further down the article continued—

"Another specialist could tell an inquiry of going to one of his out-patient sessions at a public hospital to find 50 people waiting for him—because they'd all been told to be there at the same time."

**Dr. Crawford:** Bad organisation.

**Mr. CAREY:** Yes, bad organisation; the times should be staggered. A similar problem arises at the Southport General Hospital. In fact, I have made a note that I think that the point is well taken and that the time of arrival of patients should be staggered.

The article continues—

"One of Queensland's most distinguished surgeons said: 'By and large, Queenslanders get a pretty good service.'"

I believe that the words of such a distinguished surgeon are well worth remembering.

Further on the article said—

"Our child mortality rates are no higher than anywhere else in Australia. Yet you wonder how much better they would have done with better nursing."

Those extracts tell the story of the situation at that hospital.

**Mr. Murray:** Who was the surgeon?

**Mr. CAREY:** I do not know. His name was not given.

I shall deal now with the interjection made earlier by the hon. member for Maryborough. Before a Country-Liberal Government took the Treasury benches in this Assembly in 1957, a former member for South Coast, Mr. Eric Gaven, who retired some years ago, asked that a general hospital be built at Southport. He was told by the Premier of the day that no hospital would be built in close proximity to the big Royal Brisbane Hospital. Of course, later the Princess Alexandra Hospital had to be built, and, under a Country-Liberal Government, a hospital was built and opened at Southport in 1960.

**Mr. Harris:** What rubbish you are talking! The Labour Party decided to build one at Wynnum at that time.

**Mr. CAREY:** That might have been a Labour seat. I am telling hon. members what the Premier of the day told the former member for South Coast. He said the Government would not build one at Southport. Since then, we have built hospitals at Redcliffe, Caloundra and Hervey Bay, to name just a few. Prior to that, all the sick and injured people who needed hospitalisation had to be taken to Brisbane.

Finally, I want to say—and I know the Minister will be reading this with interest—that I hope the Government is planning for the tremendous growth that will take place on the Gold Coast and will see that not later than 1980 a 500 to 600-bed hospital is built. It is urgent and important that we get such a hospital.

**Mr. Hinze:** We have land set aside for it at Burleigh.

**Mr. CAREY:** I am not going to deal with the location of the hospital; all I want to see is a hospital for the people.

**Dr. Crawford** interjected.

**Mr. CAREY:** I appreciate the comment of the hon. member for Wavell, who is a professional man, but I do not think that the adverse publicity in the Press and on the radio has done very much for the poor unfortunates who are lying in hospital believing they are getting bad treatment.

As I have only five minutes left, I want to deal quickly with several other matters. I refuse to take any more interjections.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member has only three minutes.

**Mr. CAREY:** I again appeal to the Government to build a railway line from Beenleigh to Southport, from Brisbane to Southport, or from Brisbane to the border. From the time of its closure, this rail link has been used as a political football by hon. members opposite who have nothing better to offer. This is the fastest-growing area in the State. It has 60,000 to 65,000 permanent residents, and a population of from 150,000 to 200,000 during most of the year.

In "The Courier-Mail" on 2 May, it was reported that Cabinet was looking into the expenditure of \$2,500,000 on a new rail complex in the Mackay area. The article said that the suggestion "will be taken to Cabinet by the State Treasurer and Liberal Party leader (Mr. Chalk) for approval." Do not forget that it is "for approval". I compliment the Deputy Leader and Treasurer of the State on a pre-election speech he made in support of a candidate of his party, which was reported in the "Gold Coast Bulletin". I am sure it would be accurate. The report reads—

"Support for feasibility study  
"Coast railway: Chalk's pledge"

"The Liberal Party's parliamentary leader, Mr. Chalk, would 'support in broad principle' a study to determine the feasibility of a standard gauge railway through the Gold Coast."

If the Government can spend \$2,500,000 in Mackay, it can spend a few million dollars serving the fastest-growing area in the State. The people in my area and the Gold Coast generally—I know my colleague Russ Hinze supports me—are crying out for a railway to be built. They are even demanding that we build one. He and I cannot build a railway. We can make plans, but we expect



the Government to give very serious consideration to the case I have submitted and look forward to hearing, in the next Budget, something about a new railway for the Gold Coast.

**Mr. BLAKE** (Isis) (12.35 p.m.): I take this opportunity to record expressions of loyalty of the electors of Isis and myself to Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, and to convey our respects and felicitations to His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, who opened the 39th Parliament of Queensland.

I express my great appreciation to the electors of Isis for displaying their confidence in me by giving me the opportunity of representing them for another term in the State Parliament. I pledge myself to justify that confidence by endeavouring to provide energetic and conscientious representation for the Isis electorate.

I give thanks also to my parliamentary colleagues and to the many supporters and energetic workers in the Labour movement who assisted me in my successful election campaign. I pay particular tribute to my friend and campaign assistant, Mr. John Bunn.

I also extend hearty congratulations to the newcomers to this Chamber. I do this in no spirit of condescension, though I am a "veteran" myself.

It gives me pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to be able to congratulate you on your commendable impartiality in regard to my position in this Chamber. Government members, in extremes of wishful thinking, often referred to me as the "temporary member for Isis", and they predicted that I would make political history by serving the shortest possible term as a member of this House. As I was re-elected with a greatly increased majority I felt that, when the Whip informed me that my name had been omitted from his list of members entitled to vote in this House, Government members were carrying their wishful thinking just a little too far. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for correcting that omission and restoring acknowledgment of true democratic principles to this House.

To those Ministers who extended to me the normal courtesy of releasing official information pertaining to my electorate, I express my sincere thanks. To the other Ministers who used their office in an attempt to boost the electoral prospects of the Country Party candidate, I extend my commiserations at their extreme disappointment.

It is common knowledge in my electorate that I entered politics in protest against the disastrous decline in the prosperity of rural industries, of the businesses that were dependent upon the rural industries and of those people who were dependent on employment in the rural industries. I compare that decline with the conditions that prevail in other sections of the community. That decline is not a political whipping horse; statistics prove

the grave mounting debts of rural communities with repercussions on stable employment in glaring contrast with the boom that exists in other sectors of the economy. Anti-inflationary measures are being taken by the Reserve Bank by withdrawing funds and applying higher interest rates. Surely this proves Government incompetence or Government indifference towards rural areas in not ensuring that they receive fair treatment or a just reward for supplying the lion's share of this State's economy. The fact that the credit restriction measures applied by the Reserve Bank in withdrawing \$63,000,000 in funds and the raising of interest rates are spread like an indiscriminate blanket over the whole economy without regard for the dire credit needs of drought-stricken areas, shows a complete lack of understanding of rural needs. I hope that this Government can convince the Federal Treasury that this is financial slaughter of those who are financially crippled in Queensland by drought and other circumstances beyond their control, and that the Government manages to obtain some measure of financial recognition for them.

Let me qualify the statement that the rural areas represent the lion's share of the economy of this State. Government statisticians estimate that the value of rural production in 1969—despite the drought—will rise by 12 per cent., to \$762,000,000. Mining, although increasing in value by 37 per cent., will reach a total of only \$204,000,000. It is time that the Government realised the necessity to have solvent rural industries, not only as producers, but also as consumers of our growing industrial output. The great bulk of our secondary-industry output is absorbed by rural industries in the form of tractors and trucks, as well as heavy, medium, and light machinery, fertilisers, chemicals, spare parts, fuels, etc. Directly or indirectly, the major portion of our economy, including employment, is firmly based on rural production. As a contributor to the development of this State in the past, as an export earner, and as the firm basis of our present economy, rural industry remains unchallenged.

I accuse this Government of handing out cost-saving privileges to certain solvent, secondary industries, mainly by way of freight concessions, while making the rural work-horse work harder and faster and get poorer and poorer, while other sections of industry ride astride its back like circus ballerinas, getting all the applause. In most cases they dip into the meagre feed-bag of the rural nag, by passing on costs that cannot be passed on again by rural industry. In many cases they accept no responsibility whatever for earning overseas credits, but simply skim the cream off the protected home markets.

At this point I express my disappointment in that His Excellency the Administrator did not mention anything in his address about the formation of a consumers' protection council, or a similar body to carry out that function. I therefore assume that there is

no intention to introduce such a measure in the present session. That is a great pity, because from almost every rural industry conference come resolutions, well documented by facts, asking for protection from exorbitant charges for spare parts and various farm supplies. It appears that hopes raised in rural circles by Country Party election promises concerning action in this regard are not to be realised.

On behalf of the many primary producers and others in all sections of the community, who know that they are being fleeced in many instances, I challenge the Government to proceed with legislation that will give teeth to a consumer protection council so that it will not remain a sham, paper tiger used only for election purposes as it has been up to date. Too many rural industries are staggering under the weight and the chafing of overdrafts, and providing piggy-back rides for firms that pay between 7 per cent. and 20 per cent. in dividends, particularly as many primary products today are selling at the prices that existed a decade ago.

No fair-minded person would deny that a drought brings troubles to Governments as well as to people. It is the recorded history of this State, and indeed of this continent, that there have been recurring droughts. Drought is not a problem peculiar to this Government, but I must say that this Government has handled the problem peculiarly.

Parts of the Isis electorate were declared drought areas in November, 1968. Following complaints from farmers who were unable to obtain any drought relief, I flew to Brisbane and asked for available funds from the Department of Primary Industries, the Treasury Department and the Agricultural Bank. All informed me that no funds were available. This fact was recorded in local newspapers, together with details of the result of my inquiries to the State Wheat Board office, Toowoomba, regarding the availability and price of so-called cheap wheat for stock fodder.

As a last resort on 20 March this year I sent telegrams to the Premier and the Minister for Primary Industries asking for immediate funds for approved cases. The Minister for Primary Industries acknowledged my telegram immediately—the Premier acknowledged it later—and referred my representations, with his support, to the State Treasurer. Forms for applications for assistance were still not available from Agricultural Bank branches in Gympie and Bundaberg on 2 April. Drought areas were declared in my electorate and others early in November last year and even application forms for drought assistance were not available at the beginning of April. I believe that some forms were available through dairy factories.

It was stated in the Press that quite a large sum of money—I think it was close to \$250,000—had been distributed to needy, drought-stricken farmers. That was not reflected in the complaints voiced to me by

people who were asking for financial assistance. I think the truth lay in the difference between the phrases "Funds allocated" and "Funds distributed". I do not think any funds were distributed at that particular time.

This is not intended as a criticism of the departmental officers involved. They have the time-consuming jobs of interpreting legislation handed out by Cabinet, drawing up and printing forms, and getting the wheels turning. However, it is criticism of Cabinet for not dealing much sooner with an obvious and urgent situation.

On 23 February, 1969, "The Sunday Mail" recorded that delegates to the Queensland Country Party Conference in Maryborough had sought alleviation of unfair transport charges and had pleaded for a better deal for drought-stricken areas. The Premier was reported as being present. Apparently the submissions of the Country Party delegates were ignored by the Country Party.

I do not intend to adjudicate or to conduct a post-mortem examination on the ducking and dodging by the Premier and the Prime Minister on who was to blame for the delay in Federal attention being given to Queensland's drought needs. Each blamed the other. However, there is a distinct possibility that if Queensland had made an earlier approach, as was justified by the drought conditions, greater consideration could have been given, greater Federal appreciation of the State's needs could have been gained, and greater benefits might have been obtained now and for the future, when the need will be very pressing.

It naturally follows that the problem of drought and its cost turns our attention to irrigation. The Burnett-Isis-Kolan irrigation scheme, as I shall refer to it because that represents more clearly the areas it will serve, is of vital importance to that district and to the State of Queensland. A comprehensive report on the scheme is available to every member of this House, so I shall not waste time by going into its details. The hon. members for Mackay and Bundaberg are to be commended on their presentation and evaluation of the merits of the scheme and the great need for the utilisation of Queensland's vast water resources.

I must press for the implementation of the Burnett-Kolan-Isis scheme. Such a step is essential if this area is to play a continuing and outstanding part in the development and economy of Queensland, not only as a producer but also as a consumer by virtue of the multitude of products used in the intensive agricultural practices in the area. This is a function, I might add, which could not be carried out by any agricultural industry other than sugar production.

I address my remarks to the Premier lest he accuse me in the future, as he, along with his political minions, did during the election campaign, of not making any representations to him concerning irrigation. Although he has said often and publicly

that he has a great appreciation of the need for the Burnett-Kolan-Isis scheme and has accorded it No. 1 priority, I shall put forward a few salient facts which I hope will convince the Government of the justification of the State's going at least some of the way with State finance to ensure urgent Federal participation in this necessary and meritorious scheme, and to guarantee an early start to its implementation.

Let me make it clear to those in authority that the State's economy, and the State Treasury, may not be able to look forward in the future to the same performance as this area has produced in the past if the Burnett scheme is not proceeded with. With the present high cost of production and the burden of earning overseas credits on unprofitable markets, the dry farms in the proposed irrigation area are sinking into a morass of debt which can be arrested only by a continuity of production, and that can only be brought about by the availability of water.

Briefly, the Burnett scheme entails the utilisation of the waters of both the Burnett and Kolan Rivers by a system of barrages, storages and reticulation services, to serve 1,458 farms in Stage 1 at a cost of \$47,000,000. The lands proposed to be served by the scheme are those adjacent to the rivers named, and lands in the Isis district. The economics of the scheme are beyond question. It has been exhaustively planned and investigated, approved by the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, accepted by the State Government and accorded first priority. It has been submitted to the Commonwealth Government on this basis with a request for financial assistance.

