

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 11 APRIL 1984

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

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Director, State Emergency Service, Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1983
Rockhampton Harbour Board for the year ended 30 June 1983.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Proclamation under the Forestry Act 1959-1982
Order in Council under the Forestry Act 1959-1982.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Taxation in Queensland

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer) (11.2 a.m.), by leave: Much has been said in the House in the last couple of weeks about the level of taxation in Queensland and the treatment of Queensland by the Commonwealth Government. The questions to be addressed really come under three headings—

- (a) Queensland as a low taxation State;
- (b) The relevance of certain statistical figures published by the Reserve Bank;
- and
- (c) Whether Queensland is getting a fair deal from the Commonwealth.

In regard to the level of taxation—the issue is not whether more or less taxation is collected on a per capita or any other basis, but rather the rates of taxation that are paid by Queenslanders and these, on average, are much lower than those in all other States.

Queensland's figures on a per capita basis are boosted by the relatively lively state of its economy, because people have more money to spend and are spending it here.

Tax rates which are comparable are generally lower than other States and as well Queensland has—no financial institutions duty; no tobacco tax, which adds up to 30 cents to a packet of cigarettes; and no fuel levies, which add 3 to 4 cents to a litre of fuel.

Queensland reduced stamp duties to the bone on business transactions and eliminated death duties and a number of other taxes. Queensland's pay-roll tax rates are at a maximum of 5 per cent, compared with 6 per cent in some other States, and Queensland's exemption levels are the highest in Australia.

Despite the relatively high tax base in Queensland arising from its more vibrant economy, the most recent figures show that Queenslanders are paying tax at a per capita level which is second only to that paid by South Australians. The following figures demonstrate this—

				Per Capita \$
New South Wales	..	..	..	640.71
Victoria	..	..	..	632.15
Western Australia	..	..	..	491.59
Tasmania	..	..	..	482.34
Queensland	..	..	..	482.30
South Australia	..	..	..	452.63

The principal reason South Australia's figure was lower was that that State had a much lower level of economic and financial activity, as everybody knows. These figures were produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and cannot be disputed. I expect a new set of figures to come from the statistician very shortly and there is no doubt in my mind that these will again verify Queensland's unequalled position in the area of low taxation.

Turning now to the figures published by the Reserve Bank—this is simply a table showing receipts and expenditures by States under very broad headings, one of which is taxation. They are derived directly from Budget documents and no attempt has been made to refine them to eliminate anomalies and inconsistencies.

The Leader of the Opposition has attempted to use them to demonstrate an above-average rate of growth in Queensland taxes. In doing so, he has completely overlooked the fact that the rate of growth indicated includes the effect of population increase which, in Queensland, has been over 18 per cent in the seven years to 1982-83. With the effect of this and inflation removed, even on this broad basis the average Queenslanders paid only 11 per cent more tax in real terms in 1982-83 than he did in 1975-76 and most of it would be because of the increased economic activity in 1982-83 compared with that in 1975-76. The average in Victoria was 31 per cent and New South Wales 21 per cent more, even though their economic activity in 1982-83 was relatively stagnant. Tasmania paid 15 per cent more and the only States that had a lesser increase than Queensland were Western Australia and South Australia, because they did not have Queensland's economic stability. Those figures come from a purification of the same Reserve Bank documents that the honourable the Leader of the Opposition was using. So much for the sortie of the Leader of the Opposition into that particular area!

Finally, I must comment on the statements by the Leader of the Opposition that Queensland has been very favourably treated by the Commonwealth in terms of financial assistance. The Queensland Treasury has proven its case to the independent Grants Commission which recognised that Queensland had an entitlement to a greater share of the Commonwealth taxation pool than it has been receiving. The Queensland Government accepted the rational and realistic argument that this substantial increased entitlement for Queensland and some other States would have to be phased in over a period of three years, and this is what has happened.

This phasing-in, however, has upset the relativities because all other States which are in trouble economically, have had the protection of the guarantee "floor" from the Commonwealth, whereas Queensland has not had this protection. Consequently, the relativities that should exist have not been established and Queensland is still in a disadvantaged position in the tax-sharing area.

The Labor Federal Government has now very seriously accentuated this inequity through its treatment of Queensland under Medicare. Queenslanders are paying twice for their free hospital services, once through State taxation, as they always have, and once through the 1 per cent Medicare levy. Queensland is receiving only \$29 a head for its public hospital services whereas the other States on average receive \$50 a head.

The relative figures are—

	Per Capita \$
New South Wales	47.6
Victoria	50.2
South Australia	52.1
Western Australia	49.2
Tasmania	61.7
Queensland	29.0

They are the Commonwealth Government's figures.

The Queensland people are missing out on \$52m a year, which is their just entitlement if equitable treatment were to prevail. This is an issue that will not be allowed to rest by this Government. Despite this inequitable treatment by the Commonwealth and the low tax position in Queensland, Queensland has the most effective and efficient financial management of all the States and balances the Budget every year, and it will do it again this year. No matter how hard Opposition members try to write down and bad-mouth Queensland's effort, the facts are as stated herein and give the lie to their argument.

Media Coverage of Hunger Strikes

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Wavell—Minister for Health) (11.10 a.m.), by leave: I regret that it is necessary for me to have to make this appeal today to our news and current affairs media organisations. However, I believe that the matter warrants urgent and serious attention under the present circumstances. It relates to the coverage by news and current affairs media of acts of deliberate self-deprivation or starvation, such as hunger strikes, which are usually perpetrated as a form of coercion. These acts, by their very nature, are limited in their success by the degree of publicity they attract through the various media outlets.

In this way the media can be directly responsible for encouraging a type of behaviour which, at best, is irresponsible and, at worst, is life-threatening. I believe, therefore, that any media coverage whatsoever of this type of behaviour is a matter for the most serious consideration by all media organisations.

I find it difficult to accept that any media coverage of these acts can be justified under any circumstances. But I do understand that some media organisations may decide to give publicity to such cases where individuals might be waging a life or death struggle against the most severe injustice or oppression.

I believe, however, that it is inexcusable and irresponsible for any media organisation to publicise an act of self-deprivation or starvation before that organisation has taken steps to become fully acquainted with all the circumstances surrounding the particular case.

It is even more reprehensible for media coverage to present a partial or distorted picture of these cases when certain key facts cannot be made public. Unfortunately, a few media organisations seem to take particular advantage of situations where legal or moral constraints prevent those on one side of a case from presenting all the facts publicly.

Once having driven the knife into the constrained party, these media organisations then twist the blade by declaring that a deliberate cover-up must be involved. Of course, all of this only serves to spur on those who are engaged in acts of self-deprivation through the inevitable wave of public sympathy engendered.

Although it is often difficult enough to convince people to abandon such acts in a calm, rational and private atmosphere, it is virtually impossible in circumstances where their behaviour has become the focus of media attention. If a suicide does result from such an act, often innocent parties who can become terribly distressed by the ensuing coverage are involved. It should be noted that rarely, if ever, do such acts achieve anything, which is one way that they can be successfully discouraged.

I hope that all honourable members would support my plea today to the various media organisations to take stock of their position on this issue. Surely no-one in the media wishes to bear the responsibility for unwittingly being the vehicle by which a person commits suicide or becomes seriously incapacitated as a result of one of these acts.

PETITION

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petition—

Traffic Lights, Nebo Road/George and Marryatt Streets Intersection, Mackay

From Mr Casey (4 080 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will instruct the Main Roads Department to provide pedestrian-activated traffic lights on Nebo Road, a part of the Bruce Highway, near its intersection with George and Marryatt Streets, Mackay.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

Questions submitted on notice by members were answered as follows—

1. State Emergency Service

Mr Neal asked the Premier and Treasurer—

With reference to "The Courier-Mail" of 10 April in which it gives belated recognition to the wisdom of the State Government in purchasing a helicopter for use by the State Emergency Service despite severe criticism at the time by members of the Opposition and most sections of the media—

(1) How many people have been assisted and how many lives have been saved by the helicopter and its crew since it began operations?

(2) Apart from "The Courier-Mail", are other sections of the media prepared to give appropriate recognition to the men who risk their lives in these rescue operations and to the State Government's role in financing this most valuable service?

Answer—

(1) Assistance to the Queensland public involved in flood and other types of disasters, which has been assisted by the SES helicopter with resupply and other types of missions, involves thousands of members of the Queensland community. For example, the area of operations in 1983 involved that part of Queensland that was equivalent collectively in area to the State of Victoria and half of New South Wales. For these activities, over 351 operational sorties were undertaken.

Since the SES helicopter commenced operations in January 1982, the figures specifically relating to search and rescue, rescue and evacuation and medical evacuation totalled 162 tasks involving 300 persons. Many of these operations were extremely hazardous and the pilots, Athol Jory and Peter Clark, together with permanent officers of the service who are the crewmen are worthy of the highest commendation for their dedication and expertise.

(2) It is pleasing to report that since the honourable member asked his question yesterday, other sections of the media, notably the Channel 7 program "State Affair" and the ABC news department, have followed the lead of "The Courier-Mail" and given extensive coverage and due credit to the SES helicopter crews who risk their lives for the safety of others.

I hope that all sections of the media in the future will follow this policy and give appropriate recognition to the State Government's role in the provision of this vital rescue service.

Of course, certain members of the Opposition, who criticised the purchase of the helicopter, now have to eat their words. When they have finally swallowed them, they should be big enough to give credit where credit is due.

2. Police Inquiry into Tabled Documents

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

With reference to his personal assurance to this House on 5 April that there would be a full police inquiry into all documents and all evidence tabled in this House—

- (1) Who is the inspector in charge of the inquiry?
- (2) What is the number of staff and their respective ranks allocated to the inquiry?
- (3) When will the inquiry commence?
- (4) Will he table the findings of the inquiry in this House?
- (5) Will he recommend an indemnity from prosecution to witnesses so that they can speak freely to the police without fear of criminal charges being brought against them?

Mr GLASSON: Before I answer this question, I would like to make a statement to the House. In doing so, I refer to reports in the media that put a false interpretation on words stated in this place on Thursday, 5 April.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr Wright), in response to my ministerial statement about a letter that was forwarded to me by the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General to be passed on to the Commissioner of Police, implied that I gave an assurance to the House that an inquiry would be set up.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr GLASSON: I beg honourable members' pardon; it is recorded in "Hansard". Mr Wright said, "I ask the Minister whether he intends to initiate a full investigation?" My reply to the Leader of the Opposition was, "I was speaking to the office of the Commissioner of Police after lunch today. The statutory declarations are being investigated——". The Leader of the Opposition then asked, "All the documents tabled?" I replied, "Yes, certainly. I give that assurance."