The justification for the implementation of this scheme is abundantly clear when it is shown that loss of production on these lands during the drought years of 1964 and 1965 totalled \$19,000,000 in sugar production alone. It is difficult to calculate with accuracy the losses in the present drought year because of the greatly fluctuating price of sugar on the world market, even under the International Sugar Agreement. However, at the moment it appears that losses in sugar production in Isis will total \$5,000,000, and that in Isis and Bundaberg combined the losses could approximate \$15,000,000. Thus in three years of drought there have been losses of approximately \$34,000,000 in sugar production alone, and all the scheme requires is \$47,000,000, for full implementation to Stage 1. To that sum of losses totalling \$34,000,000 must be added losses from unemployment, and losses to associated industry and commerce.

There is no question about the merits of the scheme or the advisability of implementing it. Apart from stabilising the area and preventing losses in sugar production, the scheme would stand on its own merits as a developmental project. With the rich soils available to be utilised for any purpose, the scheme

is warranted even on the basis of new development, apart from its stabilising effect. The provision of water would release much of the land now used for the production of cane, and the present extensive fruit and vegetable industry could be expanded vastly and would no doubt attract canning industries to the area, adding to secondary industry and decentralisation in the State.

The expenditure would bestow permanent benefits for countless generations, a direct contrast to the massive expenditure on the development of coal resources, which Government Ministers themselves admit may be worthless in 15 years' time. I hope that the reports that one sees in the Press of the Government's "Go it alone" attitude on finance for the proposed Central Queensland power-house will extend also, if necessary, to the Burnett-Isis scheme, to get the project moving.

I was surprised to hear the hon. member for Landsborough, who referred to himself as an agricultural economist, bring forward figures that were completely out of date relative to utilising Queensland's water resources and suggest that Queensland believes it is lucky to receive \$25,000,000 for the Fairbairn Dam scheme on the Nogoa River from the \$50,000,000 allocated by the Federal Government for all water conservation projects. In fact, Queensland received only \$20,000,000. As for the hon. member's attitude that this State was lucky to get \$20,000,000, I point out that, taking into account what the Federal Government has paid to the States in the last 20 years for utilisation of water resources, \$20,000,000 represents only a little over 2 per cent. of the total amount of money allocated. I hope that the hon. member's attitude that Queensland is lucky to have received that amount is not reflected in the case relative to the Burnett-Isis scheme put forward by representatives of the Queensland Government to the Federal Government. Their approach should not be so humble as to suggest that Queensland believes it is lucky to get funds. The taxpayers in this State have contributed for many years towards schemes in other States, and it is time that the Government of Queensland made it clear to the Federal Treasury that it is asking for only a particle of what it is really entitled to in return.

The Snowy Mountains Authority, developed under a Labour Government, was intended to come to Queensland in its entirety, as a planning and constructing authority, to undertake the harnessing of Queensland's vast water resources. Such a move would have recompensed the State to some extent for its contributions to water conservation in other States. However, thanks to the present Federal Government, the Snowy Mountains Authority now exists only in part, as a planning authority.

The hon. member for Landsborough said also that he would be interested to see what other projects are currently before the Federal Government for the \$25,000,000 remaining

from the \$50,000,000 allocated originally. There is no \$25,000,000 remaining. Mr. Fairbairn said before the last State election that the money had already been allocated.

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

**Mr. BLAKE:** As I was saying, there is no \$25,000,000 remaining; it has already been allocated. As was indicated by Mr. Fairbairn in Federal Parliament, it has been allocated as follows: \$20,000,000 to the Gwydir scheme; \$3,600,000 for the River Murray salinity reduction scheme; \$4,000,000 for the King River Dam, Victoria, scheme; and \$6,000,000 for the Taillem Bend to Keith pipeline, making a total of \$33,600,000. With the \$20,000,000 for the Fairbairn Dam, or the Nogoia scheme as it is known, the total amount is \$53,600,000. So hon. members can see that the money has already been allocated and any more funds that will be forthcoming for the Queensland scheme will have to be allocated by the Federal Government from other sources.

This morning I asked a question of the Premier about the composition of the delegation to the National Development Committee in Canberra, and whether a senior member of the Government or a senior departmental official would be included in it. His answer was to the effect that there is no such necessity at this time. I hope and trust that if the occasion arises, we will have top representation from the Queensland Government at a political level to make further representations. In connection with the Central Queensland power-house proposal, four senior departmental officers went to Canberra to talk the matter over with Federal Government officials.

Before leaving this subject, I point out that if the Burnett-Kolan-Isis scheme is implemented, in terms of additional revenue, additional industry and additional employment, relatively to cost it will be worth more to the State of Queensland than will the Central Queensland power-house.

Returning now to the State level and dealing with the State allocation of about \$7,500,000 a year for irrigation, we know that State resources are strained, but we know also that \$7,500,000 is not enough. Recent representations by me about the Mary River and Burrum elicited the fact that, according to the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, there are not enough funds even to carry out an investigation. Emphasis is placed by this Government on the development of secondary industry and the development of mineral resources to tide us over the dry periods in our economy. I suggest that the development of our water resources calls for a bigger allocation than \$7,500,000 a year.

I would be the last not to give credit where it is due and I openly admit that the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Act scheme administered by the State Government is a very good one indeed. At the present time, because of drought, machinery is lying idle and there are many people

who cannot raise even the 10 per cent. that is necessary for them to take advantage of this scheme. They are financed to the extent of 90 per cent. of the cost of the scheme.

As many of the areas in which water resources can be developed are presently dry, I point out that the time is now opportune for work to be done cheaply, and I ask the Government to consider allocating the full extent of the funds necessary for the development of farm water supply assistance schemes. If the further 10 per cent. were to be provided, the work could be performed in dry periods and people in drought-stricken areas could make their repayments under the same terms as those applying under the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Act.

In my electorate a number of drought-stricken fruit growers have dying fruit trees and others have either no crops or under-sized crops. I accept that all sections of industry face cost problems, but the time has come to disillusion the industry and the Government of the concept that those problems can be overcome simply by passing costs on to the primary producers.

An example of this exists at the Rocklea markets. A number of the local agents at the markets have increased their commission rates by 25 per cent. What other industry could increase its charges or the price of its products by 25 per cent. in one fell swoop? A number of conferences have been held on this matter. The latest one was chaired by the late Premier and attended by the Minister for Primary Industries, three members of Parliament, representatives of the agents, and Mr. Flewell-Smith, then General Manager of the Committee of Direction of Fruit Marketing, who represented the growers. From that conference came the understanding that agents would not increase their charges above 10 per cent. It was understood that if they did the Minister would exercise his prerogative under the Farm Produce Agents Act to peg their commission rate and other charges.

The fact that a number of the agents have increased their charges is an indication to me and many growers that the agents have betrayed their undertaking or the understanding that emanated from that conference. Of course, it is a free market. The growers who are unhappy about being charged more than 10 per cent. can take their business to other agents. However, I would point out that these business connections have been built up over many years and in some cases the connections have been carried on from generation to generation.

I believe that the growers have not changed from one agent to another because they believe that the Minister for Primary Industries will invoke his powers and peg the commission rate to 10 per cent. I request him to do so. The agents who charge the 10 per cent. impose additional charges for sorting, stacking, bank charges and

stationery and those additional costs can represent a further 2 per cent. If these charges had been imposed by the C.O.D. that organisation would have received an extra \$35,000 for the year. The City of Brisbane Market Act guaranteed the Brisbane agents who moved to the Rocklea markets a 10-year period free of competition from other agents. If the agents want freedom from competition they cannot expect to be able to increase their commission rates at the expense of the growers at will.

A breakdown of returns shows that farmers get nowhere near 7 per cent. on invested capital and labour, which was the figure used in a recent cost survey to work out what agents were entitled to. Indeed a survey shows that the growers receive a minus quantity as an investment percentage. Of course, the agent who has a small single stand is in a disadvantageous position when compared with those with large multiple stands, but the operators of a number of the small stands show that they are faring well on a commission of 10 per cent. At the present time fruit and vegetable growers who are so hard hit by prices, and also by adverse weather conditions, are told by this Government, "You are too small and you are not an economic unit. If you wish to survive you will have to grow larger." If that criterion applies to primary producers it should apply also to the agents at the Rocklea markets.

I now wish to speak briefly about decentralisation, which in my electorate is working in reverse. Railway lines have been torn up and, recently, rail services were suspended. This has caused workers from the country to move to Maryborough. The only alternative left to people is to move to the city.

Industrial estates have been established, and I pay credit to the Government for that. But from what I can gather, one of the prerequisites for railway freight rebates is that manufacturers must provide evidence of export orders for their products. It would be very difficult indeed for anyone to manufacture a product and then to go overseas and get orders for it before establishing a factory. This prerequisite will not boost the industrial estates. Although other factors may, this one certainly will not.

I ask hon. members to compare this condition as it applies to provincial businesses with the concessions granted to established firms competing with them. Earlier in this debate we heard of city firms receiving freight concessions that enabled them to compete successfully—indeed, in many cases more than successfully—with provincial businesses. If we compare the concessions that the Queensland provincial industries get with those enjoyed by foreign investors, which the hon. member for Barcoo proved are tailored, freight-wise, by the Government, to suit the foreign investors to make their ventures

profitable, and if we are genuine about decentralisation, surely we must agree that provincial industries should receive the same treatment.

I read a report last week, which probably most hon. members read, to the effect that a survey of the I.Q. of rural children showed that they were slightly below average. Under a Labour Government such a survey would not have revealed the same result. People did not have to be below average intelligence to live in the country under a Labour Government. I do not agree with the findings of this survey, but wherever I go in the country, people who have lived there for some time tell me, without equivocation, that although people do not have to be stupid to live in the country, it is certainly a big help.

**Mr. LEE (Yeronga) (2.29 p.m.):** My wife joins with me and my constituents in expressing loyalty to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

I congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply on their fine contributions to this debate. No doubt we can look forward to many further interesting contributions from these gentlemen. I also congratulate the new Minister for Local Government and Electricity, Mr. Wally Rac. No doubt his plate is full with his new portfolio, but he is a good thinker. Above all, he is a broad thinker, which is essential in a ministerial position.

In the six short years in which I have been in this House I have created two records. First, I had the privilege of making the first Address-in-Reply speech in the remodelled Chamber that we enjoy today. Second, in spite of all the bellyaching by A.L.P. members about their conditions, I am the first Government member who has had to have a table set up in a passageway in Parliament House. Why are members of the Opposition crying about their conditions? These are the conditions of today.

As the general debate progresses it becomes more evident that members of the Opposition are concerned only with creating propaganda for their Federal election campaign. The first signs of this outlook came with the farce which was made of question time in the opening weeks of this session. New members of the Opposition could be excused for wondering what their job in this Parliament is supposed to be. They probably think it is nothing but to ask questions. During the past week or so we have heard from the Opposition a series of half-truths, half-lies, all designed to influence the outcome of the Federal election.

**Mr. TUCKER:** I rise to a point of order. I deny that the Opposition has given half-lies to this House at any time. I ask the hon. member to withdraw that statement.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition denies the truth of what the hon. member said.

**Mr. LEE:** It is only because of your position, Mr. Speaker, that I withdraw the remark. But I will withdraw it.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member for Yeronga has passed a remark that is offensive to the Opposition, and he must withdraw it unconditionally.

**Mr. LEE:** I withdraw it unconditionally. Of course, we have had Mr. Whitlam around the place with his story-telling.

**Mr. P. Wood:** Are you going to read all of this?

**Mr. LEE:** Before the day is out, the hon. member will be sorry that I have spoken.

It is worth recording at this time, so that we might put Mr. Whitlam back where he belongs, that on Labour Day he was the leader of the Trades Hall march in which 50 Vietnam flags were carried and waved vigorously and with gusto by members of the Opposition. It should be recorded in "Hansard" also that he did not march alone at the head of this procession. Some prominent members of the A.L.P. in this House were by his side. It is history that desperate bids were made after the march to disclaim the "Laver mob". But the facts are that they were given permission to march, and it was only the public outcry that led to later denials. Nobody can disprove that.

It was only a few days ago that a story appeared in "The Courier-Mail" about an attack on the Prime Minister of Australia by the North Vietnamese delegation to the Paris talks for the role played by Australia in the Vietnam war. The same spokesman praised the rat-bag groups in Australia for their support of the Viet Cong. No doubt he was remembering such events as the 1969 Brisbane Labour Day procession.

I am not saying that all Labour supporters are supporters of the Viet Cong. In fact, I know that this is not so. But surely it is not right to accept the association of these extreme Left-wing, anti-Australian organisations with the political fortunes of the A.L.P. Why does not a member of the Opposition get up and say that he is ashamed of the events of the 1969 Labour Day procession? Why does not someone get up and admit it? That is the trouble with them. They do these things and then want them hushed up and kept quiet. It is obvious to me that the people in charge of the A.L.P. have very few scruples. I am not speaking about anyone on the Opposition benches, because it is well known that all they do is take instructions. They are not allowed to speak their own minds.