An investigation is being undertaken, but not an inquiry. Whether an inquiry is held depends on the investigations carried out by the Police Department and recommendations referred to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General for the opinion of the Solicitor-General. If he decides that there is sufficient evidence, an inquiry will be held. That is the normal procedure. I assured the House that there would be an investigation. An inquiry was referred to by four members of the Opposition yesterday in question-time and also by one journalist.

Answer—

- (1 to 3) Detective Inspector B. B. Ingham and a detective senior sergeant have commenced investigations into this matter. Support staff will be provided if circumstances dictate.
- (4) The findings will be made known.
- (5) This aspect will be examined as the investigation proceeds.

3. Main Roads Department Tenders

Mr Lee asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing—

With reference to the answer given by him to my question No. 7 of 3 April—

What is the number, award price and location of all individual contracts called in 1980-81, 1981-82, 1982-83 and to date in 1983-84 which have a value between \$3m and \$5m as stated in his answer?

Answer—

The following major contracts have been let in recent years—

1980-81	..	Nil	
1981-82	..	Nil	
1982-83	..	Northern approach to the Gateway Bridge	\$5,708,586
		Nebo-Mt Coolon Road	\$2,421,329
1983-84	..	Beerburum Creek—Caloundra turn-off on the Bruce Highway	\$3,045,001
		Cunningham Highway—Southern Ipswich bypass ..	\$2,638,673
		Western Arterial in Brisbane	\$2,376,708
		Logan Road to Springwood on the South East Freeway	\$2,785,710
		A contract in excess of \$3m on the South East Freeway will be awarded later this month.	

4. Government and Local Authority Day Labour Works

Mr Lee asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing—

With reference to my question to him of 3 April, in answer to which he advised that it is no longer necessary for all projects funded by ABRD trust moneys to be put to public tender, and as these revised arrangements are the product of a conference dominated by ALP socialist Governments—

(1) Does this Government, which claims to be a free enterprise Government, propose to undertake any work under such a system?

(2) What projects have been commenced, if any, or are about to be commenced, which are to be funded out of the ABRD trust moneys, and for which public tenders have not or are not about to be called?

Answer—

(1 & 2) The honourable member has obviously not fully understood my answer to his question of 3 April.

The proposed amendments to the two Commonwealth Acts do not change the basic concept of contract construction for national highway and Australian Bicentennial Road Development arterial work. They merely provide some discretion for the Commonwealth Minister for Transport in dealing with certain defined cases in which the calling of tenders might not be appropriate. The proportion of these special cases will be very low indeed.

The amendment Bills have not yet been passed by Parliament.

All ABRD projects on national roads and arterial roads have been submitted to public tender in accordance with the Commonwealth requirements.

Future action in this State will be considered on the circumstances applicable to each individual case, but there would not be any substantial change in the policy of this Government towards the calling of tenders.

5. International Air Services

Mr Borbidge asked the Premier and Treasurer—

(1) Which international airlines have commenced services into Queensland in recent years?

(2) What other airlines have expressed interest in commencing services and what has been the degree of co-operation from the Federal Government in securing additional international air services for Queensland?

Answer—

(1 & 2) Firstly, I appreciate the question very much indeed, because it is of tremendous importance to the tourist industry of this State. I hope that every member in this House and particularly every Federal member of Parliament will express very strongly to the Commonwealth Government his views on the Commonwealth's attitude against Queensland in the tourist industry. Both the previous Federal Government under Mr Fraser and the present Federal Government refused again and again to allow airlines to come into Queensland with tourists. Queensland has suffered a tremendous disadvantage because of the attitude of various Governments in Canberra. Today, that attitude still persists. At a time when tens of thousands of tourists could be coming to Queensland, they are being blocked.

In the last two years, five international airlines have commenced new services into Queensland. Thai Airlines International, Philippine Airlines, Cathay Pacific Airlines, Air Caledonie and Singapore Airlines now all provide services to Brisbane. The most recent, Singapore Airlines, commenced on 31 March 1984.

The increase in international flights into Queensland has effectively doubled the number which previously serviced the State. Prior to the new services, only British Airways, Air New Guinea, Air Pacific, Air New Zealand and Qantas had international flights in and out of Queensland.

Since the opening of the Cairns International Airport and the news that Queensland will be the official host of Expo '88, international airline companies have been virtually queueing up at the doorstep to bring international tourists into this State.

At the present time, an additional 15 international airlines, including Pan Am and Continental Airlines, have expressed a strong interest in Queensland as a major destination. Of course, Queensland has a problem with the politicians in Canberra, who cannot see farther than Sydney or Melbourne. These airlines have now realised what we have known for a long time, namely, that Queensland has almost unlimited potential as a major tourist destination.

The honourable member has asked about the degree of co-operation from the Federal Government in helping to secure these international flights. Again I reiterate that, down through the years, the Federal Government's co-operation has been nil.

Indeed, because of the efforts of the members of the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation, under Sir Frank Moore—to whom I pay a tribute for the tremendous job that they are doing—Queensland has successfully been promoted internationally. As a result, airlines are now coming to Queensland direct for help with their applications instead of going to the Federal Government, which would be a complete waste of time, anyway.

Recently, Cathay Pacific applied for additional services into Brisbane. Its application was refused by the Federal Government. Indeed, Canberra has demonstrated a remarkable anti-Queensland attitude in not allowing airlines such as Cathay Pacific to have extra seating capacity into Queensland ports. This is absolutely crazy. After Hawaii, Australia is now the second biggest honeymoon destination for the Japanese. As the honourable member would be aware, there would be a virtual explosion of Japanese tourists to the Gold Coast. Many more would come if services were provided to Queensland. It is virtually impossible to get a seat on an aircraft on the Tokyo to Brisbane route.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Owing to the failure of the microphones, I ask honourable members to keep very quiet while the question is being answered.

Answer (contd)—

Owing to the disallowance of extra services from Japan into Queensland, Australia is missing out on extra tourist dollars and ultimately the creation of extra jobs in the tourist industry.

Similarly, Singapore Airlines is forced to fly from Singapore to Sydney before coming to Brisbane. It cannot fly from Singapore to Brisbane direct. If that is not political interference at the highest level, I do not know what it is.

Perhaps the area of greatest indecisiveness and non-co-operation is in the building of the new international airport terminal for Brisbane. With the airport due to be opened in 1987, tenders still have not been called for the construction of the new terminal building. If a start is not made shortly, it will not be finished in time for Expo '88.

The Federal Government's delay in this area is only hampering Queensland's and Brisbane's tourist industry. Australia and Queensland will be the world focus in 1988.

I trust that the Federal Government will come to its senses and get on with the job of constructing the new terminal. I strongly urge it to do that. I am convinced that Queensland can become one of the greatest tourist destinations in the world. It is heading in that direction very rapidly.

All that is needed is for the Federal Government to allow the international airline companies to have freedom of choice as to whether they want to come to Australia and where they want to first land in Australia. If that is allowed to occur, I am confident that Queensland will very rapidly become Australia's premier tourist stop-off point.

Mr McELLIGOTT: By way of a supplementary question, I ask the Premier: Could he advise the House what Commonwealth funds have been put into—

Government Members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to ask his supplementary question.

Mr McELLIGOTT: I ask the Premier: Could he advise the House what Commonwealth funds have been put into—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is out of order.

6. Gladstone Accident Involving Mr R. C. Ware

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

With reference to his statement in "The Observer" in Gladstone in which he stated the amount of damage necessary to report an accident should have been \$1,000 and not \$2,000 as previously stated—

(1) Will action now be taken against the driver of the Ford LTD who was involved in the collision in July 1983 with a Honda 900 motor cycle, namely Mr R. C. Ware, solicitor of Gladstone and National Party secretary?

(2) If not, will he state what was the amount of damage incurred in that accident which gave those who investigated this accident reason to base their claim as I have been reliably informed that the insurance company paid \$2,000 for damage to the motor cycle alone and damage to the LTD was assessed at several thousands of dollars?

Answer—

(1) The circumstances of the accident have been fully investigated and, notwithstanding the extent of damage sustained, prosecution action is not proposed against either party.

(2) The monetary extent of the damage is not recorded on the accident report, but it would appear to be in excess of \$1,000.

7. Child Abuse

Mr Prest asked the Minister for Welfare Services and Ethnic Affairs—

(1) As this is the Year of the Family and as child abuse in Queensland seems to be on the increase and should be of great concern to us all, what action does the Department of Children's Services take when a complaint is made in relation to injuries sustained by a child either physically or sexually owing to child abuse?

(2) How many cases of child abuse have been reported to the Department of Children's Services in the past 12 months?

(3) How many of these cases are complaints of child abuse in the Gladstone area?

(4) Have any of these complaints been reported during 1984 and what action has been taken to have the offender or offenders charged and acted against?

(5) As SCAN has just completed a four-month investigation which has named Gladstone as the town with the highest incidence of child abuse and as it is stated in "The Morning Bulletin" in Rockhampton on 7 April that he denied the incidence in Gladstone was higher than anywhere else, (a) has his department conducted any surveys and, if so, who were members of the group conducting the surveys and (b) which areas were covered by such surveys?

Answer—

(1) When such a voluntary notification is received, a child care officer of the department makes necessary investigations and inquiries to ascertain whether there is a basis for the complaint. This may occur in consultation with medical and police officers who are members of the local SCAN team. Subsequent action is dependent on whether the allegation is assessed as founded or otherwise.

(2) The total number of notifications received by the department during 1982-83 was 1 167. No subsequent figures are available.

(3) Formal statistics are not available. However, the average number of notifications is in the vicinity of two per week.

(4) Yes. Action to charge offenders is the responsibility of the Police Department.

(5) Representatives of the Department of Children's Services, the Police Department and the Department of Health recently completed a State-wide trip to review the development of the SCAN operations throughout the State of Queensland. A key aspect of the trip was to provide ongoing education for SCAN team members because of the increasing complexity of child abuse. The officers were the former medical superintendent of the Mater Children's Hospital, the inspector of the Juvenile Aid Bureau in Brisbane and the acting senior child care officer of my department's Child Protection Unit. This group visited all official SCAN centres in Queensland.

8.

Deceptive Packaging

Sir William Knox asked the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs—

(1) Has he noted an article in the "Daily Sun" of 5 April on page 7 headed "Import lollies threat" in which the federal director of the Confectionery Manufacturers of Australia, Mr Mulcahy, alleged that the Queensland Government was neglecting to clamp down on deceptive packaging on imported products?

(2) What is the latest information regarding the problem described in the article?

Answer—

(1 & 2) I am aware of the article which appeared in the "Daily Sun" on Thursday, 5 April 1984, headed "Import lollies threat". I had in fact received a deputation from the federal director of the Confectionery Manufacturers of Australia, Mr Richard Mulcahy, who had expressed concern at the marketing of deceptively packaged imported confectionery. Contrary to Mr Mulcahy's statement that Queensland had done nothing, an investigation covering labelling requirements, short weight and deceptive packaging was launched in February last immediately the matter was first brought to my attention.