Some pressure has been put on the A.L.P. in recent months through the operations of a Brisbane public relations consultant, and the A.L.P. has taken some drastic actions to relieve this pressure.

**Mr. Davies:** What is the pressure?

**Mr. LEE:** The hon. member will hear about it, and he will wish he had not made that interjection. The ordinary people find this sort of thing very hard to believe. Anyone who cares to check what I have to say from start to finish will find it very factual. To relieve this pressure, an official of the Australian Labour Party in Brisbane, Mr. Tom Burns, wrote a letter to the Bulimba brewery in which he suggested that, if that company did not take its account from this public relations consultant, the Labour Party would place a black ban on its products. That is absolute political blackmail. Even Joe Stalin would have hesitated before doing that. Hitler would have done it, but he would have thought about it first. Things have reached a pretty low level when political blackmail is used to try to do a public relations consultant out of a job. After all, he is merely doing the work at which he earns his living.

That reminds me of the position in 1957 when the A.L.P. was in Government and when any policeman who had the audacity to do anything the A.L.P. did not like found himself transferred to Bouli or some other far distant place. That is the type of political pressure brought by A.L.P. members; they can deny it, but they cannot get away from it. It is surely a denial of human rights. Pressure on this side of the House is generally related to the activities of underworld organisations, and not major Australian political parties. Hon. members opposite ought to be ashamed of themselves.

It is most unlikely that this was the idea of Mr. Burns, and it certainly was not the idea of anyone in the Opposition, because all they do is take instructions. I do not believe that it was Mr. Whitlam's idea because he and Opposition members are in the same boat. The point is that it was the idea of the A.L.P., and all associated with that party must share the responsibility for it. They cannot dodge it. This is a very serious matter, and I should like some members of the Opposition to get up and tell us how it sickens them, too, but they are not game to do that. They would have their heads lopped off if they did.

I might mention that the company has rejected that letter. It is certain that there will be some back-peddalling by the A.L.P. because the public relations consultant is a member—

**Mr. Davies:** Who was it?

**Mr. LEE:** I am glad the hon. member has asked that. He is Mr. Bingham, the man who defended the Premier against the scandalous, filthy personal attacks made upon him during the last election campaign. The hon. member knows how scandalous and personal the attack was, and it shows what hon. members opposite will stoop to. I am game to name him at any time.

It is certain also that there will be some backpedalling by the A.L.P., because the public relations consultant is a member of

the Australian Journalists' Association and that organisation is taking an active interest in the matter—I will bet that shocks hon. members opposite—and is not averse to imposing bans, just as the A.L.P. has threatened to impose bans. Hon. members opposite would look silly if they did not have the support of the Press over the next few years.

One could be excused for wondering whether some sections of the A.L.P. should be living in Czechoslovakia where the little men of the party are the big men of power—I repeat: where the little men of the party are the big men of power.

**Mr. Bromley:** Say it again.

**Mr. LEE:** The hon. member is only a little man. I remind the House that in Czechoslovakia the rights of the individual are nil.

Only a few weeks ago the A.L.P. axemen lopped off the head of an old and faithful servant when selecting their team to contest the next Senate election, and Senator Dittmer goes into political exile unhonoured and unsung.

**Mr. Ramsden:** Unwanted—despite his services to the Party.

**Mr. LEE:** Unwanted. The tragedy of the Australian way of thinking is that Senator Dittmer recognises the axing as part of the operation of the machine to which he belonged and which he had served for so long. Undoubtedly he is a very bitter man, but he knows that there is nothing he can do about it. He cannot buck the great party machine. Again I say that it is similar to the position in the suppressed countries of Europe, in which the party machine is all-powerful and the individual does not count for anything—not a thing! That is the state of the A.L.P. today.

**Mr. Wallis-Smith:** Tell us about the Liberal Party.

**Mr. LEE:** I am told that the hon. member was coming down for the Labour Day march but he hurt his leg. In fact, I heard the story, Mr. Speaker, that he was going to fight Mr. Gough Whitlam for one of the flags. He wanted to be in front of him.

I have mentioned three points—the waving and carrying of the Viet Cong flag; political blackmail; the axing of an old and faithful servant—which have occurred in this State in the past three months. Hon. members opposite are very quiet; it is unusual for them to be quiet while I am speaking. I must have stunned them with the truth. I have mentioned those three points only to emphasise how the A.L.P. operates and to prove it to the public once and for all. The A.L.P. will chop off the heads of its members as quickly as one can snap one's fingers.

What chance would this country have of holding its present prosperity, let alone of

progressing, if its destinies were controlled by the A.L.P.? What chance would this wonderful State have?

**Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt:** That is why the A.L.P. haven't a Government in Australia.

**Mr. LEE:** That is right.

**Mr. Tucker:** Tell us about Mr. Connolly.

**Mr. LEE:** The hon. member has a great deal to tell his mates up on the hill. He could tell the House about Eric Lloyd, while he is at it.

I was interested to study some of the speeches made in this House by members of the Opposition. Because of my appreciation of contracting, I was particularly interested in the speech made by the hon. member for Mackay and I was astounded to hear him compare the financing of the Goonyella project with that of a sugar mill. Sugar mills are going concerns, and have ready outlets, but the Goonyella project is not yet off the ground although millions of dollars have already been invested on search and testing. That is the difference.

The hon. member is rather like the man who wants to back a winner at the best price after it has passed the post. The annual report of the Moura mine, issued recently shows a loss of more than \$2,000,000. This mine has been exporting coal for more than five years, but not too many people would be interested in investing in it today. Hon. members opposite are always crying about what somebody makes.

**Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt:** It gives employment to 600 men.

**Mr. LEE:** That is right. To hear hon. members opposite speaking of mineral development one would think that all one had to do was to put some money in and pull it out again with great heaps of profit. This is far from true. In mining many millions of dollars are sunk on negative search and testing and a tremendous amount of spade work is done on projects in which few people today would want to have any equity. It is true to say that many Australians would not want equity in these mines when they are in their infancy, as most of them are.

I was disappointed that the hon. member for Mackay did not come out and say what a good thing the Goonyella-Hay Point project will be for his district, but he did not.

**Mr. P. Wood:** Read his speech.

**Mr. LEE:** I read his speech; the hon. member has not to tell me what he said. I am quite capable of reading for myself. Like his predecessor in the House he was opposed to this project whereas, as a contractor, he should know its value to the district. That is the least he should know. While politically he is on side with the A.L.P. in their policy of opposition to foreign investment, I will bet my socks that he is already costing the work or getting ready to tender for some of it, if he has not already done so. Perhaps I

should qualify that by adding, if he is capable of tendering for it or of costing the job, because, from what I am told, if he does not pull some stops out very soon he will lose a job he has contracted for and put another bad mark on the contracting system.

I should like to speak now about beef roads. During the recess—the hon. member for Warrego knows this—I had an extensive trip over the beef roads of Queensland.

**Mr. Bromley:** Is that why all your constituents say you are neglecting your job?

**Mr. LEE:** It is a pity the hon. member would not get out of his city electorate of Norman and broaden his mind which is about 2 inches wide by 1 inch deep. With my wife and two friends, I had the privilege of going over virtually all the beef roads in Queensland and I can say, "Thank God that this Government had the foresight to put in these beef roads."

When we go into the West, the Mid-west and the North-west of the State we see the shocking effects that the drought has had on people who live in those areas. It is quite heart-breaking to see starving stock being transported in stock trains. When motoring on one of the beef roads every few miles one passes a stock train transporting starving stock. If this Government had not had the foresight to construct beef roads the graziers would have had to watch their stock die on their properties and then go completely broke. At least, with good markets in the South and in Adelaide, the stock trains can transport the starving stock to Sydney or out through Camooweal and Alice Springs down to Adelaide.

We owe a great debt to the late Ernie Evans. He was able to persuade the Government of the day to construct a bitumen strip 12 feet wide through the western portions of the State. If that bitumen strip had not been constructed the track would have been like the country through which it runs, a dust bowl. The forward thinking in constructing that bitumen strip has saved the Government literally millions of dollars in maintenance costs. I think the hon. member for Barcoo would agree with that, although I know that he does not like to agree with anything I say because he is frightened that he might have his head lopped off.

**Mr. Davies** interjected.

**Mr. LEE:** I am told that the hon. member for Maryborough is another Opposition member who wanted to get down into the front of the line. Just as well he didn't. I do not think his leader would have appreciated his being out in front.

I turn now to a matter that I raise year after year, that of day labour versus contract.

**Mr. Bromley:** Tell us a bit more about blue metal.

**Mr. LEE:** If I cracked the hon. member's skull there would be no metal in it, only sawdust.

The value of Main Roads Department approval for contracts during the year was increased by \$1,700,000 to \$9,900,000, which represents 25 per cent. of the total Government expenditure. Approvals for day labour were increased by \$2,500,000 to \$29,200,000. Day labour received \$29,200,000 compared with the \$9,900,000 received by contracts. I am extremely disappointed to find that, after 12 years in office, the Government is merely paying lip service to its so-called free-enterprise policy. I cannot agree with it.

If, when I have finished quoting these figures, any Government member says that we are giving a fair deal to free enterprise, he is nothing but a Socialist and he should join his Socialistic comrades on the Opposition benches. I know that the cry is that we must look after the local people, and I will deal with that later. Never have I said, and never will I say, that I want 100 per cent. contract work. But let us reverse the figures to 75 per cent. contract and 25 per cent. day labour. Then we as a Government could hold our heads high on our policy, which, each year, we claim is a free-enterprise policy.

**Mr. Davies:** You are thinking only of your own purse.

**Mr. LEE:** I have no connection with any earth-moving company anywhere in Queensland or Australia, or the world.

I feel that I should now incorporate in my speech some figures to substantiate the rather drastic statement I have just made.

**An Opposition Member:** What drastic statement?

**Mr. LEE:** The hon. member will know when the "mob on the hill" get him.

The following table sets out clearly what I am trying to outline—

Year	Day-labour	Contract	Contract Percentage
	\$	\$	
1961-62	17,200,000	5,400,000	24
1962-63	21,000,000	7,300,000	26
1963-64	24,600,000	14,100,000	36
1964-65	23,300,000	7,900,000	25
1965-66	23,300,000	5,000,000	18
1966-67	28,800,000	12,000,000	29
1967-68	26,700,000	8,200,000	23
1968-69	29,200,000	9,900,000	25

It will be seen that in 1962-63, 26 per cent. of the work was done by contract and, in 1963-64, 36 per cent., which was the highest ever.

**Mr. Hodges:** What sort of work is this?

**Mr. LEE:** It was remote Main Roads Department work, not Housing Commission or similar work. I believe that 75 per cent. of Housing Commission work is now being done by contract.



In 1966-67 contract work represented 29 per cent. of the total, whereas in 1961-62, 24 per cent. was done by contract. In 1968-69, 25 per cent was done by contract—an increase of only 1 per cent. Admittedly the amount of money involved has increased, but a percentage increase is much more desirable than a monetary increase. In 1961-62 expenditure totalled \$22,600,000, whereas today it totals \$39,100,000. It is essential that a greater percentage of the work be given to contractors. The industry cannot last, nor can it be successful when the percentages are up one year and down the next; conditions are impossible for those in the industry with a stop-go policy. Each year there should be a gradual increase in the work given to contractors so that those in the industry can buy plant and work it to the maximum advantage. Hon. members opposite will agree with that.

**Mr. Casey:** What was the percentage in 1956-57?

**Mr. LEE:** I have not got the figures.

**Mr. Blake:** It was more than your Government was spending.

**Mr. Casey:** It was a far higher percentage than it is now.

**Mr. LEE:** I will not argue this. I do not know the answer. I will gladly discuss the matter with the hon. member later to see if in fact what he said is correct.

**Mr. Davies:** The firm you belong to—

**Mr. LEE:** As I said before, I do not belong to any firm in Queensland, in Australia, or in the world. Does that get through the hon. member's thick skull?

The hon. member for Hawthorne has asked me what the saving to the Government would be. Statistics prove that contracts represented only 25 per cent. of the over-all expenditure last year despite the fact that during the past five years \$131,000,000 was allocated to day-labour work. The estimated—I repeat "estimated"—cost of the work let to contract in that period was \$43,000,000. The contract price, when the jobs came out, was \$32,000,000. That represents a saving of \$10,000,000 in five years.

If the reverse had been applied and \$131,000,000 had been allocated to contract work and \$32,000,000 to day-labour work, the saving to this State would have been not less than \$40,000,000 in five years. That is more than one year's programme for the Main Roads Department. Nobody can argue against these figures, because they are taken from the Queensland Government Gazette.

**Mr. Chinchen:** The saving would be greater than that because time and again the day-labour cost exceeds the estimate.

**Mr. LEE:** That is right. I can only take the figures that appear in the Queensland Government Gazette. As the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt says, nobody will ever know how many millions of dollars have been

wasted in this State by not increasing the percentage of contract work. While I am a member of this Parliament I shall fight for this cause; it is not a fight for free enterprise but to save this State millions of dollars. This, in turn, will mean the construction of thousands of miles of road which the Opposition claims the Government has not built. Yet the Opposition turns around and advocates the day-labour system! The Opposition cannot "knock" with one hand and take with the other.

**Mr. Davies:** The best roads were built by day labour.

**Mr. LEE:** The best roads in the State were built when I was contracting.

I have further figures I wish to quote. They are to the nearest \$100,000.

**Mr. O'Donnell:** How many contractors have gone broke?

**Mr. LEE:** Dozens, but that is the very life of free enterprise.

**Mr. Davies:** Which Minister do you blame for this situation?

**Mr. LEE:** I blame nobody for it. I am simply giving my views, and I hope that they are listened to because they are backed up by figures. I do not pull figures out of the air as many Opposition members do.

I have some figures here to illustrate what I am saying. In 1964-65, the total estimate of work going to contract was \$7,900,000, and it was let out at a contract price of \$5,600,000. In 1965-66, the total estimate of contract work was \$5,000,000, and the contract price at which it was let was \$3,500,000. In 1966-67, the total estimate of contract work was \$12,000,000, and the contract price was \$9,200,000. In 1967-68, the total estimate of contract work was \$7,600,000, and there was an estimate of \$600,000 for the expressway at Kangaroo Point. The contract price was \$5,700,000, and the price for work on the expressway was \$500,000. In 1968-69, the total estimate of contract work was \$8,100,000, and there was an estimate of \$1,800,000 for the Rocklea overpass—for which I am eternally grateful to the Minister and which is now, many years overdue, being constructed. The contract price was \$6,000,000, and \$1,500,000 for the overpass, representing a saving of \$300,000 on that one project alone.

No jobs for which tenders have been called have been transferred to day labour during the year. I suggest that the hon. member for Mackay pull out a couple of stops and get going or he will lose the job.

**Mr. Casey:** Oh, no.

**Mr. LEE:** Do not say, "Oh, no." The hon. member is down here instead of being up there looking after the job. One day I shall get together with the hon. member and try to find out how he can justify sitting on the A.L.P. benches and being a contractor as well. I cannot understand how he can be

subservient to A.L.P. principles against those of a free-enterprise system. He is either a good A.L.P. member or a bad contractor; he cannot be both.

Only one contract for a small bridge, for which the contract price was \$12,980, was won by a local authority in competition with private contractors. Each year the Government is doing work by day labour. Do we see the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Clem Jones, who is supposed to be shackled with the principles of the A.L.P. and imbued with the socialistic outlook of gentlemen on the other side of the House, having work done by day labour? Certainly not. At least 75 per cent. of the work of the Brisbane City Council is done by contract, and the rest is basically maintenance. That is the very thing for which I have asked. Most of the work done today by the Brisbane City Council by day labour is work that the Government hands it on a platter. I instance work at Moorooka and on the Sandgate Road. I was promised that that work would go to contract, but it went to the Brisbane City Council under a day-labour system.

**Mr. Davies:** Why would you be promised that?

**Mr. LEE:** Because I asked for it by means of a letter. There is a second section of that road to be built, and I understand that it looks as though it will be done by the Brisbane City Council by day labour.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee)** (3.10 p.m.): First, I express my loyalty, and the loyalty of the people of the Nudgee electorate, to Her Majesty the Queen.

I thank the electors of Nudgee for the record majority with which they returned me at the last State election. The circumstances were a little exceptional because, although there was an increased enrolment in the electorate, the Liberal Party polled the lowest number of votes it has ever polled and the A.L.P. polled the highest number of votes it has ever polled in Nudgee. That is an indication of the attitude of the people as a whole to the Australian Labour Party, despite the remarks of the hon. member for Yeronga and the aspersions that he cast at the A.L.P.

It is extraordinary that, despite all its supposed faults, the A.L.P. claims the support of the highest number of people in Queensland and is acknowledged and acclaimed by them as the most reliable party in the political field.

I am surprised that the hon. member for Yeronga is leaving the Chamber. He apparently thinks that discretion is the better part of valour. However, I wish to refer to several of the remarks that he made.

The hon. member is traditionally a "knocker" of the engineers and other employees of the Main Roads Department, and he attacks them every time he rises to his feet in this Chamber. The hon. member

claims to speak on behalf of private contractors, and it is true to say that the contractors pick the plums out of the work that is available.

**Mr. Lee:** You haven't the slightest idea what goes on.

**Mr. MELLOY:** One does not find them contracting for work on which there is any element of doubt about the margin of profit. The hon. member for Yeronga has proved over the years that he has been in this Chamber that he is one of the greatest "knockers" of the workers in this State. In fact, he is equalled only by several other members of the Liberal Party.

I wish to deal with a number of matters in my contribution to this debate. First, I wish to make an appeal to the Minister for Health relative to the Autistic Children's Association, which caters for children in this State to whom the present Government refuses to give recognition. The Minister buries his head in the sand whenever the question is raised. The Autistic Children's Association has met him in conference and he has refused consistently to assist it in any way. The work being carried out by the association is voluntary, and it provides treatment for autistic children that they would not otherwise receive.

In his replies to questions that I have submitted to him, the Minister has told the House that the children are being catered for in a wider field of psychiatric and educational endeavour and that it is unnecessary to duplicate subsidised services in Queensland. It has been made very clear by the association in its approaches to the Minister that the treatment that these children require is not available to them in any of the Government institutions or organisations.

**Mr. Ramsden:** That is not true, you know.

**Mr. MELLOY:** It is true, as I shall point out. The fact that such children in Government institutions are treated in association with children who have similar complaints but who are not, in fact, autistic children, militates against their treatment. Autistic children need specific and individual treatment which they do not receive as part of the treatment given to children in the institutions in this State.

There is only one association that adequately cares for these children and that is the Autistic Children's Association. The attitude of the Minister and this Government is, in fact, in sharp contrast to the treatment of autism in other States of Australia, where this condition is officially recognised by the Health Departments. Whereas in Queensland this Government makes no contribution whatever to the work carried out by the autistic association, in other States a great deal of assistance is given. I shall cite what is provided in the other States of Australia.

In New South Wales the State Government provides a subsidy of \$2 for each dollar raised by the voluntary organisations which treat autistic children in that State. In addition to this, a subsidy of \$1,950 a year for a qualified teacher and \$1,400 a year for an unqualified teacher is paid to the autistic association to provide treatment for these children. The Government also pays a conveyance subsidy of 20 cents per loaded mile for the transport of these children to the centres where they are treated.

In Victoria, the Government is much more generous. A subsidy of \$4 for each dollar raised by the association is paid by the Government, and it is paid on all buildings and on the purchase of equipment for the autistic centre. In addition, the autistic association receives \$780 per annum for each child treated, with a minimum of eight children, and a further \$860 per annum as a transport subsidy.

In Tasmania, the assistance is not as great as in the other two States but accommodation is provided for the autistic association.

What a great contrast there is between assistance elsewhere and the very shabby treatment accorded to autistic children in this State by this Government. It costs the Queensland Autistic Children's Association approximately \$6,500 per year to run its centre in Brisbane and this money is raised by the hard work of its members and the generosity of many service associations in Queensland. It survives by the good graces of service organisations such as Apex, Rotary, Lions, the Quota Club, and with the help of the University Students' Union, the Jewish Ladies Society, the Greek Ladies Society, insurance companies, bank societies and many others, but receives not one cent from this Government, which refuses to acknowledge the work done by it. I have told hon. members of the extent of the help that is given by the Governments of other States to this association, which has achieved tremendous success in the treatment of autistic children.

**Mr. Miller:** What amount of money has been spent on health by the other States compared with Queensland? Are you comparing an over-all health scheme or just one section of it?

**Mr. MELLOY:** If I adopted the attitude of some Ministers, I would tell the hon. member that the information he seeks is available in the records of the various other Governments.

**Mr. Miller:** You don't know. You know nothing about it.

**Mr. MELLOY:** I have told hon. members what has been done.

**Mr. Miller:** What amount is spent on health in New South Wales?

**Mr. MELLOY:** What has that got to do with it? However, no matter what amount of money is spent in the other States on

health, and no matter what amount is spent in this State, the fact remains that the Governments of the other States contribute to the Autistic Children's Association and this Government, irrespective of what it spends on health generally, contributes absolutely nothing. That is the comparison.

**Mr. Ramsden:** That is not true. The Minister gave you the facts in an answer to a question.

**Mr. MELLOY:** The Minister did not give me that information in an answer. In fact, he evaded the points in my question.

I appeal to the Minister for Health to take another look at the situation. The autistic children deserve assistance. The treatment that is being given to them by their association is the only treatment that is effective. The children need a nursing ratio of one teacher to one child, and they do not get it in the Government institutions in which they are placed. They are treated in conjunction with children who suffer from other complaints.

I turn now to the matter raised by the hon. member for Wavell, the hospital system of this State. He has called for an investigation into Queensland's hospital system, and he has been supported by the Australian Medical Association. There is an old saying, "Beware of Greeks bearing gifts." We should beware of the A.M.A. when it bears the gifts of co-operation and endorsement of A.L.P. policies. There is more to it than meets the eye when the A.M.A. commits itself to an investigation of this nature, because it is well known that the A.M.A. has as one of its objectives the abolition of the free-hospitals system in this State. It is opposed to that system, which has been enunciated by the A.L.P., and one of its objectives is to have the system reviewed with a view to breaking it down or completely abolishing it.

Over the years the A.L.P. has asked for an inquiry into Queensland's hospital system, and time and time again its requests have been rejected by successive Ministers for Health simply because they have been ill advised. Of course, the Minister is not a medical man and he must depend on his departmental heads for any statements he makes or the policy he follows concerning the Queensland hospital system.

We in the A.L.P. agree that there should be an inquiry into the Queensland hospital system, purely on the basis of improving the service given to patients. Attention must be given to the staffing of hospitals, the training of nurses and the availability of medical staff because here lie some of the greatest faults in our hospital system.

The hon. member for Wavell stated that he could make our hair curl if he were to tell us of instances relating to hospital ramifications. I will help him a little. Hon. members may recall that earlier this year I drew public attention to the case of a young girl who was referred on three occasions to the

general hospital by her local medical adviser for an appendix operation. The three visits to the hospital were made in 10 days, and on each occasion the operation was refused although her medical adviser considered that she should have an immediate appendix operation. The girl's parents then referred her, as did her doctor, to a specialist, who operated immediately on the girl. It is interesting that the specialist who considered her to be in need of an immediate operation was none other than the hon. member for Wavell. He was the specialist who, after the hospital refused to carry out the operation, decided that it was immediately necessary, and carried it out, much to the betterment of the girl concerned.

It is little wonder that the hon. member for Wavell has come here with a chip on his shoulder about our hospitals. I should say that he is very knowledgeable so far as our hospitals are concerned, and I have no doubt that when he really launches an attack on the Government about our hospital system he will make the Minister's hair curl.

**Mr. Porter:** You have it wrong. The hon. member for Wavell was very careful. He attacked the system, not the Government or the Minister.

**Mr. MELLOY:** That is quite right. As I said, when he really unleashes his attack it will be on the Government and the Minister.

The Minister cannot escape responsibility for the policy that is followed and, to that extent, for the conditions existing at the hospitals. If the Minister does not know the conditions at hospitals he is extremely ill-advised. The hon. member for Wavell is just the person to put him wise about what is going on in the hospitals of Queensland. For years the Opposition tried to impress on the Minister the importance of these matters. Because of the Minister's lack of knowledge of his portfolio—I do not altogether blame him for that because he is not a medical man and must depend on his advisers, who very often are not reliable in the light of the information they have given him—he must accept responsibility for his department and the hospitals.

I shall now deal with a matter that distresses me. I do not like speaking on such a matter. It involves action which, as a rule, is contrary to the nature of the average Australian and to all sense of fair play. However, it illustrates the depths to which an individual will go when he is frightened of losing his seat in Parliament. It is extraordinary that a person considered to be an average type can, when stricken with fear, display an entirely different nature. The Australian Labour Party endorsed a candidate for the metropolitan seat of Kurilpa in the most recent State election. The candidate was of European parentage but was born in Australia. He had proved himself to be 100 per cent. Australian.

**Mr. Hanlon:** And a very good candidate.

**Mr. MELLOY:** An excellent candidate, and an absolute gentleman. In the campaign he was attacked by innuendo and insinuation in a way that does not become the average Australian. I have in my hand a pamphlet issued by the hon. member for Kurilpa. It is headed—

“Hughes your Liberal member is an Australian.”

Nobody doubted that he is an Australian. It was therefore unnecessary for him to put a heading on his pamphlet to convince the electors of Kurilpa that he is an Australian. Obviously, his motive was, by implication, to suggest that his opponent might not be an Australian.

**Mr. Porter:** Does he say that in his pamphlet?

**Mr. MELLOY:** The hon. member is belittling his own level of intelligence.

**Mr. Porter:** Don't you think you are making a mountain out of a molehill?

**Mr. MELLOY:** No. The average Australian, and certainly members of the A.L.P., do not do such things, and if anybody does descend to that level and adopt such a tactic, it should be brought out into the open in this Chamber. That tactic was adopted by the hon. member for Kurilpa.

In addition, in his list of qualities or qualifications in the pamphlet, the hon. member included—

“Clive Hughes is above all a true Australian.”

That emphasises what I said a few moments ago. It ill becomes a member of this Parliament to stoop to such tactics and cast aspersions on the bona fides of an opposing candidate. That indicates what fear will drive people to.

**Mr. Porter:** What was the verdict of the electors?

**Mr. MELLOY:** It was a very close result, which vindicated the character of the A.L.P. candidate.

I shall now say a few words on a subject I have raised several times with the Minister for Transport, namely, the working conditions at the Northgate railway workshops. The building is a ramshackle, white-ant-riddled structure which is falling to pieces.