As the problem is one of national importance, I instructed that action be taken by my officers to co-ordinate activities between Queensland and other States and Territories of the Commonwealth. A meeting of State and Territory weights and measures officers is to be conducted on Monday, 7 May 1984, specifically for the purpose of discussing deceptive packaging.

One item in apparent breach is no longer on sale. Other confectionery items are being brought to the attention of local agents with the object of having the offending articles removed from sale. The honourable member may be assured that my department is taking every possible action to ensure that Queensland confectionery manufacturers are not disadvantaged by deceptively packaged imports.

9. Migration to Queensland

Sir William Knox asked the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs—

What are the migration statistics regarding movement to Queensland from other Australian States, in a convenient form, for each successive year from 1970 to 1983 inclusive?

Answer—

Information on interstate migration in Australia is published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics using data available from population censuses and from a sample survey of internal movements conducted annually. The only figures produced on a yearly basis for the period requested are available from 1974 onwards and relate to net estimated interstate migration. The ABS considers that information for the period 1970-1973 is too unreliable for publication.

I lay on the table two schedules providing details of interstate migration in Australia. The first schedule, "Net Estimated interstate migration 1974-83", provides details of net gains or losses through interstate migration for each State and Territory. The second schedule, "Interstate migration into Queensland", comes from unpublished ABS statistics and shows the gross migration into Queensland from each of the States and Territories for the intercensal periods 1971-76 and 1976-81 and estimates for the years 1981-82 and 1982-83.

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the documents on the table.

10. Mineral Rights of Private Land-holders

Mr Eaton asked the Premier and Treasurer—

(1) How many private land-holders in Queensland hold freehold titles to land which also include mineral rights?

(2) How many of these land-holders are receiving mineral royalties?

(3) What was the amount of royalties paid to such land-holders in 1982-83?

Answer—

First, let me assure the honourable member that we have no intention of following the same dishonourable course as his party colleagues in New South Wales, where they plundered and stole private land-holders' royalty rights under the Coal Acquisition Act of 1981.

Mr Vaughan interjected.

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: The member's colleagues in Canberra are nothing more than pirates.

Mr Vaughan interjected.

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: I would not say that the member would do it, but they did.

Answer (contd)—

The answers to the specific questions asked are—

(1) Section 110 of the Mining Act 1968-1983 defines the Crown's property in minerals. Those titles wherein any mineral is not the property of the Crown are identifiable only by search at the Titles Office.

(2) Records held in the Department of Mines indicate that 84 land-holders were receiving royalty payments in 1982-1983.

(3) This information is not available publicly.

11. Burdekin Rural Education Centre

Mr Eaton asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Is he aware of problems at the Burdekin Rural Education Centre regarding staff, management and the disruption and discontent of parents because of this situation?

(2) Is he aware that many parents have been asked to contact their local member to see whether he can have this problem solved as quickly as possible?

(3) Has he inquired into this problem and, if not, will he inquire into the dispute and attempt to have the problem solved as soon as possible to the satisfaction of all concerned?

Answer—

(1 to 3) As the administration of the Burdekin Rural Education Centre comes under the portfolio of the Honourable the Minister for Education, I suggest that the honourable member's question be redirected accordingly.

Mr Milliner: On behalf of the honourable member, I do so accordingly.

12

Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board

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

With reference to his answer to my question during the week commencing 1 April concerning the understaffing of fire services in Brisbane in which he stated that this service was overstaffed—

How many fire-fighting appliances were off the road for a complete shift within the area covered by the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board from the period 1 April 1983 to 30 March 1984?

Answer—

The number of appliances available to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade is a matter that I have under study as part of a State-wide investigation into fire brigade resources. However, I am advised that the Metropolitan Fire Brigade normally crews 33 or 34 fire appliances per shift. During the period 1 April 1983 to 30 March 1984, there was a possible total of 24 564 appliance shifts. Of this possible total, only 261 appliance shifts were lost, principally because of sick leave. On average, therefore, the brigade stood down one vehicle out of 33 every third shift. The Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board advises that effective fire protection cover was therefore not prejudiced.

13.

Land Devaluations, Sunshine Coast

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

(1) Is he aware that his blanket devaluation of multi-unit zoned property in the Maroochy Shire by 20 to 33 per cent and 15 per cent on industrial-zoned land has meant that some land-holders have been badly disadvantaged and refused revaluation whilst a favoured few have received substantial relief?

(2) As the valuation dated from September 1981 and in December 1982 his predecessor as Minister acting on advice from departmental officers defended the valuations saying only rarely had property values dropped since the valuation and that the council's new building height policy had been taken into account in the valuations, how does he account for his statement that he acted because of the downturn in the market and because of the council's building height policy?

(3) As his action has now created a situation in which some property-owners have received substantial reductions in valuations and, of course, subsequent rate relief, will he now, in the interests of justice, apply his new order to all other property in that shire and adjoining coastal shires so that all Sunshine Coast property-owners receive valuation justice?

Answer—

(1 to 3) Maroochy shire was valued as at 30 September 1981, based on the market for land in mid 1981. In all parts of the shire prices continued to rise until early 1982, although the number of transactions declined after October 1981. The investment market for multi-unit land moved differently from other land markets. It was active in 1981 and created a strong demand for development sites. In late 1982, the home unit market experienced an economic downturn which, when combined

with changes in the Maroochy council by-laws affecting multi-unit development, resulted in a subsequent major fall in land prices. The Valuer-General continued to monitor this movement after the issue of valuations in November 1982.

In December 1982, my predecessor released a statement indicating that prices did not drop until well into 1982 and that the by-law limitations had been considered in applying multi-unit valuations. The building height regulation amendments were not gazetted until 11 September 1982, just prior to the issue of the shire revaluation, and the Valuer-General had little evidence on which to gauge the effect upon the value of land.

Since then the Valuer-General has heard approximately 4 500 objections from all sections of the shire. During these hearings, the economics of multi-unit developments were argued by owners, developers and private consultants. As a consequence, it became apparent that some sales which occurred in mid to late 1981 were based on false expectations of the market and were imprudent purchases.

The Valuer-General has now issued decisions to land-owners and in recognition of special market circumstances the valuations of the multi-unit commercial and industrial lands in Mooloolaba, Alexandra Headland, Maroochydhore and Coolum Beach have been reduced to accord with the downturn in the market. Even after these reductions on objection, the increase in values of multi-unit lands will be double the increase in value of most residential properties.

With few exceptions the market for other types of properties such as residential, rural residential and rural, is still at or above the Valuer-General's revaluation level. In these circumstances, a revaluation of Maroochydhore shire is not justified, as valuations have been adjusted to the market. Landsborough shire was valued as at 31 December 1978 and Noosa shire at 31 March 1980, well before the market pressures which affected Maroochy shire.

14. Amalgamation of Ambulance and Fire Brigade Services

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

With reference to concern about the suggestion that there may be an amalgamation of ambulance and fire brigade services in certain circumstances—

Will he clarify that situation in order to allay any confusion?

Answer—

I commend the honourable member for his interest in this matter, which is of vital interest to the tax-payers of his electorate and of the State.

On 23 January 1984, Cabinet approved formation of an interdepartmental committee comprising representatives of the Premier's Department, the Public Service Board, the Health Department, the Education Department, and the Department of Mapping and Surveying, to investigate aspects of possible amalgamation of services provided by urban fire brigades, rural fire brigades and ambulances. That committee will be required to provide a report to Cabinet within six months, after considering the advantages and disadvantages of amalgamation or integration.

The Government has made no decision to amalgamate fire and ambulance services, but will await the report of the interdepartmental committee before considering any measures which may be advisable.

Should the honourable member wish to make any submissions to the committee he can do so to me and I will forward his submissions to the committee.

15. Price Reductions, Remote Northern Areas

Mr Scott asked the Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs—

With reference to the proposal to negotiate with manufacturers to require them to establish a State-wide price for their goods—

(1) Will he outline specific instances of success which his department has achieved in reducing prices in remote northern areas as a result of initiatives which were supposed to be set in train by his predecessor, the Honourable V. J. Bird?

(2) In what way does he hope to achieve price reductions in the same areas by the introduction of a new barge service to Gulf townships as outlined in his recent press release?

(3) Is he aware that a barge service is already provided by a shipping company in north Queensland?

(4) Is the Government's barge to be supplied or subsidised by the Government and will it be in competition with existing services in the area?

Answer—

(1) I can but commend the Honourable Val Bird for his efforts to pursue price equalisation for north Queenslanders. As the honourable member well knows, it is the whole range of overhead costs, not just the freight component, although that is one of the most important factors, which is the major contributing factor to a trader's costs in isolated areas. The honourable member would also know that an increasing number of manufacturers, wholesalers and large retailers are now practising free-into-store trading practices, a prime example of the benefit brought about by the efforts of my predecessor.

North Queenslanders can be assured that I will continue the inroads already made in obtaining pricing justice in isolated areas. Indeed, the Federal Labor Government could well follow Queensland's example through a revision of its sales tax laws and zoning allowances and provide worthwhile assistance to the real workers, the pioneers of this country, those people in the far northern isolated areas of the State.

(2 to 4) As evidence of my continuing attempts to assist these pioneers, my recent press statements concerning a barge service from Karumba are directed towards assisting all those people who live in those areas. My recent visits to the area, my discussions with locals and the overwhelming response from people as a result of my statements have clearly indicated to me the possibility of an improvement of transport services in the region by free enterprise. That is probably the reason the honourable member is squealing. It is obvious that if transport times can be reduced by shipping through Karumba, reduced freight rates and thus reduced prices will flow to these isolated communities.

Freezer trucks return empty from Brisbane and, to a lesser extent, from Cairns. Back-loading contracts should enable goods from Brisbane to be delivered virtually freight free. A barge big enough to back load cattle from Weipa or Aurukun to Burketown and Mornington Island, I am reliably informed, could cut freight costs in half. That would reduce food costs, for example, by an average 25 per cent across the board. As well as that, average delivery times could be reduced to three or four days.

The Government is aware of the existing operators and will endeavour not to do anything to their detriment. However, the dream of developing intersettlement trade in the Gulf area has long been a dream of us people of the Gulf. The halving of the cost of transporting cattle out and stores in must, I am sure honourable members will agree, be considered to be of overriding importance.

16. Year of the Family

Mrs Harvey asked the Minister for Welfare Services and Ethnic Affairs—

What has been the public response to the Government's initiative in promoting the Year of the Family and what specific programs have sections of the public taken up or devised to achieve the objectives of the Year of the Family?

Answer—

The response to the Government's initiative in declaring 1984 as the Year of the Family in Queensland, the first of its kind in Australia, has been outstanding from both the public and private sectors of the community. The response from hundreds of organisations and thousands of people throughout the State has been tremendous.