**Mr. Knox:** It is a disgrace.

**Mr. MELLOY:** Yes, it is a disgrace. I thank the Minister for that admission, although I know he is being sarcastic.

**Mr. Knox:** I am not. It is a disgrace.

**Mr. MELLOY:** The Minister will now probably make the statement that it was inherited from an Australian Labour Party Government; I can see his mind working along those lines now. The fact is that this Government has had 12 years to do something about it.

**Mr. Knox:** You want to see some of the other things that we have had to do something about, too.

**Mr. MELLOY:** Yes, I will admit that. However, nothing has been done at Northgate. Just across the road from the workshops are partly completed buildings which it seems are to remain in that state, if the Government continues to own them. The Government is, of course, gradually selling railway buildings, some completed and some partly completed, to outside interests, instead of retaining them for the development of the railway system.

In the workshops at Northgate there are no washing or lunch-room facilities for the staff, who wash their hands at a tap and sit on upturned buckets. There is no ablution block. In this building there is also very valuable machinery which is not protected from the weather. Despite appeals to the Minister to do something about this situation, he refuses to take any action; always the matter is "under consideration". It has been "under consideration" for the last 12 years, and still the men there are working under unsavoury conditions that would not be tolerated in private industry. If the men at Northgate worked for a private employer, the building would be condemned and the employer would be prosecuted. The Government seems to think that it can get away with these conditions. I appeal to the Minister to do something about them. He has available partly completed buildings to which the workshops could be transferred, where the men could be provided with proper working conditions.

**Mr. Knox:** This is the first time you have become seriously interested in any social problem in that area.

**Mr. MELLOY:** To contradict that statement by the Minister, I point out that I was returned with a record majority this year. Apparently the people of Nudgee do not feel that I have taken no interest in them. In fact, I take a tremendous interest in the welfare of the Nudgee electorate.

**Mr. Knox:** And apparently some of the Nundah electorate, too.

**Mr. MELLOY:** If I get the opportunity, yes. The Minister says that I apparently take some interest in the Nundah electorate. That is true, because if I did not the people of Nundah would be very much neglected. At the same time, if the Minister comes into the Nudgee electorate I am not rude to him. I shake his hand and welcome him, because I realise that he must come to Nudgee at times to see how well things can be done.

I again appeal to the Minister to take some action in relation to the Northgate workshops. I also appeal to the Minister for Health to give consideration to the Autistic Children's Association and provide it with the assistance that it really needs.

**Mr. TOMKINS (Roma) (3.39 p.m.):** I should like to express on my own behalf, and on behalf of the electors of Roma, loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. I also wish to say how much I appreciated the Opening Speech of His Excellency the Administrator which set out matters for consideration this session. I regret that Sir William Mack was not able to perform the opening ceremony, and I certainly wish him a speedy return to good health. His Excellency the Governor, Sir Alan Mansfield, and Lady Mansfield have been away for a well-earned rest, and I look forward to welcoming them on their return to this State in the near future.

I congratulate the two new Country Party Ministers on their elevation to Cabinet. The Honourable Neville Hewitt, the member for Mackenzie, is now Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs, and he is doing a first-class job. Of course, he has been interested in these matters for so long that he could not help doing a good job. I welcome particularly the appointment of the Honourable Wally Rae, the member for Gregory, as Minister for Local Government and Electricity. I think it is fitting that a member representing the electorate of Gregory should be appointed to that position. He, too, will do a first-class job, and I have no doubt that history will prove that I am right in saying that.

Honourable members have a habit of saying, "Thanks to my electors for returning me with an increased majority." I should like to thank electors of the Roma electorate in exactly the same way. Having become a member of Parliament at a by-election held two years before the last election, I was returned on this occasion with a greatly increased majority. All I can say is that people living in my electorate think a lot of the policies of the present Government.

In addition, I congratulate my friend the hon. member for Balonne, who moved the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, and the hon. member for Wavell, Dr. Crawford, who seconded it. They both made excellent speeches because they spoke about subjects with which they are familiar. Mr. Hungerford has had years of experience in local-authority work, and he spoke with a wide knowledge of his subject. Dr. Crawford spoke in a similar way, and I think it is desirable that members should deal with matters with which they are familiar.

**Mr. Houston:** Who do you think is right—Dr. Crawford, or the Minister? Whose side are you on?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I think that Dr. Crawford, with his experience of health matters, has every right to come into this Chamber and say what he did.

**Mr. Houston:** And you agree that what he said is right?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I do not know whether he is right, but I was interested in what he said and time will prove whether or not he is right.

I referred earlier to the new Minister for Local Government and Electricity, and I am pleased that the Leader of the Opposition is in the Chamber because he made quite a number of remarks about the speech made by the hon. member for Balonne in moving the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. The Leader of the Opposition spoke of his visits to local authorities and how well they looked after him. However, he made one or two statements that I could not follow. I agree with him that local authorities and shire councils are composed mainly of Country Party supporters, and I do not see anything wrong with that. Most of the councillors attend the meetings, receive a small allowance, and put in a great deal of time on local-authority matters. They receive very little reward in the financial sense, and they show a great deal of public spirit. I have never noticed the "rocking the boat" to which the Leader of the Opposition referred. Most shire councils with which I have had anything to do come to Brisbane and put their case as strongly as possible if they want something from the Government. One can go to almost any of the western areas and see—this is what the Leader of the Opposition referred to—very up-to-date and modern shire offices, greatly improved main roads, and many secondary roads. I shall not mention grants received from the Federal Government.

**Mr. Houston:** Will you agree that many shire chairmen are also prominent Country Party members?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** Yes.

**Mr. Houston:** They talk about not playing politics, but on the other hand they are active in politics.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I know quite a number who do not take any interest in politics at all.

**Mr. Houston:** The hon. member for Balonne was a shire councillor and Country Party member.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** So was I, but I do not think this influences one's thinking. If the hon. member's party was in power, we would not get the same consideration we expect from this Government. It is due to the generous subsidies paid by this Government that we have swimming pools, sewerage systems and things of that type. These would not be possible without substantial Government help in the form of subsidy.

**Mr. Houston:** The subsidy rate under the Labour Government was higher than it is under this Government.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I think that is true, but if you stop to think about subsidy—

**Mr. Houston:** Everything has gone up except the subsidy.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** It is the old story that you can give a high rate if not much money is involved.

**Mr. Houston:** But you are spending more of the ratepayers' money, aren't you?

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Hooper):** Order! I ask the hon. member to address the chair.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** The hon. member for Warrego agrees with my thinking because he says that local authorities do a first-class job and that councillors are very good fellows. I agree with this. In the Minister's area the shire councils probably do a better job than is done in the nearer areas. They have picture shows, hotels, cafes—

**Mr. Ramsden:** Dick Wood does a fantastic job in Logan.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** Many of them do. I think the experience one gains in local government fits one particularly well for the job one has to do here.

I should like to refer now to three matters that concern me most. I congratulate the Minister for Education on his decision to install video recorders and the necessary accessory equipment as an educational project for students in areas beyond TV reception. We had a display, or an opening, on 14 July. Roma happened to be the area chosen and it was very pleasing to me that this area was selected for the first project. It is also pleasing to find that in the Roma electorate, apart from the Roma Primary School and the Roma High School, schools with secondary tops at Injune, Wallambilla, Taroom and Wandoan also have the system installed. This will give the children in these areas the same opportunities as apply in the city areas. This shows the decentralisation that has taken place so far as the Education Department is concerned.

This decision is very wise and I am hopeful that as television moves out further, the system will be extended. The Education Department, far from stagnating, is doing an extremely good job.

Another education matter to which I should like to refer is that of school bus services. This is a fantastic system that has been devised by the Education Department, and it has made a tremendous difference to country children. In fact, apart from those in the Far West, virtually all children today can get to a State school or high school in country areas and the areas themselves are reaping the benefit. Recently I was surprised by the unceremonious dismissal of a driver of a school bus. He brought the matter to me.

**Mr. R. Jones:** That did not do him much good.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** On the contrary; it did him a lot of good, because he is still employed.

I went into the conditions of employment of a school-bus operator, and I was staggered by the wording of one of the conditions of service.

Paragraph 5 states—

“A local Conveyance Committee elected from parents or guardians of eligible school children (Primary and Secondary) should enter into a contract or agreement with an owner/driver of a bus or other vehicle for the conveyance of the school children. The parties to any such contract or agreement should understand that it can be terminated by giving one month's notice.”

I wish to deal with the aspect of giving one month's notice. Under the system that operates, a conveyance committee calls tenders, and if a person applies to operate a school bus he is required to purchase a bus. In the instance that I am referring to, the bus cost \$8,000. This driver found that he was dismissed.

**Mr. P. Wood:** The driver or the contractor?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** The driver of the bus.

**Mr. P. Wood:** Was he the contractor or just the driver?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** He was virtually a contract driver. He works for the conveyance committee.

**Mr. P. Wood:** But it is his bus?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** Yes.

I went into this matter with the Regional Director of Education, who told me that under that clause the conveyance committee was acting within its rights and that it could dismiss the driver. He said that he did not feel obliged to interfere, so I took the matter up with the conveyance committee and I was told that the driver concerned could not control the children very well. I made certain remarks to the committee, which induced it to hold another meeting. The result is that this driver is able to continue in his employment until the end of the year.

I should like the Minister for Education to look at the wording of that clause. I have no quarrel with conveyance committees, but if people are on committees without any financial responsibility and are able to do this sort of thing lawfully then I think that the “lawful” part of it needs to be looked at. I found myself in sympathy with the driver, and I am not quite sure that he is out of the woods yet. It is not hard for parents to gang up on a driver and get rid of him. I think that the situation is a dangerous one, and that the wording of the clause should be looked at.

I turn to another matter on education, and I hope that the hon. member for Toowoomba East will agree with me here, too. I have learned that school inspectors are required to cover vast areas in performing their duties. A number of the areas are as great as those covered by the regional directors. I can think

of some that are larger than the Gregory electorate. The inspectors are expected to travel by public transport to visit schools. In most cases they travel by train; however, if a particular school is situated a long distance from the railway line, the Education Department does not quarrel with the inspector if he engages a taxi to visit the school. Of course, the taxi-driver has to be paid waiting time until the school inspector returns to the railway station, and the taxi fares are as much as 40c a mile in western Queensland and 30c a mile in areas closer to the city. This arrangement seems to be a fairly loose one. No person can do his job effectively when he is expected to catch a train at 10 to 4 in the morning, travel 50 miles, arrive at a town at half past 6, and then have to wait until the school opens at 9 o'clock. I should like the Minister to investigate this matter because I believe it would be more economic to provide school inspectors with motor transport. In the long term it will be cheaper for the department, because inspectors now have to be paid expensive taxi fares and they waste time waiting for trains. The Minister will agree that the present situation leaves much to be desired. I hope that he will investigate this matter, because I do not see how senior officers in any department can work properly in such circumstances.

**Mr. R. Jones:** Does this apply also to apprenticeship advisory officers? What about a rented car?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** Normally I do not favour the idea of renting motor-cars.

When a Government department buys a motor-car it pays no sales tax. As a rule the vehicle is kept for a considerable period, and when it is traded in, in theory it is sold with sales tax added. Our local shire council usually buys Holden motor vehicles, keeps them until they have covered 25,000 miles and, at the end of 12 months, they can be traded and it does not cost the council more than \$200 to buy a new vehicle. The Government would be well advised to consider adopting the same practice.

**Mr. R. Jones** interjected.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I do not know about that, but as long as my ideas are followed I will be quite happy.

I wish to refer now to the drought and its effect on the economy of the State, and also to suggest some remedies that I believe the Government could put into effect. At present two-thirds of the State is drought-stricken. Not only are the great wool-growing areas affected; so also is the country in the central and far western areas. The drought position in this State has never been worse. Queensland has not picked up since 1957.

**Mr. Sherrington:** That is just when this mob came into power.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I knew that someone would say that. It is unfortunate that these two happenings coincided, but I do not think that even the Opposition can blame the Government for that.

I am concerned about the plight of wool-growers because this industry has been the backbone of Australia. Over the years it has been, and it still is, Australia's greatest export-earner. However, it is a fact of life that the price of wool has slowly decreased and the wool-grower is now caught in the cost squeeze. His position is becoming untenable, and the drought is making conditions much worse.

To give hon. members an idea of conditions in my electorate, I point out that in the shire of Taroom and the area north of Roma and around Injune, conditions could not be worse. This year, many of the farming areas around Mt. Abundance, Miles, Chinchilla and even around Dalby face their worst wheat crops, in addition to the already clouded price prospects for wheat. All these people on the land face huge problems, which we must help them to cope with. As the hon. member for Warrego said, in the past 12 years Queensland has suffered severe droughts. However, I certainly do not agree with his statement that the Country-Liberal Government gives little to the people of the West, and cares less for them. That is not true. Any Government caught in a similar situation could not have been more sympathetic to their needs or have done more for them.

**Mr. O'Donnell:** Do you think the Federal Government will give the \$100,000,000 to rehabilitate them?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I shall come to that in a minute, because that is one of the main points in my speech.

To discover what the Government has been doing, it is only necessary to look at the drought-aid scheme that was put into effect in March this year. Under that scheme the Government allows rail-freight rebates of 30 per cent. on stock going from drought areas for sale for slaughter, 50 per cent. on stock in any condition being sent on agistment, 50 per cent. on the return trip or on reconignment to another agistment area, and 75 per cent. on fodder consigned to stock-owners in drought-declared areas. The Department of Transport allows free-road-transport permits for all stock movement in drought-declared areas, and for the road transport of fodder. In addition, there is a subsidy of 5c a ton-mile on fodder transported by licensed carriers from the nearest railhead to property in a drought-declared area.

That is the type of concession being offered. I do not think the Government can be anything but proud of this scheme which has cost millions of dollars. It has been well received in the industry which is sensible enough to know that there is a limit to what a Government can do in this field. There is no

doubt that the Government would like to do more, but education and health service expenditure is increasing. In fact, all costs are increasing. The Department of Lands assists in a small way by not imposing penalties for the late payment of rentals. It normally charges 10 per cent.

There is no doubt, as the hon. member for Barcoo said, that the Commonwealth Government is the only avenue for finance of any consequence which would help in a situation such as this. There is no doubt also that it is best to have a plan prepared which can be put into operation when the drought breaks. It is not much use injecting millions of dollars into the economy now for restocking purposes. It would be better to hang on until the drought breaks.

**Mr. Carey:** The Commonwealth Government draws a tremendous amount of money from Queensland, according to "The Courier-Mail" this morning. It reports that an enormous sum goes to the Commonwealth Government from Mt. Isa alone.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** That is so. In my book, Queensland is a very good investment for the Commonwealth.

The wool industry is caught up in a rising cost spiral and a slowly falling wool market. Were it not for the work and effort of the International Wool Secretariat and the Australian Wool Board, the price of wool today would be much lower. For quite some time the price of wool was tied and closely allied to the cost of synthetics. That price relationship has been broken. I believe that the Wool Mark symbol and the effort behind its introduction did a good deal towards breaking that price relationship. That does not alter the fact that wool is still selling at too low a price. It is sold to practically all countries in the world. It has a ready market, but not necessarily a profitable market based on the Australian cost structure. This is rather sad because it is our main export.

Some of the bigger wool-growers have the ability to survive, whereas some of the smaller ones strike trouble because of their more limited scope, carrying capacity, and so on. In any case a plan must be evolved to assist the industry now. The Longreach meeting of wool-growers which was convened by the United Graziers' Association for 17 September should be able to produce the nucleus of a rehabilitation plan which will do something for this industry.

I suggest that the Government once again bring to the notice of the Federal Government the plight of wool-growers in Queensland. I refer also to other people on the land who are in similar straits as a result of the drought, but I refer particularly to the wool-grower because he has suffered not only from the drought but also from the low price of wool.

In an endeavour to assist the wool-grower, I suggest that he be offered a 50 per cent. reduction in Crown rental charged over



the next five years—this was offered two years ago but is not being offered now—and I also suggest that shire council rates be subsidised to an extent which would allow a reduction of 50 per cent. over a five-year period. It is quite impossible for shire councils to give such a concession, and the only way in which they could carry on under those conditions would be by a system of subsidising rates from somewhere. I believe that history shows that the State Government cannot afford this type of assistance, and Federal help would be needed. These are things that I believe the Government should put to the Federal authorities.

I now come to the very costly matter of restocking. I believe that restocking loans should be made available on a long-term basis at nominal interest rates, certainly no higher than 3 per cent. I also believe that the Government should give consideration to setting up a competent and experienced committee consisting of a State Cabinet Minister, a senior representative of the Treasury, a senior representative of the Department of Primary Industries, a senior representative of the Department of Lands, and also three industry representatives, one each from North Queensland, Central Queensland and South Queensland. This committee should have wide powers to investigate the cases of people who qualify for the type of assistance that I have recommended. It is quite obvious that there would be some people who need, and qualify for, assistance, and there would be others who are able to finance their own way out of trouble and do not need help. I believe that this should be a top-level committee, and for that reason I suggest that one of its members should be a Cabinet Minister in order to give it the status it needs.

It would also be necessary for the committee to consider applications from cattle producers, many of whom have been hard hit by drought, and from those farmers who are also facing an unpredictable future as a result not only of drought but of the uncertain future of the wheat industry as well. I believe that action must be taken now so that plans will be in operation when the drought ends.

The State Government must also have a further look at the matter of living areas. I believe it is axiomatic that, as wool prices recede, living areas, particularly in the drier regions, must be allowed to become larger. It should be made easier for a grazier to sell his property to his neighbour in certain circumstances, and in many cases assistance could be given to allow this to happen. Under freeholding tenure, it is now possible to subdivide a property and sell portion of it, and this also can be of great assistance in certain cases. I think that is good.

I should also like to see the automatic granting of a freeholding offer to all lessees of grazing selections who apply for conversion, and the departmental practice of granting special leases over those areas said

to be in excess of a living area discontinued. I do not believe that the special-lease system, as being used at present, is conducive to good land settlement, and I should like to see the system discontinued altogether.

I should like to see the freehold system extended far more quickly than has been the case to date. I believe that once the freehold system is adopted instead of the grazing-selection system it will be a good thing for the industry. In many cases producers get into such a position that they must get out, and if, in getting out, they are able to sell to their neighbours, they would be helping them, too. I think that would be a good thing. There must be a flexible land policy.

I make a further plea to the Federal Government to have another look at the position in Queensland as a result of the drought, particularly as it affects wool-growers. My mind goes back to the wool-boom years in the early fifties, when wool reached a price of £1 a pound.

**Mr. Bennett:** There was a Labour Government in those days.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** In those days the price of wool rose because of the Korean war—I do not think that the Labour Government had much to do with it—and wool-growers were caught in a situation exactly opposite to the present situation. They were receiving high incomes, but they were not able to develop their properties fully because of the shortage of fencing and building materials, and so on. It was very difficult to get timber to build a house, and engines, windmills and other equipment were in short supply.

The wool-growers received the money in one hand and lost it with the other. Who received it? The Federal Government. I believe, therefore, that that is a factor which the Federal Government should consider when it looks at Queensland today and sees how this State is suffering. Western Australia is suffering, also, but I believe that Queensland is a very good investment for the Federal Government. It almost owes it to this State to come to the aid of wool-growers because of the considerable amount of revenue it collected from them in taxation in the wool boom between about 1950 and 1956. I again appeal to the Federal Government to look at the situation in that light.

**Mr. Bennett:** What do you say about over-stocking?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** Over-stocking is what wrecks properties in most instances. Usually it occurs because people have areas that are too small, and most of them were created by Labour Governments. After the first World War, an A.L.P. Government set up perpetual leases in my electorate as dairy farms and some of them were as small as 330 acres. Soldiers returning from the first World War went onto those blocks and went stone motherless broke, and it has been difficult to correct the anomalies created by

bad land administration in those days. Overstocking occurs because people on small properties must over-stock to live. I should like to see an extension of freeholding, which would have a tendency to correct this situation.

The cattle industry is in a different category because its price structure is the direct opposite of the price structure in the wool industry. I was interested to read in the Queensland Pocket Year Book that, once again, the beef and veal industry had been the greatest export income earner in 1967-68. It earned \$105,837,000 for the State, which was more than the \$98,873,000 earned by wool and the \$95,616,000 earned by sugar. The cattle industry is set to expand rapidly once normal conditions return, and I have no doubt that it will do so.

I wish to deal now with roads. It has been possible this year for surplus stock to be sold at fair market prices to New South Wales and Victoria because there has never been a better season in the South. Here I must pay tribute to the road transport operators, who have made this trade possible. They have done a magnificent job transporting cattle and sheep vast distances into New South Wales and Victoria, and in some cases right through to South Australia. They have worked long hours and have been responsible for saving many drought-stricken stock from certain death. Generally speaking, cattlemen in Queensland have been able to get a fair market price for their stock.

It has been possible for the road transport operators to do this because the main north-south roads are slowly being improved. Again I urge the Government to give consideration to increasing the priority on the north-south roads. It is a fact—I speak purely of the western line areas—that most roads head towards Brisbane and that less accent has been placed on north-south roads. By extending itself, the Government has provided fairly good east-west roads, and I believe that the north-south roads must now be given higher priority.

**Mr. O'Donnell:** The east-west roads in central and northern Queensland have not been finished. How can you suggest that north-south roads leading to New South Wales should be built?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** That may be so but, if we are going to save vast numbers of stock, it is up to people to put up arguments as they see them and this is the way I see them.

There are three main north-south roads. The Leichhardt Highway from Theodore to Taroom, Wandoan, Miles, Condamine and Goondiwindi is a very important one as also is the road linking Rolleston, Injune, Roma, Surat, St. George and Mungindi. The last important north-south road—

**Mr. Bennett:** What about the Roma-Injune road?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** The hon. member will be pleased to know that that is a perfect road and a tribute to the engineers who built it and our council which did the work. The Charleville-Cunnamulla road in the electorate of Warrego is another very important north-south road. I should like to see more money spent on these north-south roads because I believe the time is fast coming when they will be used other than for sending stock from Queensland to New South Wales. With good roads, producers in Queensland could well go to places such as Dubbo and Gunnedah, buy stock there and bring them back for re-stocking purposes. I believe this is very important. The hon. member for Barcoo would appreciate that, once we get these good roads built to a higher standard, we will bring stability to the market.

**Mr. McKechnie:** It allows for a flow either way.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** That is so and I believe this is what we should aim for.

Another matter which I have only a moment to touch on is a realistic drought-bond scheme to be introduced by the Federal Government. I believe that this together with good north-south roads are two factors that will do no end of good for primary producers in Queensland. The drought-bond scheme that has been put up by the Federal Government does not go far enough in that it is limited to persons who get 90 per cent. of their income from the sale of stock, cattle or sheep, and this would penalise any person growing crops. I do not think it should do that. I believe that a properly administered drought-bond scheme, together with better roads, would make no end of difference. I agree with the hon. member for Yeronga that beef roads in Queensland have brought tremendous benefits. I think that, with an extension of the road system and a bit of realism in the taxation set-up, much could be done to save the livestock of Queensland.

**Mr. DAVIS** (Brisbane) (4.18 p.m.): It gives me pleasure to stand in this august Assembly and speak as the representative of the electorate with the name of the capital city of our State. I welcome the opportunity to express on behalf of the electors of Brisbane their loyalty to our Sovereign, Queen Elizabeth II, and to thank my A.L.P. supporters and my assistant campaign director, Mr. Bluey Cannon, for their tremendous support during the campaign. I must also thank the electors of Brisbane for allowing me to come here.

The Brisbane electorate is a very historic one. I am only its fourth representative since 1912, a span of 57 years. In 1912 the electors of Brisbane were sensible enough to elect the first Labour representative, Michael Joseph Kirwan, who was commonly known in the Chamber as Mick Kirwan. He is still well known in the electorate even today. He was in Parliament

from 1912 to 1932 and served as Chairman of Committees, Minister without portfolio and also Minister for Public Works.

He was followed by Robert Funnell who served from 1932 to 1936 and who died tragically after only four short years in office. Robert Funnell is still remembered in the electorate, and each year the Robert Funnell memorial medal is presented to the pupil who obtains the highest pass in Junior at a school within the electorate.

After Bob Funnell came perhaps the most illustrious of all representatives of the Brisbane electorate. I refer to my friend and tutor, John Henry Mann, who is known to one and all as the famous "Johnno". He entered Parliament in April 1936, so he served for 33 years, which is approximately my age. As everybody knows, from 1950 till 1957, he occupied the very high office of Speaker and carried out his duties with great dignity and pride. I thank him for the assistance that he rendered to me during the election campaign as my campaign director. Not too many people know more about campaigning than "Johnno" Mann. A great number of stories have been circulated about him, and I believe some to be false. To try to emulate Johnno would be impossible, but I have the wish to possess one of his very fine qualities. I wish for his sincerity to his electors. I know that they received that sincerity from him and that they expect the same from me.

The electorate of Brisbane has in it many fine buildings and institutions. It contains the largest hospital, over 50 hotels, the largest department stores, the largest motels and the largest theatre. It might be said that it is the hub of the business and theatrical world of this State. Although the City of Brisbane is the gateway to our tourist State, tourists are given a very poor reception. If he arrives by air the first thing he sights is a shocking igloo that has been left over from the 1939-45 conflict. I know the old argument will be put forward that that is the responsibility not of the State but of the Commonwealth. I point out, however, that at the moment the Premiers of Victoria and New South Wales, Mr. Askin and Sir Henry Bolte, are fighting tooth and nail with the Commonwealth about which one of their airports, Mascot in New South Wales or Tullamarine in Victoria, will be the first to be completed as an international airport. Those Premiers are speaking in terms of millions of dollars for their respective States. This year the Commonwealth will spend \$20,000,000 on the Mascot airport and \$19,000,000 on Tullamarine airport, whereas it will spend only \$24,666 on Eagle Farm airport. These are the results of the strong representations by the leaders of those States and the wishful dreaming of the Rip Van Winkles of our State.

Let us take the case of a tourist who arrive at the interstate railway station. He does not disembark from his train in the centre of the city but over at South Brisbane.