Since the highly successful public awareness campaign conducted early in the year by the State Planning Committee and my department, other Government departments, local authorities, church and charitable organisations, other community

groups, business firms, families and individuals have entered into the spirit of the campaign with a wide range of constructive proposals aimed at promoting the year's objectives. I would add that a number of established annual functions have agreed to incorporate the theme in their 1984 programs.

It is not possible for me, in the time available, to outline a complete list of specific programs which have been organised, but I will receive this week a quarterly report from my departmental officers on the activities up to the end of March, as well as a calendar of proposed events later in the year. I will be happy to provide the honourable member with a copy of that report for her information.

As the honourable member is aware, all of the major denominations in her electorate have met as a result of her initiative and are planning to promote communication between children and parents in the schools in her area during religious instruction periods. I understand they will be meeting again in the near future to plan other activities.

The honourable member has always shown a very real concern for the support and strengthening of the family unit within the community. I have no doubt that the electorate of Greenslopes, and the Brisbane metropolitan area generally, will reap the benefits of the Year of the Family program in the years ahead because of her dedication and commitment to meet the people's needs on a personal basis.

17. Petrol Price

Mr Miller asked the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs—

With reference to indications by the Shell Company of Australia that an increase of 7.4c per litre for super grade petrol in Queensland is imminent—

(1) What are motorists in Sydney and Melbourne now paying for super grade petrol?

(2) What would these motorists pay per litre if State taxes were not payable?

(3) What is the reason for the variation in retail prices for super grade petrol at the pump in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane and why has Brisbane the highest price even though I believe that all three capital cities have their own oil refineries?

(4) As the Petroleum Products Prices Authority has already demonstrated that price control does not work by giving increases in the wholesale price of petrol at a time when oil companies were discounting petrol, will he now give consideration to the establishment of an all-party parliamentary select committee to report to the Parliament on the retailing and pricing of petrol in Australia?

Answer—

(1) I am advised that in Sydney the average set maximum retail price for full service super grade is 50.8c per litre. However, with discounting, the average price paid by a motorist is 48.8c per litre. In Melbourne the figures are 48.7c per litre and 45.9c per litre respectively.

(2 to 4) The State fuel taxes applicable in Sydney and Melbourne are 3.53c and 3.49c per litre respectively. These taxes are part of the wholesale list prices approved by the Petroleum Products Prices Authority, now the Prices Surveillance Authority.

These approved wholesale list prices bear no relationship to prices charged at the retail pump, as retail prices are determined solely by market conditions operating at the time within the trading area of a specific site. Demand and supply conditions will vary on a regular basis between States and markets and this will result in continual disparity of retail prices.

The reference to oil refinery location is incorrect because of Australia's system of refinery exchange between oil companies. This system gives companies an entitlement of product in every State, whether or not a company has a refinery in a particular State. Freight aspects also have to be taken into account.

This point, in addition to the PSA price mechanism, means that, except for State levies and low-lead surcharges in southern States, the approved wholesale price of petrol is the same in every capital city. As explained, pump prices vary greatly between States, depending on market forces.

As the honourable member is aware, the Queensland Government is conducting a random audit of service stations in this State. Following this, the whole question of petroleum retail marketing will receive further consideration.

The Hawke Government is taking away from the motorist at the pump more than 50 per cent of the price of petrol by way of taxation, and it is about time that that Government did something about it. Because of movements in the Consumer Price Index, the excise on fuel is continually increasing.

I make a plea to the Federal Ministers to answer the call from the States to at least talk about this matter, because it is very much in their court. It is about time that the people of Queensland and Opposition members realised that fact and tried to do something about it. While the Federal Government adopts its present attitude, the public will be far worse off.

What about the promises? Before the last Federal election, the Labor Party said that petrol prices would be reduced. In fact, they have been increased. The Federal Government has broken its promise. It has totally hoodwinked the Australian public. It has made no effort to do anything about this matter.

18. Scratch It Rich Competition

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

With reference to the "Daily Sun" of 10 April which states "just scratch from the card the four numbers in the Daily Sun every day, and look for the matching dollar values. Any four the same means you're a winner." and as it has been reported to me by a constituent that in the week ending 7 April she had four of the same amounts but on contacting the "Daily Sun" was told that all the prize-money had been distributed—

(1) Will he take action to ensure that the public are made aware of the prize-winners by ensuring that all winners are named in the "Daily Sun"?

(2) Will he have the advertisement altered to read that any four the same may mean the holder is a winner?

Answer—

(1 & 2) It is a condition to be observed in the conduct of trade promotion art unions such as that conducted by the "Daily Sun" that the name and address of each prize-winner shall be published once at least. The "Daily Sun" has been made aware of this condition and a representative of the newspaper has given an assurance that all winners will be named in the "Daily Sun".

The representative denies the allegation that a prize-payment has been refused in respect of any valid claim and has emphasised that all prizes won, which have been verified by the newspaper, will be paid. However, it must be pointed out that the "Daily Sun" has stipulated in the rules that the games will not be continued once \$100,000 has been won.

Any person who has a complaint in relation to any promotion of this nature should contact me and I will have the complaint investigated.

From my discussions with representatives of the "Daily Sun", I am confident that the integrity of that newspaper in this promotion is beyond question.

19. Motor Cycle Fatalities, Lakeside

Mr McLean asked the Premier and Treasurer—

With reference to the recent motor cycle accident in which a rider was killed in a race fall at Lakeside and as it has been widely reported that this rider crashed at a point of the circuit where two other motor cycle racers have been killed and many more seriously hurt in the past three years—

(1) Is he aware that motor cycle clubs and riders have made numerous requests for this section of the track to be modified to make it safer for cycle races, even to the point of offering to pay for such modification?

(2) What investigations are undertaken by police and other Government authorities to ensure that these tracks are safe and to order alterations or improvements at known accident spots?

(3) What responsibility does the owner of the track or the club have to the family of riders killed where in fact an obviously unsafe situation exists?

(4) When the two previous riders were killed at this track, what Government departments or instrumentalities investigated the deaths and what were the findings?

(5) If it could be shown that riders are being made ride on tracks that are unsafe, is there any criminal charge that could be levied against those responsible?

Answer—

(1 to 5) I am informed that Lakeside is controlled by the Lakeside International Raceway Pty Ltd, and that motor cycle racing is controlled by the Motorcycle Sportsmen of Queensland. Competitors complete an indemnification against liability before competing in events.

According to police reports, three motor cycle competitors have been killed at Lakeside during the past three years at an area which is commonly called the Dunlop Bridge Bend. The first died on 14 February 1982, the second on 29 May 1983, and the more recent one on 4 March 1984. No record is kept by the police of serious injury, only those killed.

Advice furnished to me is that the Motorcycle Sportsmen Committee and Lakeside are responsible for the track. I am also informed that the Namco guard-rails are to be removed from the track near the Dunlop bend before the next meeting on 27 May 1984. The track will be altered to reduce the speed at this area from 160 km/h to approximately 80 km/h.

The deaths at Lakeside were investigated by the Police Department, including mechanical specialists from the Police Garage. Inquests have been held into the deaths occurring on 14 February 1983 and 29 May 1983, and these were held by the coroner at Petrie. In the first case, the motor-cyclist lost control of his motor cycle, hit the guard-rails and was knocked down on to the track. The rider was then hit by several motor cycles following.

The second incident occurred when the motor-cyclist lost control and his motor cycle collided with the guard rail. The rider sustained fatal injuries. The police report on the third fatality has not yet been finalised.

20. Operations on Private-bed Patients, Redcliffe Hospital

Mrs Chapman asked the Minister for Health—

Is there any reason why certain doctors would be excluded from operating on private-bed patients at Redcliffe Hospital, even though they have the skill and competence to do so and have done so for many years?

Answer—

I am advised that there is no reason why properly qualified practitioners are excluded from operating on private-bed patients at the Redcliffe Hospital.

21. Assistance for Employers of Apprentices

Mrs Chapman asked the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs—

What assistance is available for employers who employ apprentices in different industries in this State?

Answer—

To encourage employment of apprentices, a wide range of financial assistance is currently being offered by both the Commonwealth Government and the Queensland Government. The assistance by Queensland includes—

Pay-roll tax exemptions for employers of first-year apprentices.

Financial support on a dollar for dollar basis with the Commonwealth Government for group apprenticeship schemes. This assistance ranges from \$16,500 per annum from each Government for schemes involving up to 50 apprentices to more than \$33,000 per annum from each Government for larger schemes.

A payment of \$500 for each out-of-work apprentice engaged. This payment is in addition to any support that is provided through the Commonwealth Special Assistance Program.

Training more than 2 400 young persons in 1984 in trade-based pre-employment courses prior to entry into apprenticeship.

The Queensland Government also assists in the promotion of various Commonwealth programs that support State initiatives. In addition, the field officers from the Division of Employment Planning and Training play a major role in assisting employers to develop training programs for their apprentices and also provide an on-going consultancy role to industry.

Because of the hard-working member's interest in this matter, I shall arrange for full details of both Commonwealth and State initiatives in this area to be forwarded to her.

22. Proposed Road, Cape Tribulation National Park

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

With reference to the road construction through Cape Tribulation National Park—

(1) Has he given approval for widening the road reserve from the original 20 metres to 100 metres in parts and 60 metres in others, 100 metres being the width of a four-lane highway?

(2) If so, when was such approval given?

(3) If not, why is the widened road shown on official maps of the Department of Mapping and Surveying?

(4) In view of the new estimates from the Douglas Shire Council engineer that a four-wheel drive, dry season track with concrete bridges would cost \$1.8m to build and in view, also, of the enormous costs of maintenance of such a road, will he reaffirm his previous public statement to the effect that there should be no further funding of the road by the State Government?

(5) If so, how can he possibly have given approval when, under section 25 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act, the cardinal principle to be observed in the management of national parks shall be the permanent preservation, to the greatest possible extent, of their natural condition, and when such a widening of the road would lead to the destruction of about 15 per cent of this rare lowland rain forest that is of international importance?

(6) Was the approval given under section 10 (1) (c) of the National Parks and Wildlife Act?

(7) If so, has the director carried out surveys as required by section 10 (1) (e), as well as investigations and research into the problems arising out of the construction and maintenance of the road in the national park as required by section 10 (1) (f) of the Act?

(8) If so, will he table the results of these surveys, investigations and research?

Answer—

(1 to 8) The road now under construction has not been gazetted, but I have informed the Minister for Environment, Valuation and Administrative Services (the member for Barron River) that I would not object to the road reserve being widened in parts where necessary. It is my understanding that, in the main, the actual road, when completed, will be a very narrow one for the foreseeable future.

The question of funding is a matter for the Douglas Shire Council. I might add that, in my opinion, the Federal Government should now make funds available for this road under one of its labour-intensive employment schemes. The member

for Ipswich West should speak with the Federal member for Leichhardt (Mr Gayler), who was instrumental in withdrawing Federal funding of the road. The honourable member should make Mr Gayler understand that, if he wants to do something worthwhile for the environment, instead of playing politics, he should do what he can to restore Federal funding.