The scenery that meets his eye consists of wonderful potted palms and hanging baskets and plenty of colourful paint. Thank goodness it is the terminus and the tourist cannot go any further. If he could I am sure that with that sort of reception he would turn back and would not cross the Victoria Bridge into the centre of the city.

The greatest reception that any tourist can receive is given if he arrives by ship. We expect to attract the wealthy overseas tourists, but can hon. members imagine the situation when the liner comes up the river and berths at Hamilton Wharf, Bretts Wharf or another of Brisbane's working wharves? They must feel disgusted as the liner pulls into the wharf and the gangway is lowered for them to disembark. It must be shocking for them to walk on to the wharf and weave their way through bales of wool, cranes, fork-lifts and ropes. Of course, on the scheduled arrival of a ship, at Hamilton, someone from the Tourist Bureau generally places artificial indoor plants on the wharf to make it look more attractive.

I have also noticed that female toilet facilities are not provided for mothers with children who are waiting for a ship to arrive. If we expect Brisbane to be the tourist capital of the State we must do much better than we are.

Brisbane has many fine buildings and institutions, and it will not be long before we are admiring the wonderful city square. The city has progressed under the Jones Labour administration in spite of the many obstacles placed in its way by the Country-Liberal Government, but the city dwellers are disadvantaged. For example, during the recent election campaign the Treasurer published a pamphlet displaying a very attractive, modern railway station in his electorate. Have hon. members seen some of the railway stations in the heart of the city—the very hub of the State? The Treasurer's pamphlet displayed the Helidon and Laidley stations. I agree that they are fine stations, but have hon. members seen the Bowen Hills railway station? It is worth the trip just for the laugh.

I should now like to present my views on one of the sports that I follow, namely, mid-week racing. Mid-week racing in the metropolitan area should be reviewed. The New South Wales system for metropolitan and provincial racing is the ideal one in that the racegoer has an alternative. Racing takes place at Canterbury mainly on Wednesdays, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays race meetings are held at Kembla Grange, Wyong, Hawkesbury, or one of the other tracks. Brisbane racegoers who wish to attend a mid-week meeting are forced to go to one of the country courses, at some of which the amenities are very poor. There is a place for country racing but I firmly believe that the racing fraternity, and the public generally, favour the allocation of extra days to metropolitan mid-week racing.

Breakfast Creek provides another example of the need for beautification in our city. From inquiries directed to residents of long standing in that area I am led to believe that many years ago the creek was a haven for fishing, exploring and swimming. Today, it is polluted and is an eyesore with a very serious flooding problem. In June, 1967, properties adjoining the creek were seriously damaged. Hon. members will recall the terrible disaster of the Queen's Birthday week-end. Although lives were endangered, thank heavens none were lost. However, no action has been taken by any Government department since then to prevent flooding. As it is a tidal creek, the responsibility should be accepted by the Department of Harbours and Marine. It should be cleaned, dredged and straightened. Residents who have inquired have been informed that one section is the responsibility of the Department of Harbours and Marine and that another section is the responsibility of the Water Supply and Irrigation Commission. An answer that I received in the House recently puts the responsibility on the Brisbane City Council.

How can any positive action be taken against all this red tape? It is a depressed area, and property valuations have been drastically reduced. No positive action has been taken by this Government for two years. The residents there now live in fear of continual rain. Action must be taken immediately to stop illegal dumping and the silting that follows it, because what was once a free-flowing creek is now, at low tide, a string of muddy water-holes.

If we consider the next generation of residents in this part of our city, it is our duty to give Breakfast Creek back to nature so that it will be like it was years ago. I believe that inner-city living should be taken into account by the Government far more than it is at present. We should look to the future. Where is there a plan for reurbanisation? People are forced to go to outer suburbia. Would it not be a far better proposal to build blocks of Housing Commission flats where all the amenities are now available?

I am proud to represent the city dweller. I shall push, with all my endeavour, the cause of the city dweller who, I feel, has been neglected by this Country-Liberal Government. The case of city versus country should be put into its proper perspective. Inner-city dwellers are first-rate, not second-rate, citizens. They are equal to their country cousins and should be entitled to the same privileges, especially in voting. The A.L.P. believes in a fair deal for all sections of the community.

My colleague the hon. member for Sandgate, in his speech last week, said that a transportation authority should be set up in Brisbane to cover all forms of public transport. This was our policy before the most recent State election. Everyone will no doubt agree that the only way that we will improve public transport in the city is

to create an authority incorporating train, bus, taxi and all other forms of public transport. It must be pointed out that at this point of time we have sufficient information from overseas to go along with this. Even in America, the great citadel of private enterprise, all bus and other public transport services, which are run privately, are not paying. I think that the No. 1 reason public transport services do not pay is that the motor-car is so popular. People who own motor-cars do not leave them under houses; they prefer to drive them to work. What encouragement are they given to use public transport?

One transport authority could co-ordinate all forms of public transport so that there would be a quick, efficient service with cheap fares. Undoubtedly a loss would be incurred but the public would have a decent transport service. Any Government should think along these lines. Public transport cannot be made to pay at this point of time. It would be far better to make public transport a taxation concession. It could be financed from the Commonwealth's petrol tax. The people are entitled to a good public transport service and the only way there can be such a service is to co-ordinate the different forms of transport.

In my opinion, one of the most irresponsible and senseless actions of the Government when it took office in 1957 was the cancellation of the scheme for the electrification of the suburban railway system. It was pointed out in this Chamber the other day that the population of Brisbane will shortly be 1,000,000. Where is the planning for their transportation? It is no good simply saying, "We will get more people. What will we do about it?" We have to say positively, "This is what we will do."

I believe that Brisbane is unique in that it has a divided railway system. If a person living on the north side of the city wishes to visit someone on the south side, he has to leave the train at either Roma Street or Central station and catch a bus or walk across Victoria Bridge to make another trip on the south-side system. What a foolish situation that is, and what a shocking indictment it is of the Government! Instead of spending \$24,000,000 on the railway connected with the Goonyella project, let the Government provide something for the city dweller in Brisbane.

**Mr. Sherrington:** Land was resumed for that purpose in Labour's time.

**Mr. DAVIS:** The plans and specifications are prepared. A friend of mine worked on that job.

I now wish to deal with other forms of transport. When I was connected with the Transport Workers' Union, I was one of the officials who endeavoured to have something done about the transportation of inflammable products. I asked the Minister for Labour and Tourism whether the Transport Workers'

Union was consulted when the new regulations came into effect, and his answer was "No". The Minister consulted officials of the oil industry and master carriers—all bosses who, in my opinion, from the dealings that I have had with them, would carry petrol in plastic bags if it was cheap to do it that way and if they thought they could get away with it. The Minister did not consider the people who do the actual transportation of these very volatile products.

There have been instances of tankers capsizing on the approaches to the bridge at Breakfast Creek. There are many things that could be discussed with representatives of the drivers, and I think that the Minister should at least have been courteous enough to discuss the matter with officers of the Transport Workers' Union, which covers the majority of drivers who transport inflammable products. It will be too late if a tanker blows up on, for example, the Story Bridge and people are burnt in the holocaust that would follow. My information to date is that the regulations that have been introduced are impossible to understand and implement, and I believe the Minister would be wise if he conferred with both sides involved in the transportation of these products.

**Mr. Sherrington:** They don't mind charging drivers for axle overloading.

**Mr. DAVIS:** The hon. member has just beaten me to the punch, as I was about to deal with that matter. I believe that the most shocking and unjust law in this State at present is the one that places the responsibility for overloading on the driver. I have had contact over many years with hundreds of drivers who have been fined for overloading breaches. It is all very well for the Minister to claim that overloading is the responsibility of the driver. In numerous cases drivers have been instructed to overload. What is the alternative? If an employer instructs a driver to carry a load and the driver knows that the vehicle is overloaded, the driver, especially in country areas, either has to get in the vehicle and drive it out through the gate, or get out permanently. That is his only alternative. This occurs time and time again.

Under the Act, employers say also, "If you are booked and fined, we will pay the fine", and on many occasions the employer does pay the fine. However, after a while a driver becomes unprofitable because his fines are mounting. I know of one driver who had so many convictions that his fines amounted to over \$500. His employer was approached and he said, "What name are they in?" He was told that they were in the driver's name and he said, "No. I have paid enough fines for overloading. They are yours. Look after them." That occurs time and time again. The big companies will pay the fines while a driver is in their employment, but once he is dismissed or sacked they will say to him, "There it is in the Act. The responsibility is yours." I say to hon. members opposite, "Don't let anyone tell you that that does not occur."

When a question was asked by the hon. member for Salisbury relative to the gaoling of people convicted of overloading offences, I think that the answer was, "There is no record of this." There have been numerous instances in which people could not afford to pay fines for overloading offences. A policeman produces a record of conviction with costs and says, "You owe \$100." Where would many men with families who have been employed as truck-drivers find \$100 or \$120, from which the employer has received the profit? If they have not the money, the policeman takes the body. That has occurred on numerous occasions, and anyone who says that it has not does not know what he is talking about.

I turn now to the question of driver onus, and I was personally involved in one incident that I think shows the unprofitability of drivers when their convictions and fines for overloading offences begin to mount up. I was in the office of the personnel officer for one of the big carrying companies and I asked him this question: "If I had 10 convictions for overloading offences and my friend who is with me was a 'cleanskin', who would get the job if you knew that?" He answered quite emphatically, "We would have to employ the 'cleanskin' driver because he would be less expensive the first time he was booked for overloading." So, by having many fines for overloading offences, a driver can put himself out of a job; he becomes too expensive for the employer.

The Minister has been approached by the Transport Workers' Union on this question, and I should like to see the onus relative to overloading put on the owner. I do not think one would have to worry very much about policemen if the employer had to pay the fines out of his own pocket. He would be the best possible policeman.

Although I am a strong supporter of road safety, I believe that the current policy of cancellation of drivers' licences under the so-called points system is quite unfair and unjust.

**Mr. Bromley:** Especially if a person drives for a living.

**Mr. DAVIS:** Thousands of drivers throughout the State are dependent on their licence for their livelihood. In this category are truck-drivers, taxi-drivers, bus-drivers, sales representatives and van salesmen, to mention only a few. I have no sympathy for the irresponsible driver, but I wish to quote an extract from the 1963 report on policy and procedures for the promotion of driver improvement through licensing and enforcement. It was prepared by the Committee of Driver Improvement and issued by the Department of Shipping and Transport, and, on page 23, item 151 contains the following:—

"Drivers residing in the Brisbane metropolitan area whose points total reach the 'show cause' level are called upon by the

District Superintendent of Traffic to 'show cause' and these drivers have to appear at the Brisbane Traffic Office before a Superintendent of Traffic.

"This interview usually results in a final warning being issued.

"If such driver comes under notice again within a short time a further 'show cause' notice is served on him. At this interview some action is usually taken against the driver to suspend his licence.

"This suspension may be for a period of from one to six months, however, in the case of a driver whose livelihood depends on his holding a licence the suspension may take the form of a restriction being placed on his driving other than during working hours—especially if his offences have been committed outside working hours."

That report was made in 1963 and I very much doubt whether it has been changed by the Commonwealth Department of Shipping and Transport. But this is not the present procedure. When a driver reaches nine points, he is asked to show cause and is given an opportunity to explain the reasons, and he then loses his licence. This procedure and what is printed in the report I have just read are contradictory.

My argument is that, if a driver is a person who could be classified as a professional driver and these offences occur outside his normal working hours, he should be treated separately from the person who drives purely for pleasure. The driver who earns his living with his licence incurs a dual penalty.

The police argument is that the driver who requires a licence for a living should be a more experienced and competent driver and should realise the risks he takes. As a union official, I have represented people on 'show cause', particularly during the period last year when the radar traps were stationed at the bottom of hills, but this was not taken into consideration. The position is the same as I instanced before with overloading. If a person has nine points, an employer will not hire him. As he is unprofitable, he is "turfed" out, and this constitutes a dual penalty in that he pays the fines for his convictions and then loses his job. He may have to take a labouring job or something less remunerative than his wage as a professional driver. In other words, he could lose up to \$300 by the cancellation of his licence plus the amount he has paid in fines.

We were discussing contractors earlier. I mention the case of one person who had a contract for the cartage of oil in the Mackay district. A driver employed by him was charged and lost his licence. The employer was able to employ somebody else and this man had to look around for a labouring job. I believe his treatment was quite unfair and unjust. And the report put in by

Inspector Crank, Superintendent of Traffic, has not been rescinded. What we tell people in the South as to the procedure here is, in fact, wrong and a lie.

I should like now to touch on the subject of the SGIO Theatre. When I first came into this House I asked the Treasurer if he would consider changing the name of this theatre and the flippant reply I got was that the theatre is owned entirely by SGIO policy-holders. I have always been led to believe that the SGIO is the State Government Insurance Office and is responsible to the State Government. I have house insurance and a life assurance policy with the SGIO and I was not consulted on the name of the theatre. I do not appreciate foolish answers such as that. The question was asked in good faith. The theatre is in my electorate and it is, indeed, a wonderful theatre. I have been approached by people in the art world. The newspapers have been inundated with letters to the editor, and prominent theatrical personalities have made their views well and truly known. Rumour has it that the administration of the SGIO Theatre would prefer to have it named the State Theatre, but this hypocritical Government considered that that name was too socialised and would remind the people that the State Government Insurance Office was set up by a Labour administration. I feel that the name of the theatre is a very stupid one. Recently a person from Melbourne visited my home and told me that he was going up to see the Old Tote Company performing at the theatre. (By the way, I think also that a representative of the Old Tote Company said that the name of the theatre was a stupid one.) This interstate visitor told me that he was going to visit the "Seego" theatre. That was his pronunciation, and he was not being facetious. I do not care if the theatre is named after royalty—it can be called the Prince of Wales Theatre, perhaps, after Prince Charles—or in honour of a famous Australian. As far as I am concerned, it could even be called "Old Joe's" Theatre. It can be named anything, so long as the Government gets rid of, as it is said in current theatrical terms, this unpronounceable four-letter word.