The construction of the Cape Tribulation road is a result of a long-standing agreement between the Douglas Shire Council and the State Government. A dedicated road existed well prior to gazettal of the national park.

23. **Special Lease 36221, Moreton Island**

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

(1) When and for what purpose was Special Lease 36221 on Moreton Island issued?

(2) Has he or his department received an application to change the special lease to another purpose and, if so, to what purpose?

(3) Has he or his department received an application for freeholding of the special lease?

(4) Will he give an assurance that he will reject any application to change the present usage?

Answer—

(1) The lease was issued for a term of 30 years from 1 April 1972. The original purpose was "airstrip purposes". This was amended by Order in Council in 1973 to "business and residential" purposes to allow for the housing of staff employed by the lessee.

(2) No, not recently.

(3) Yes.

(4) No change of usage has been applied for recently. The freeholding application will be investigated very thoroughly having regard to the public interest and because the lease contains a condition to the effect that conversion of tenure under section 207 of the Land Act shall not apply to the leased land.

24. **Women's House**

Mr McElligott asked the Minister for Welfare Services and Ethnic Affairs—

With reference to an article in the "Sunday Sun" of 1 April which says that intervention by the Federal Government has saved Women's House from yet another funding crisis and quotes a spokesperson from Women's House as saying, "The State Government doesn't like us."—

(1) What is the State Government's attitude to Women's House?

(2) As a gesture of goodwill, will he waive the requirement that Women's House repay the advance of \$15,000 made to them in 1982-1983?

Answer—

(1) Women's House provides a necessary service to women and children in crisis situations. It is treated no differently from any of the other 21 women's refuges funded by the State Government. In recognition of the number of women and children assisted by Women's House and the range of support services that it provides, Women's House receives the highest level of funding of any refuge under the Women's Services Program.

(2) It does seem strange that the honourable member should make implications concerning the State Government's attitude towards women's refuges when it was his Commonwealth ALP colleagues who imposed unrealistic demands on the release of WESP funds. Following strong representations from the State Government, the Commonwealth withdrew those conditions.

For the honourable member's information, I have already met with representatives of Women's House and given a commitment that the \$15,000 to which he refers will not be deducted from future funding. I am informed that Women's House has already been allocated State funds of \$10,053.22 in excess of the collective's approved 1983-84 budget and the release of further funds is pending. That means that over \$25,000 in excess of allocations has been approved to Women's House.

25. **Siting of New Power Station**

Mr McElligott asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) What is the planned commencing date of the first unit at Stanwell power station?

(2) What consideration is being given to the site for the next power station after Stanwell?

(3) Has any consideration been given to a power station in north Queensland using coal from the Pentland deposits?

(4) If so, is Charters Towers a probable site for such a power station?

Answer—

(1) March 1990.

(2) Preliminary investigations into feasible sites are in progress; however, no decision has yet been taken.

(3 & 4) All feasible sites will be considered.

26. **Hi-technology Parks**

Mr Bailey asked the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology—

With reference to the Government's commitment to develop hi-tech parks—

What encouragement is being given to private enterprise to develop such projects in Queensland?

Answer—

I thank the honourable member for his question and for the opportunity to confirm the State Government's very strong commitment towards private enterprise development of high technology in Queensland. It is true that the Government has approved the development of two high-technology parks in Queensland—one on the Gold Coast and one in Brisbane.

In addition to this initiative by the Government, it is appropriate that I announce today proposals by private enterprise for the development of a high-technology park at South Brisbane. I expect to be in a position in the near future to make a formal and detailed announcement on this proposal. But suffice to say at this time that I have held discussions with a number of private enterprise organisations over the last few weeks and they are now committed to the construction of the State's first private enterprise high-tech park at South Brisbane.

Honourable members should also be aware that the Government, through my department, has started allocating sites for the Gold Coast high-technology park, the first of the sites being officially let by my officers earlier this month.

The State Government sees its role as facilitating the development of high technology in Queensland and thereby encouraging greater private enterprise involvement. We have, of course, established a Science and Technology Council to advise the Government on matters relating to these two areas. Other initiatives include Government financial assistance for overseas academics, such as Professor David Brophy of the University of Michigan in the United States, to visit Queensland specifically to lecture our resident academics and businessmen on technology and science-related disciplines, including venture capital and business administration.

I believe that Queensland, through initiatives such as high-technology parks, and with the assistance of private enterprise involvement, is well on target to become the focal point of high technology in Australia.

27. **Categorisation of Hospitals**

Mr Elliott asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to discussions with representatives of both private and co-operative hospitals on 7 April—

(1) How has the Federal Government categorised the various hospitals in this State?

(2) How has this categorisation adversely affected the co-operative hospitals in this State?

(3) If this system is to continue will the continued viability of these hospitals be put at risk?

Answer—

(1) Categorisation of private hospitals has been a unilateral decision taken by the Commonwealth without consultation with the States.

(2) The smaller hospitals, not having the bed numbers or performing major surgery, are not included in the higher category. Co-operative hospitals are in this group.

(3) Ever since the categorisation system was first mooted, it was obvious to me and to the Queensland Government that it would cause serious disruption in the private hospital sector and would threaten the viability of some existing hospitals, which the community could ill afford to lose.

When the proposal was discussed at the Health Ministers Conference on 15 June last year, I stated—

“We have been caught many times before in taking over areas of Commonwealth responsibility. At this stage, with the information before us, we will not be participating in the scheme.”

Nevertheless, Dr Blewett, in his wisdom, decided to proceed with the categorisation system, taking the entire responsibility for the enormous problems that it created. But last week it came to light that Dr Blewett did not even get to first base before he committed a major bungle. In determining the categorisations for private hospitals, Dr Blewett failed to comply with the provisions of his own legislation, and therefore the hospital categories were not valid in law. He did not consult with State Ministers, as required under the legislation, and he did not meet an essential deadline for gazettal of the guide-lines. This was only discovered after private hospitals, which were adversely affected by the categorisation system, attempted to use the appeal provisions. The invalidity of the original categorisation was uncovered.

Private hospitals have now been requested by the Commonwealth Department of Health to reapply to have their category determined under section 32 (4) of the Health Legislation Amendment Act 1983. So, many private hospitals will now have to go through the farcical process of applying for a category which they know will be unsuitable, and then appealing under section 38 to have their category reviewed.

At this point, I would like to make it clear that the entire power for altering the category of any private hospital rests with the Federal Health Minister, Dr Blewett. Let me quote from the Health Legislation Amendment Act 1983, dealing with section 29A of the principal Act under the heading “Variation of categorisation of particular private hospitals”—

“(1) Subject to this section, upon application made in accordance with the approved form by the proprietor of a private hospital for a variation in the category to which the private hospital belongs, the Minister may, in his discretion, vary the determination under Section 24 of that category, with effect from such a date as he thinks fit, by substituting for that category such other category as he thinks appropriate, and shall, by notice in writing, served either personally or by post, notify the applicant of his decision on the application.

(2) Subject to this section, the Minister may, of his own motion, vary the determination under Section 24 of the category of private hospital to which a private hospital belongs, with effect from such date as he thinks fit, by substituting

for that category such other category as he determines to be appropriate and, where he does so, he shall, by notice in writing served personally or by post, notify the proprietor of the hospital accordingly.

(3) The Minister, in exercising his powers under sub-sections (1) or (2) shall comply with any relevant principles in force under section 23H.

(4) The Minister shall not vary a determination of the category to which a private hospital situated in a State belongs unless he has consulted the Minister for Health of that State and has had regard to any views of that other Minister expressed in the course of that consultation."

It is important to note that, in the last clause, although the Federal Minister is required to consult with his State counterpart, as he is when originally determining the hospital category, he is not bound by any recommendations of the State Minister. What that really means is that Dr Blewett retains complete power over hospital categorisation, while paying lip-service to the concept of meaningful consultation. For this reason, I do not propose to become involved in the determination process for private hospital categories when the State really has no power whatsoever to influence that process.

As something of an indication of Dr Blewett's attitude towards State Ministers in this matter, it is interesting to note that he has not even sent me a list of the categories of private hospitals in Queensland. Nevertheless, Dr Blewett and his party colleagues have been desperately trying to drag me and the Queensland Government into the mess which his Government has created, so that he can shift the blame onto us.

Dr Blewett has telexed me on a number of occasions seeking my views on variations to the system or to the categories of various private hospitals. Knowing full well that neither I nor the Queensland Government has any power to influence Dr Blewett's decisions, I have simply responded to his approaches to the effect that I had no objection provided there was no additional cost incurred by the Queensland Government. There is no way that the Queensland Government will accept any of the responsibility for the massive bungle committed by the Federal Labor Government in the introduction of its Medicare arrangements for private hospitals. It has now become obvious, of course, that a great many private hospitals are most unhappy with the Medicare changes. But, unfortunately for them, there does not appear to be much that they can do about it.

In my view, one of the most serious flaws in the new categorisation system is its inability to recognise different staffing requirements, cost factors and regional demands faced by private hospitals in different localities throughout the nation. Each hospital has the right of appeal to the Federal Minister of Health for alteration of the allotted category.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The time allotted for questions has now expired. Questions remaining unanswered will appear on tomorrow's Notices of Questions.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Legal Profession; Statutory Declaration by Mr J. C. Howard

Mr MENZEL (Mulgrave) (12 noon): I rise to speak on a matter that affects each and everyone of us at some stage of our lives. Whether a person is hauled into court or whether he needs to transfer property, he needs the advice and assistance of a lawyer. At present, lawyers—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I ask those honourable members in the aisles to either resume their seats or carry out their intentions.

Mr MENZEL: I was about to say that solicitors, barristers and other persons dealing in law should be answerable to somebody or to some organisation that is totally independent so that any person who is aggrieved by the action of his lawyer has the right of appeal. At present in Queensland, he has no such right.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: You have got the Labor Party's policy for once.

Mr MENZEL: That is not so. I do not know whose policy it is, but people should be entitled to the right of appeal against the actions of unscrupulous people, whether they be lawyers or anyone else.

For far too long lawyers have been a law unto themselves. Since I became a member of Parliament, circumstances have been brought to my notice in which people, mainly widows, have transferred deeds, and the procedure has been delayed by solicitors. Every time a person rings his solicitor and asks what is going on, he is told that the solicitor is in court or is unavailable. That has been going on for too long.

I shall refer to a particular matter that has been brought to my attention and table a statutory declaration by the person concerned. Before doing so, I wish to refer to the matter and cite some examples of what is happening. It is high time that the Government did something about it. I have taken people to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General. I understand that the Minister is very sympathetic in relation to their problems.

The statutory declaration to which I refer was made by John Campbell Howard, 50 Wellington Street, Petrie Terrace, in the State of Queensland. After the settlement of a divorce, he approached his solicitors to invest the balance of his moneys. He asked his solicitor to invest the money wisely so that his money would be looked after in a responsible manner. Of course, when a person goes to a solicitor he expects him to be one of the most ethical persons in the community. He also expects the solicitor to do the right thing. However, that was not the case in this instance, as I shall indicate.

Mr Howard said that he was prepared to invest money. The chief executive officer of a trustee company was involved in the matter. He said that the company would go ahead and purchase a block of land for the total price of \$26,496. He paid a deposit of \$20,000, with the balance payable in two years from the date of signing the contract. In his statutory declaration, Mr Howard states—

“I put \$20,000 in trust with my solicitors to make that first payment. In fact, I had sufficient funds to pay in full. At all material times I have been ready, willing and able to complete. In fact, the money in trust was used as a vehicle to purchase by the trustee and agent, about 277 acres of land, including the 91½ acres—”

that was supposed to be for him—

“for a total price of \$80,000.”

The development company was Co-ownership Land Development Pty Ltd.

Various court actions ensued. Mr Howard went to court to try to obtain a settlement of some sort after the matter had dragged on. First, he was advised of the wrong court hearing time and was therefore unable to appear in court. He was in the building, in a room not far away, but was not told that the hearing was on. His solicitors at that time were Price and Roobottom. They advised Mr Howard in a letter that I will table that the matter had been reserved. In fact, the case had been adjourned. Misleading a client is particularly serious, and this is one of many instances seen in the legal profession.

Mr Underwood: Have you raised this matter with the Attorney-General?

Mr Smith: Don't you have any conferences with the Attorney-General?

Mr MENZEL: I refer to paragraph 21 of a statutory declaration by Mr Howard. He said—

“I retained fresh solicitors again to clean up the mess.”

He changed from one firm of solicitors to another. He continued—

“Further action was brought in the Supreme Court. The solicitor for the Vendor failed to make disclosure of all relevant documents by his client. The affidavit concerning discovery of documents was therefore false.”

Eventually, Mr Howard found a document in which it was shown that the defendant knew the true value of \$4,000 per acre—that was discovered in documents that were concealed from Mr Howard—when in fact he maintained to Mr Howard that the land was worth less than \$300 per acre.

Colin William Steley, of Southport, who was the chief executive officer of Co-ownership Land Development Pty Ltd, sold Mr Howard's land to himself. It is appalling that a development company should mislead a client, wheel and deal and in one way or another use the client's money for investment, buying land cheaply from a client and selling it at a huge profit. At no time did Mr Howard give permission to sell the land. That is a disgrace. The law needs to be tightened up or amended so that action such as that is not possible.

The Government ought to set up some sort of tribunal or independent court, preferably one in which lawyers are not competing against laymen. It ought to be a lay court in which people can state their case without the necessity of having lawyers. There is a tendency within the legal profession, and probably within many of the other professions, for the members to protect one another. That is a problem that exists, without doubt, in the Queensland Law Society.

Earlier I heard interjections about how many times I had spoken to the Attorney-General. I have had at least two deputations to him and spoken to him on a number of occasions. I have done my homework. I have been pursuing the matter for a considerable time. I am certain that, if I speak long enough and loudly enough, something will be done. I know that many members on both sides of the House have come across similar examples of such people exploiting their clients.

(Time expired.)

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

Loan to General Manager of SGIO Building Society; Government's Performance over Past Three Months

Mr WRIGHT (Rockhampton—Leader of the Opposition) (12.10 p.m.): I preface my speech by mentioning a matter about which I wished to ask a question at question-time. In today's "Telegraph" the general manager of the SGIO Building Society, Mr Goldsworthy, said that he would neither confirm nor deny his loan. I wish to table a document from the files of the SGIO Building Society that shows that Mr Goldsworthy received a loan of \$121,303 at 8 per cent. I also urge the Premier, when he investigates this matter, to inquire whether that was the only low-interest loan taken out by Mr Goldsworthy and, moreover, on how many occasions he went on overseas trips at the expense of the society.

I rise today to deliver what could be considered as the March quarterly report on the Government of Queensland. Over the last three months Queensland has seen a kaleidoscope of Government mismanagement, ineffectiveness and irresponsibility. The Government's performance has been slipshod in the extreme.

Any review of the Government must commence with the Premier and Treasurer. Honourable members will recall that immediately he returned to Australia from China he threatened to bulldoze out of existence an Industrial Commission decision on staffing arrangements at the Tarong Power Station. However, widespread industrial action by the trade union movement and criticism from the public forced the Premier to quickly retreat from his provocative course of action. That nothing about his backdown was mentioned in the media is notable.

Prior to that, the Premier presided over the squandering of hundreds of thousands of dollars of public money in a sustained campaign against the Federal Government over Medicare funding arrangements. The notable result was that the Commonwealth did not submit to his bullying and intimidatory tactics. Instead, the Queensland Government capitulated and the Premier suffered one of his most significant political defeats, which was well publicised by the media. However, the losers were the Queensland people who, because of the misleading advertising, lost \$500,000.

I now turn to the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer (Mr Gunn) who in the last few weeks distinguished himself by seriously misleading the Parliament of Queensland twice within a space of 30 seconds. On 4 April he stated that people from other States were coming to Queensland at a rate of 1000 a week. He had not bothered to acquaint himself with the latest official figures, which show that in the

September quarter last year migration to Queensland from other States was 2 408, which is certainly not 1 000 a week; it is more like 200 a week. He followed that up by repeating an earlier claim, which he repeated again today, that Queensland is the lowest taxed State in Australia. Again, that is not true. Queensland is the third lowest taxed State, with South Australia and Tasmania having significantly lower levels of State taxation than Queensland.

On the same issue, under questioning by the Opposition, the Deputy Premier refused to accept figures supplied by his own Treasury Department to the Reserve Bank which showed that Queensland has had the second largest increase in State taxes since 1975-76 and that over the same period Queensland received the biggest increase of any State in Commonwealth funding.

Mr GUNN: I rise to a point of order. I answered that matter this morning in my ministerial statement.

Mr WRIGHT: I accept what the Minister says.

I move to the next most senior Minister in the Government, the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing (Mr Hinze), who is in deep conflict with the Premier, and the Premier's close ally and financial adviser, Sir Edward Lyons, over the financial dealings surrounding the Racing Development Fund. The fund's financial commitments and associated arrangements are highly questionable. The contents of the Racing and Betting Bill, which the Minister intends to railroad through Parliament this week, are confirmation enough of the Opposition's claims of serious irregularities. Although the Minister and Government members strenuously deny there are any such irregularities or problems with the fund, senior Treasury officers are of the opposite opinion.

Mr GUNN: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member's statement is not true and I ask for a withdrawal.

Mr WRIGHT: Mr Deputy Speaker, that is contained in the Bill. The honourable member has not said why my statement is untrue.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! The Minister has asked for a withdrawal. Would he state the words that he wishes to be withdrawn?

Mr GUNN: That Treasury officials disagreed with the Minister for Racing is untrue.

Mr WRIGHT: I will accept his denial.

The Minister touted as a likely successor to the Premier is the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology (Mr Ahern), who displayed an astounding economic naivety with his comment to the Parliament on 4 April recommending that the Federal Government should this year attempt to balance its Budget. The consequences of such a move would be disastrous. The nation's economic recovery would be halted dead in its tracks. The suggestion is so ridiculous and so absurd that it does not warrant further comment.

One comment that does warrant further criticism is Mr Ahern's continual indulgence in economic fantasies. On the same day, he again promoted the wild exaggerations contained in the Government's 1984 publication "Major Development Projects and Proposals." Although the report lists \$20,000m worth of projects, the true situation is that projects worth only \$4,000m are currently committed, with most of them taking the next 10 years to complete. The report prompted a number of critical comments from Mr Bruce Watson, chairman of MIM Holdings Ltd, and also an attack by mining and manufacturing industry leaders. I note again that there was little comment in the media. If this had been happening in Canberra it would have been a major issue in the press gallery, but nothing happened in Queensland.

Another pretender to the Premier's throne is the ambitious Minister for Justice and Attorney-General. Mr Harper is successfully developing a distinctive style of ministerial administration based on the principle of "do nothing that makes sense", except if it is in the extreme.

In the face of overwhelming evidence detailing allegations of criminal links and illegal gambling associated with the control and operation of in-line machines, Mr Harper refuses to initiate a proper inquiry. But he has been embarrassed by the undertaking of Police

Minister Glasson that a complete inquiry would be held. Now that is in doubt, and one wonders what will come out of it. Mr Harper may not like Mr Glasson, but Mr Glasson has his own problems.

Mr Glasson could be forgiven for wanting to forget the opening session of the 1984 Parliament. He was responsible for the introduction into this House of some of the worst-prepared and most ill-considered legislation in memory, and I refer to the police Bills. They may not be his fault but, after all, he is the responsible Minister. Under intense pressure from the Opposition, the Bills have been either substantially amended or withdrawn, rewritten and reintroduced. The innocent-bystander provision in the police Bill is a typical example.

Also—and I will deal with these briefly—the Minister for Environment, Valuation and Administrative Services (Mr Tenni) supplied misleading information to the Parliament over the shortage of fire brigade officers to man Brisbane fire stations. That was discovered through a leaked document, but it received little coverage in the media.

Then the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services (Mr Goleby) made derogatory comments about the handicapped with his spiteful remark about a one-armed man being given work at the Cairncross Dock, yet he says little and does nothing to protect the jobs of workers at the dock, which is controlled by a Government statutory authority.

The Minister for Works and Housing (Mr Wharton) lent his tacit support to Gestapo-style tactics employed by Government inspectors to harass and intimidate Housing Commission tenants. He also refused——

Mr WHARTON: I rise to a point of order. That statement about Housing Commission inspectors using Gestapo tactics is quite incorrect. I ask for a withdrawal. The statement is untrue and is offensive.

Mr WRIGHT: I withdraw.

The Minister for Welfare Services and Ethnic Affairs (Mr Muntz), blundering his way through the administration of the State's prison services, managed by his inflammatory style to create more tension, frustration and unrest within the prison system than had previously existed.

The Minister for Mines and Energy (Mr I. J. Gibbs) found himself associated with people who deliberately put honest and reputable business operators to the wall in connection with the Twin Rivers Tavern project at Eagleby.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I rise to a point of order. I ask that the member withdraw those very offensive and untrue remarks.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! The Chamber will come to order. Will the Minister state his objection?

Mr WRIGHT: He just did. I accept his explanation.

The same Minister, Mr I. J. Gibbs, has no qualms about milking Queensland domestic electricity consumers—to the tune of tens of millions of dollars—to provide capital works for selected industrial consumers who already receive preferential treatment under secret tariff deals.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member's innuendo about the electricity industry is totally wrong, and I wish it to be withdrawn.