As I am a new member I think it is only fair that I should not try to rubbish the Government all the time but that I should congratulate it. I do so on its finally calling Parliament together after an eight-month recess. In Tasmania, which has a budget that is approximately the same as that of the Brisbane City Council, an election was held at about the same time as ours. The Tasmanian Parliament sat until three weeks before the election. Prior to the election a Labour Government was in power, but it did not back down; it sat right up until the end. Unfortunately, owing to the shocking method of voting in Tasmania, a Labour Government does not govern that State at the moment. Our Parliament rose early in December so that the Government could contest an election held in May. After

the election the Government decided that it was necessary to keep Parliament in recess for a further three months so that it could recover from the reaction of the electors.

I deal now with the workers of Queensland. As a former union official I am concerned about penal provisions. Time and time again employers endeavour to invoke penal provisions against unions. If any industrial trouble arises the employer straightaway races to the Industrial Commission and tries to get orders made against the unions so that the employer can bash the unions into submission. I hope that the Government will review penal clauses against employers because of the unsatisfactory provisions contained in the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. At a later date I shall ask a question about the number of employers who have been fined over the last 12 months for not carrying out award conditions.

I shall give an example of an award provision and the way in which the Act is framed against the workers. When I wanted to see one firm's time-book, I was told it was in Sydney. To use a slang expression, I knew that this firm was "touching" its workers. Nevertheless, I returned repeatedly, and being a very fair-minded union official, I gave the employer the benefit of the doubt. I said, "Fair enough, but why is it in Sydney?" In the fortnight after I first visited this firm the men suddenly received a \$10 increase. I could not get any idea of when the book would be back, and as the negotiations took four to five months to carry out, eventually the firm had to be prosecuted and brought to court to produce the time-book. For not producing the time-book the firm was fined \$10, but the legal costs of the union exceeded \$80. By the time the book was produced six months had elapsed, which meant that we were out of time. As the Act now stands, the book must be produced within six months. When we worked out how much was owing we found that, for a six-month period, for only 12 employees, over \$10,700 was owing. It was all down the drain because of the way in which the Act is framed and the weak penalties provided by it. I go as far as to say that, throughout Queensland, thousands of workers under different awards are being "touched" by employers through their non-compliance with award conditions. The Gold Coast is renowned for it, and in country areas truck drivers are working 15 or 16 hours a week overtime for trip money of 4 to 5 cents a mile, or whatever the boss wants to pay them.

**Mr. Newton** interjected.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I will not go so far as to say that, because that is another question, but this is starting to "phase in" on the drug problem. There is definitely an agreement between the employers; if they can avoid paying tea money, and avoid complying with an award, they believe they have achieved something and have had a good week.

**Mr. CORY** (Warwick) (4.58 p.m.): I take this opportunity to congratulate the Administrator, Mr. Justice Sheehy, on his opening of this session of Parliament. I regret the events that made it necessary for him to do so on this occasion, and wish Sir William Mack a speedy and permanent return to health.

I thank the electors of Warwick for again giving me the privilege of representing them in this Parliament, and I re-affirm their loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen.

I congratulate the Premier and thank him for his leadership in the 12 months since he became Premier of the State. I congratulate the two new Ministers, namely, the Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs, and the Minister for Local Government and Electricity on their elevation to their high offices. We realise that the Premier believes in making use of the ability of Government members, and he has certainly seen ability in the two new Ministers. I know that he will make full use of their abilities and that the Government will be the better for it.

On behalf of the people of Killarney, I thank the Premier and the Minister for Works for what has been done since the storm last November. From the moment the Premier returned to his office after the illness from which he was suffering at the time of the storm, he put an enormous amount of effort and drive into getting things moving and alleviating the problems in that area.

**Mr. P. Wood:** Wasn't anything done before then?

**Mr. CORY:** A good deal was done before then, but I am thanking the Premier for what was done by him. He moved quickly to provide personal relief of over \$30,000. The Glengallan Shire Council sought \$7,784.49 in relief, and that amount was paid in full. There was also a \$12,500 grant for the hospital.

I thank the Minister for Works for taking quick action to have the department do a mighty job in the two days following the storm, which occurred on a Friday night. An amount of \$18,500 was expended so that 90 per cent. of the classrooms in the school could be used on the following Monday. In addition, \$12,500 was spent on a new teacher's residence. Two more teachers' residences are in the course of construction. A total of \$30,000 is being spent on school residences. A new building housing the police station and the court-house, to cost \$38,000, is under construction. A residence to go with it will be built in the near future and a second residence is planned. Tenders have been called for new school buildings estimated to cost \$69,000.

All in all, this adds up to a solid effort by the Premier's Department and the Department of Works for the people in that area, and I take this opportunity to express their thanks.

I welcome all new members of Parliament for many reasons, but particularly because they had something to offer the electors. Regardless of the side of the Chamber they sit on they must have something, and certainly they have the confidence of the majority of the people whom they represent.

I congratulate the mover and seconder of this motion on their two impressive speeches. They both stuck to the subjects they know best and to which they have devoted their lives. The mover of the motion comes from the West and the seconder of the motion comes from Brisbane, so that their experiences are vastly different. A good deal has been said about the contribution of the hon. member for Wavell, and whether he should or should not have made it. I cannot say whether he is right or wrong because only a technical man, steeped in the workings of the Department of Health, could arbitrate on many of the matters he raised. It was refreshing, however, to hear a man espouse his thoughts. He did this. I do not know whether there is need for change, but what the hon. member said will allow a fresh look to be taken at the workings of the Department of Health.

I am reminded that my thoughts were similar when the Premier took office about 12 months ago. Here was a new Premier, and I thought that he would probably have a brand-new outlook on many matters. That has been proved in the last 12 months by his approach to transport problems, valuation problems, and health matters in Queensland. I think we all welcome these fresh thoughts. Regardless of how well a thing seems to have been done in the past, let us never be afraid to have another look at it from time to time. There may or may not be some need for change.

During this debate there have been a number of speeches from both sides of the House dealing with water conservation. Nothing new has been said in any of them, and I think it all boils down to the fact that there is not enough water in Queensland for the needs of the State. Conservation is not cheap; it never has been. Although it is not the complete answer to our problems, it is a large part of the answer to many of them. Once conservation has taken place, the water has to be paid for, which means that the economics of the industry whose production will be boosted by the availability of water must be studied carefully and must be shown to be sound. Production must increase no faster than the rate at which markets can absorb it. Whether the markets be at home or abroad, they must be able to accommodate the increased production or there will be gluts and price falls.

Let us therefore consider the conservation of water in terms of security for the nation, and security for the individual. If that is done, expansion will take place automatically. The present drought spells out the need for security first, and I think that if water

conservation projects are based on a programme of security first and expansion second, the State will not come to any harm. Although many areas are not suitable for irrigation, let us first secure, as best we can, the livestock industry that we already have.

I again advocate further conservation from the streams in the Upper Condamine basin above the point where water from the Leslie Dam takes over. This is an area in which there is no control of the stream flow. Although there is both surface and underground water, there is not enough water to go round, and I believe that there should be a policy of sharing the water that is available among all those who wish to use it.

I do not agree with the present policy of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission of prohibiting the issue of licences on uncontrolled streams. That policy has been followed for the last two or three years, and I believe that it is a sectional policy which tends to create two classes of farmers—first-class farmers, and second-class farmers. In my opinion, that is not good enough. In short, it means that a person who had consolidated sufficiently or whose bank balance was big enough two or three years ago to expand further could get a licence to irrigate, but a younger man who had not consolidated his affairs sufficiently to expand then has been prohibited from getting a licence. The younger man now finds that he cannot even get off the ground with his application for a licence. In effect, only the man with sufficient money to buy a piece of land that already has a licence attaching to it can get a licence, and in many instances this is the man who has one already next door. In this field, as in many others, it is very easy for the big to get bigger and very difficult for the little fellow to get off the ground. In all sincerity, I believe that all riparian landholders should have an equal right to share the waters that are available. A policy that allows landholders to share the underground water but saves the surface water for a chosen few is not good enough, and I find it impossible to justify it.

The position is entirely different where conservation schemes and storages from which water is sold have been provided. If water is to be sold, the Commission has a responsibility to guarantee the supply and, therefore, must limit the number of licences available. However, where there is no conservation scheme and no payment for water, I think that riparian landholders should have a right to share the water.

Because there is not enough water, let us consider all the sources of water that may be available in this area. Of course, surface waters are available, and I think that there is a greater and greater need for the building of weirs on many of the smaller streams. I know that, by and large, the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission has not had a very happy experience in the building of weirs in Queensland, but I think that it will have to



reconsider the situation. I am firmly convinced that in some instances small weirs will do the job when a major storage is likely to prove completely inadequate and too costly.

I am very pleased that the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission is investigating underground water resources. In the near future it will be calling tenders for a series of test drillings in the Freestone Creek, Swan Creek, Farm Creek and Condamine River basin. Many farmers, of course, have privately owned bores. However, I believe that the more assistance that can be given to further investigate and develop the area, the better.

Taking advantage of all these sources still leaves a deficiency, and I ask the Government to examine very closely a scheme now under way in New South Wales to investigate the whole Clarence River catchment and problems arising from flooding in the Clarence River. A special committee has been set up by the New South Wales Premier, Mr. Askin, to inquire into matters concerning the future development and utilisation of the total water resources of the Clarence River, and I ask the Government to support this committee in its investigations with the idea of having it fully investigate the feasibility and cost of diverting a small portion of the water into the headwaters of the Condamine River. The terms of reference that have been placed before this committee say, amongst other things—

“ . . . the practicability and desirability and economics of inland diversion of portion of the waters of the Clarence River by gravitation or pumping.”

As well as that sort of investigation, which includes the possibility of diverting water into western New South Wales rivers and possibly the Condamine River over the Queensland border the aim is also to assist in the rectification of the flooding problems around the city of Grafton itself. But the matter that concerns us is the possibility of diverting a portion of this water.

This is something that would be well worth investigating because the Clarence River carries much more water than can ever be adequately used. The area suffers greatly from flood damage and there can be no possible risk of lack of permanent water to the irrigators along the Clarence River. At the same time, the Condamine River has not nearly enough water and it is certainly not permanent.

If engineers can come up with a reasonable scheme whereby we can obtain water from this source, it will help the people in that area by taking it from them and help us by giving it to us.

The committee formed to investigate this proposal comprises Mr. S. Coulter, representing the New South Wales Electricity Commission; Mr. T. N. McIntosh, representing New South Wales Department of Public Works; and Mr. I. P. Cuneen, representing the New South Wales Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission. The secretary of

the committee is Mr. N. P. Rees, of the New South Wales Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission, Sydney. The committee is responsible to the Minister for Conservation, Mr. Beal, who will report to the Minister for Works.

I ask the Government to support this committee and stress the importance of this section of its investigations. By doing so, it will also be helping the contiguous local authorities and the Flood Mitigation Board of the Grafton area.

We must not be too proud to look at all sources of water, whether they are over the border or not. It is not a matter of taking a large amount of water from New South Wales. The catchment area of the Clarence River is about 8,500 square miles. The maximum area possible for a scheme of diversion into the Condamine River would be 425 square miles, which is a very small percentage of the over-all area. The annual run-off at the 2,000-ft. contour, which would be about the level at which such diversion scheme appears feasible, could be expected to be about 200,000 acre-feet a year. We may find that only a small percentage of that is necessary or sensible for our needs.

Let us examine the problems, the feasibility and cost of such a scheme. We might find that this could perhaps be an ideal solution with the possibility of a major storage at about this level which would feed both river systems. I wholeheartedly urge the Government to support this survey, with particular reference to the area of catchment which, it is believed could be used economically by the Condamine Basin. When we obtain all the facts and costs we can then decide whether such a scheme is a sensible one. But I do suggest that the Government should participate in this investigation because if such a scheme were possible it would call for co-operation between the Queensland Government, the New South Wales Government, and the Commonwealth Government. The sooner the Queensland Government associated itself with it, the better.

I want to deal now with the sale of petrol in Queensland on Anzac Day. I hope that the Minister for Labour and Tourism will look into this matter. Many motorists drive long distances on Anzac Day, when sports meetings and race meetings are held and hotels are allowed to open after 1 p.m. But service stations are not permitted to sell petrol. They can sell petrol on Sunday but not on Anzac Day. The Government's approach to the matter is an outmoded one, and it forces motorists to buy petrol illegally. The only alternative for a motorist if his car's fuel tank is nearly empty is not to drive it. I suggest that the Minister look at the matter and correct the present anomaly by allowing service stations to sell petrol on Anzac Day.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Wright, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5.23 p.m.