Mr WRIGHT: He cannot do that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister asked for a withdrawal.

Mr WRIGHT: He cannot do that.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I must pursue the point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The question of the point of order has not been determined. The Minister asked for the withdrawal of certain comments. Will the Minister state the words——

Mr WRIGHT: I withdraw.

I now turn to the Minister for Transport (Mr Lane), who came under severe criticism from Sir Sydney Williams for his and the Government's procrastination and mishandling of the issue of subsidies for western air services.

The Minister for Education (Mr Powell) became entangled with the regressive and reactionary education forces within this State to the extent that his ministerial control of the Education portfolio has, in the minds of many educationists, been effectively negated.

The Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs (Mr Katter) was given the rounds of the kitchen in State Cabinet this week for not having ready legislative measures of the most serious importance, which we read will be pushed through all stages of debate in the next 36 hours.

The Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts (Mr McKechnie) has been in trouble over his overseas trip, and also some of the difficulties he had over the Cape Tribulation road, when he could not even answer questions.

The Minister for Health (Mr Austin) provoked the first nurses strike in history in this State by his obstinate refusal to enter into negotiations, on more than reasonable terms, with the Queensland Nurses Union to discuss the critical shortage of nurses in this State.

I now turn to the point that I really wanted to get to, and that is the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs (Mr Lester), who vigorously recommended to State Cabinet that Australia Day be celebrated on 26 January each year but was rolled.

The Minister for Transport (Mr Lane) did the dirty work on Mr Justice Murphy in the Federal sphere.

(Time expired.)

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid on the table the document referred to.

Violence

Mr BAILEY (Toowong) (12.20 p.m.): It is a bit hard to follow the petulant rantings of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr WRIGHT: I rise to a point of order. I take great exception to the comment made by the honourable member for Toowong and ask him to withdraw it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! Will the Leader of the Opposition state the words that he wishes to have withdrawn?

Mr WRIGHT: He talked about petulant rantings.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I do not think that there is any point of order.

Mr WRIGHT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the Standing Orders which state that, if a member is aggrieved by words used, he has the right to ask for a withdrawal, and I do so.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Will the member for Toowong withdraw the words?

Mr BAILEY: I am delighted to withdraw the offensive remarks.

I wish to draw the attention of both the House and all Queenslanders to an issue which crosses party lines, but which should be of great concern to the whole community. It is the increasingly violent and demeaning way that women are pictured and used in commercials, magazines and so-called erotica.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BAILEY: If the member for Brisbane Central would keep his mouth shut for a couple of moments he might find that this is a subject that he should listen to—if he has any care about women in Queensland and in Australia.

I had the disturbing experience of viewing an audio visual presentation, put together by a group of women in America, which pulls no punches about the way a lot of advertising and pornography is almost encouraging violence against women. It is called, "Abusive Images of Women in Mass Media and Pornography." It covers not only the advertising bias and its sins, but magazines for both men and women that indicate that male brutality towards women is an enjoyable experience for the women, or something they deserve or provoke. I have

already expressed my feelings about violent and sadistic videos, and I compliment the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts on the action that he is taking, but this issue is more complex and, I think, inherently even more dangerous.

I make no apologies for being an admirer of women—in the nicest possible way, I might add. I also have the good fortune to be married to an extremely intelligent woman who to me is also one of the most beautiful women in the world. But I am concerned at the way that we tend to use the female body to sell everything from chain-saws to tree poisons. The relevance of a bikini-clad beauty to the product, in many cases, is beyond me, but I suppose that there is no doubt that it can give the product glamour and sex appeal. But in a number of these advertisements there is an inherently violent theme; a menace in which the woman appears to be at risk and enjoying the situation. There are an infinite number of examples of these, and some of our most prestigious women's magazines are as guilty as those that pander to the more prurient desires of men.

Mr Davis: I cancelled "The Australian Women's Weekly" last week.

Mr BAILEY: I would not be surprised. I did not think that the honourable member could read.

Scenes depict beautiful models in staged violence, bondage, or being threatened by domineering men, in various degrees of subjugation. An inference in most, if not all, of them is that this is the place for women—under male domination—and if they need to be given a hiding to keep them in line, so be it; they probably enjoy it, anyway.

I do not think that I am exaggerating the situation. As advertising agencies and magazines have to create more extraordinary or garish set-ups to make an impact, more and more of these off-beat and dangerous themes are being chosen. It is a creation of an attitude by stealth, and one can only hope that it is by ignorance rather than intent.

There is no doubt, though, that by repeating this message of violence, we program a community, we suggest that men are permitted to be masters and women are born to be subservient and that they should and can be kept in check by tough and physically stronger men—that this is OK, that it is normal. To me, it is totally unacceptable. Unhealthy is one way of describing it.

In the video presentation that I saw—I suggest all members of this House should see it—there are some really revolting pictures of women attacking themselves, slashing themselves in the most obscene way, being presented as meals or being tortured and seemingly enjoying it.

That type of material is available in video shops in Queensland. It is also available by mail order. One needs only to look at the growing amount of violent pornography to realise that this revolting industry goes to extreme lengths to satisfy the palates of the deviants. Snuff movies exist in which women are killed and dismembered. Child pornography video tapes display activities that are sickening.

Mr Vaughan: We wouldn't have that in Queensland.

Mr BAILEY: A person can obtain snuff movies if he knows the source. That is an unfortunate fact of life.

I mentioned child pornography, and I do not think that any parent could condone sexually deviant behaviour with children. It is sickening and horrifying. But what will happen when similar sickening material is permitted to be sold throughout Australia? The Federal Government and other State Governments should incur the wrath of all decent Australians for the action that they are taking in promoting the sale of pornographic and violent material. I have already spoken about X-rated video tapes. However, we as citizens and more importantly as legislators, can influence the publication of pornographic material. Legislation can be introduced.

But what can be done about the more insidious material about which I have been speaking, namely, the subtle and continual demeaning of women and the promulgation of the idea that women enjoy being raped, tortured and abused and that it is acceptable to treat women violently. If this type of material continues to pervade society children will grow up with the impression that that is socially acceptable behaviour.

It is a serious problem and it should be considered by every concerned Queenslander. I have the video tape that I mentioned and invite honourable members to view it, but I warn them that it is an appalling illustration of the sort of material that is available for purchase.

The advertising industry should take a hard look at itself. Advertising representatives might understand the influences that they have on society if they viewed the video tape in my possession. Every human being should tell the advertising industry that this type of material is not acceptable. Newspapers advertise adult videos that are available to the public. No-one can tell me that the newspapers do not know what they are selling.

The guilt of promulgating this filth lies at the feet of the editors and sales managers of newspapers who accept that type of material for advertisements. They must know; there can be no doubt.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: The same applies to massage parlours.

Mr BAILEY: Possibly the same applies to massage parlours.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Not "possibly".

Mr BAILEY: No, the member for Wolston is quite correct.

Salacious and violent video tapes will now receive an X-rating but, because of a Federal Government ruling and other State Government rulings, they will be available to the public. It is wrong that those Governments have condoned this material. I thank God that I live in Queensland because this State respects wholesome family values and human dignity. I am sure that I speak for every member, and not just Government members. I say that from my heart. Honourable members should seriously consider what I have said because it involves the future of children, women and society in Australia.

Tenosynovitis

Ms WARNER (Kurilpa) (12.29 p.m.): I thank the member for Toowong for his remarks and I hope that he will urge the Government to consider establishing guide-lines pertaining to sexism in advertising. Pornographic movies are not the only problem. The ordinary run of magazines that are available in Queensland also create sexist advertising problems, despite the wholesome family life of which the member for Toowong spoke.

The matter of public interest that I wish to speak about is an occupational health and safety problem in our own back yards. I am referring to the perennial problem of tenosynovitis, particularly as it affects six Hansard typists and 40 to 50 Supreme, District and Industrial Court typists employed by the Court Reporting Bureau. Their working conditions leave much to be desired.

The typists' union, the Federated Clerks Union, has been trying to take this issue up with the Government, but it has consistently been denied access to its members. Indeed, in July 1983, the previous Minister for Justice, in a letter to the Federated Clerks Union, stated that it was inappropriate, and, indeed, undesirable, for the union to meet with its members on departmental premises.

Recently, the union again requested the right of entry to inspect the working conditions of its members, as it is obvious that the problem is continuing. Once again, the union is experiencing problems in trying to gain access.

Let me spell out for honourable members what tenosynovitis means, how it is contracted and what steps responsible employers should take to prevent it.

"Teno", as it is called by most people who suffer from it, is an incurable and extremely painful disease, which is contracted mainly by women in the work-force who are required to perform repetitive tasks such as typing, data entry, and processing work. "Teno" occurs because the lubrication between the tendon and the tendon sheath dries out as a result of friction.

There are ways of minimising the risk of this disease. At present, at least 50 per cent of the court typists are suffering from it. Because those typists are employed on a casual basis, what often happens is that they are forced to roster themselves off for several weeks until their hands recover sufficiently to enable them to go back to work typing at high speed. Some workers receive workers' compensation for these periods off work, whereas others simply drop out of the work-force. Some are forced to give up work altogether.

Many workers find that this industrial disease affects every aspect of their lives. For example, one court-reporting typist who has been on workers' compensation for the last 12 months cannot chop food, lift a kettle of water or hang out clothes on the clothes-line.

The effect of the disease is extremely debilitating and means constant pain until the symptoms are alleviated by rest. Rest, however, is not a permanent cure, because when the typists return to work and are put under the pressures that occur, particularly during the busy months in court-reporting circles, the symptoms re-emerge. No surgery or drug alleviates the condition. Anyone who was fortunate enough to be permitted entry to the court-reporting services would find many typists with either one hand or both hands strapped up, and others with finger-nails coming away.

These facts present a rather lurid picture of appalling working conditions that are better suited to the sweated labour of the last century than to the conditions that are expected for Government employees in a modern office environment.

The main problem appears to be the stinginess of the State Government in refusing to replace the giant manual Mexican typewriters, which are referred to by the typists concerned as "El Cheapos", with electric typewriters. The carriages on the "El Cheapos" are extremely long and heavy, and require an inordinate amount of pressure to return them. Given that women are typing at high speeds with no adequate rest breaks, the risk of tenosynovitis is very great. At least one of the court-reporting typists can no longer straighten her hand.

These problems could easily be prevented by (a) more staff, (b) adequate rest breaks and (c) appropriate modern machines, which cost a mere \$2,000 at the most.

Why is it that the Minister is so intransigent on this issue? As the requests of the union and staff are so reasonable, and as the consequences of ignoring them are so grave for the workers concerned, that seems quite absurd.

It seems that in January this year, in a rare moment of generosity, two electric typewriters were supplied for the typists. However, they were mysteriously removed. The reason given was that people can get "teno" just as easily when using electric typewriters. Obviously, that contention displays gross ignorance on the part of the Government, the Minister or whoever was responsible for removing the typewriters. It is an indisputable fact that the women who are required to type at high speed on manual typewriters have a much greater chance of contracting "teno" than those typing at the same speed on electric machines.

One woman who contracted "teno" was due to return to work on 27 March. However, her medical certificate stated that she was partially incapacitated and could use only an electric typewriter. As no such machines were available, she was sent home, and she is now in danger of losing her workers' compensation.

The Hansard typists now have electric machines, because last year Mr Speaker insisted that they be provided. However, when Parliament is not sitting, the Hansard typists go on to the courts, where they are required to work on manual machines. As I say, they are the machines that are mainly responsible for causing such a high percentage of tenosynovitis.

The whole issue of tenosynovitis must be taken more seriously by all employers in this State. But surely the Government, with its access to knowledge on occupational health and safety, and the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs (Mr Lester), with his responsibility for legislation on occupational health and safety, should make sure that at least the workers in his own area—those people for whom he is responsible and those people with whom he comes in contact even in this House—should not be subjected to any more risk than is absolutely part and parcel of repetitive work in general.

Things can be done about it. Rest periods are probably the best solution. Lighter machines that are easier to handle are necessary. At the moment, such machines are relatively cheap. I am concerned that no sensitivity is being shown by the Government. On a number of occasions, the Federated Clerks Union has approached the Minister and has got absolutely nowhere. The union cannot see its members who are Government employees at their place of work; it must meet its members at week-ends. Because workers must give up time at week-ends, union contact is made more difficult. More importantly, the union cannot inspect the working conditions.

An excellent service is conducted by the Workers Health Centre that is available to all employers. It can enter and inspect work premises and make sure that machines are at the correct level and that the lighting in the area is adequate and will not lead to eye strain. It can give a general report on how matters can be improved so that industrial diseases do not occur among workers.

I am well aware that the whole issue of tenosynovitis is very recent, and that is why there has been a diagnostic problem for so long. The Government, with all the information at its disposal, should give a lead in occupational health and safety. However, so far it has been unresponsive, and maybe it will wait until the workers sue for negligence. It will then have to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in compensation. That seems to be a remarkably false economy. It seems also that the Government's attitude to those women is that they are considered disposable items in the interests of very short-sighted Government economy.

Log of Claims by Plumbers and Gasfitters Employees Union of Australia

Mr CAHILL (Aspley) (12.38 p.m.): I think that none of us in this Chamber would disagree that any professional association or trade union does not have a right to make reasonable claims for a reasonable wage and reasonable conditions. However, I bring to the attention of the House something that I consider, and I am sure all honourable members will consider, is the most ludicrous log of claims that has ever been made.

A letter of demand was sent to employers. It was signed by George Crawford, general secretary of the Plumbers and Gasfitters Employees Union of Australia. Mr Crawford is a well-known member of the Victorian ALP and also a well-known member of the hard-line left of that party in Victoria. The log of claims relates to the employment of workers, whether members of the Plumbers and Gasfitters Employees Union or not, and it refers to various matters such as locality. The various States are mentioned, and Queensland is included. Then the good part begins. The log of claims includes a weekly wage rate of a minimum of \$1,000 per week for all adult employees or any higher amount which the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission may from time to time deem to be just and reasonable.

Mr Fouras: Don't you understand ambit claims?

Mr CAHILL: I understand the word "ambit", but I do not understand ludicrous claims that go this far. Nothing can justify a claim that goes this far. It gets better.

The log of claims includes a tool allowance of a minimum of \$200 per week in addition to all other payments.

Mr Vaughan: Rubbish!

Mr CAHILL: It is over George Crawford's signature.

The claim includes an industry allowance of \$200 per week in addition to all other payments, a registration allowance of \$200 per week in addition to all other payments, a plumbing trade allowance of a minimum of \$200 per week, a special allowance of a minimum of \$200 per week, a licence allowance of \$200 per week, a welding allowance of \$200 per week, a lead-burning allowance of \$200 per week, a ships plumbing allowance of \$200 per week, a multistorey allowance of \$200 per week, a district area and divisional allowance of a minimum of \$200 per week, a site allowance of \$500 a week and extra payments of \$200 a week in addition to all other payments.

For leading hands and foremen, who quite properly would have to get more money, the claim is for a minimum payment of 50 per cent of weekly rates in addition to all other payments. For fares and travelling time, the claim is for a minimum fares allowance of \$100 per day and minimum paid travelling time of two hours per day and actual paid travelling time thereafter. For distant work, in addition to accommodation and meals, which is quite proper, \$200 a week is claimed as spending allowance for the period from leaving home to returning home.

Then special rates are claimed. A minimum of \$200 per week is claimed in addition to all other payments in respect of special circumstances, including insulation work, hot work, cold work, confined work, swing scaffolding work, work with explosive power tools, wet work, dirty work, tower work, toxic-substance work and work with fumes, asbestos, furnaces, acids,

roof repair and bitumen, as well as computing quantities, and work in a service shaft. It also mentions scaffolding certificates. Of course, that is the sort of work that the gentlemen belonging to that union would perform. However, a minimum of \$200 in addition to all of that seems to be a little harsh.

A minimum of \$500 a week is claimed to establish parity with other sections of industry. Then there is a claim for a motor allowance. An employee required to use his own vehicle shall be paid \$5 per kilometre. There are, of course, other parts to the claim. It is, in fact, a 69-point claim. It asks that wages be paid in cash, which is fair enough. It also asks that an employer not keep more than one day's wages in hand. That is fair enough, too. It continues—

“Nothing in this log of claims shall . . . operate to reduce the rate of pay of any classification . . . at the commencing date of any award.”

That is quite proper.

I then come to the matter of leave, commencing with item 26 in respect of annual leave—

“Eight weeks' annual leave for each twelve months' service. Provided that employees shall be paid for such leave at the rate they normally would have been paid if at work.

Employees shall be paid an extra four weeks wages prior to going on leave.

Additional Annual Leave

When an employee is required to be on call for work, or who works a total of not less than one hour or not less than one weekend in any year of employment, he shall be entitled to four weeks additional annual leave with pay.”

The 28th claim refers to public holidays and asks for 30 days in each year as paid public holidays. There are about a dozen public holidays a year, but this log of claims from George Crawford of the Plumbers Union wants 30 days as paid public holidays.

Sick leave is asked for and, naturally, it would be granted. In relation to long service leave, the claim states—

“Employees shall be entitled to six months paid leave per year of employment after one year of employment.”

Twenty days a year is sought for personal and compassionate leave—not an unreasonable claim; nor in my view is the claim that, if an employee is unable to perform his work owing to inclement weather, he shall not suffer any reduction in wages. However, it depends on what the wages are. There is a claim for paid study leave. Quite proper.

There is also a claim for maternity leave—naturally, quite proper—but I wonder whether it is not a little extensive—

“All female employees shall be entitled to paid maternity leave to be taken at the employees discretion for a maximum of five years without any discrimination in employment or loss of earnings.”

An employee shall be granted paid paternity leave of eight weeks to be taken from an agreed date. Similar provisions apply to adoption leave. There are also provisions for jury service, blood-donors and so forth.

Other parts of the claim refer to employee liability, which could be a little tough. However, it is a tough union and wants good conditions for its members. Similar comments apply to the claim for accident pay. However, the claim for apprentices is—

“Apprentices shall receive the same wage rates, special rates, allowances and conditions as tradesmen.”

That seems curious.

I move now to working hours. The claim is for a maximum of 30 hours per week. We would all like to have a 30-hour week, I suppose. However, after that is this claim for rest pauses—

“Every employees shall be entitled to a rest pause of thirty minutes duration in the employer's time in each hour of his daily work.”

Suddenly the 30 hours becomes somewhat reduced.

The claim gets better. I agree that any tradesman has a right to washing time, but the claim is for all employees to be allowed 30 minutes washing time before each meal break and before knock-off time. If honourable members do their sums fairly quickly, they will find that the working week has been reduced to 10 hours.

The next part of the claim deals with work outside ordinary hours and seeks that an employee who is required to work more than one hour after the normal time of ceasing shall be allowed a meal break of 30 minutes at penalty rates of pay and an additional 30 minutes' meal break for each additional three hours worked. The employer shall provide meals. Recently some discussions took place about the price of meals in the parliamentary refreshment rooms. I commend the union claim, which asks the employer to provide meals at \$200 per meal! That is not too bad; the plumbers and gasfitters must have a taste for expensive wine! The claim also asks for the provision of all amenities for the safety and comfort of employees, which is quite proper. Members of the Plumbers and Gasfitters Employees Union of Australia have the right to preference of employment, as is sought in the log of claims.

The claim for work on holidays, Saturdays and Sundays is for quadruple time, provided that one day's leave on pay shall be allowed for each holiday worked.

Taken to its extreme, the log of claims means that Mr Crawford wants his members to work a 10-hour week for \$3,700, which by anybody's standards is quite good.

I will conclude as I commenced: no-one denies the right of any union or association to ask for reasonable conditions and wages, but a 10-hour week for a payment of \$3,700 cannot possibly be reasonable under any circumstances.

Apex Oil N.L.

Mr VAUGHAN (Nudgee) (12.47 p.m.): I take this opportunity to raise a matter on behalf of the ordinary share-holders, that is the small share-holders, of Apex Oil N.L. which is a public company formed in November 1979 for the purpose of exploring for oil and gas in Australia with Houston Oil and Minerals Australia now known as Tenneco Oil & Minerals of Aust. Inc.

The authorised capital of Apex Oil is \$50m. Issued capital is 100 fully paid 50c shares and 30,004,900 50c shares paid to 25c. In addition, 15,000,000 options, which were due to expire on 30 November 1982, but which were extended to November 1983, are issued to Houston Oil and Minerals, and 14,992,450 options, which are due to expire on 30 November 1984, are issued to subscribers for contributing shares.

Directors of Apex Oil N.L. are listed as Sir Roderick C. Proctor, MBE, chairman, Robert C. Hope, Douglas M. Traves, OBE, Roger A. North and Howard E. Peterson. According to press reports, Mr Hope was to resign on Thursday, 9 February.

Although the company has not to date had any success in exploring for oil and gas in Australia, it was fortunate enough to purchase a property in the Emerald area known as "Gordon Downs" for a reported \$5m, and recently won oil prospecting rights in Texas, USA. The interesting point about the "Gordon Downs" property is that it is one of the very few areas of Queensland which gives the owners of the property mineral royalty rights. Subsequent to the purchase of "Gordon Downs" the company sold off nearly 600 head of cattle and, in May 1981, sold just over half of the property for more than \$3.5m. In June 1982, the remainder of the property was sold, giving the company just under \$2m profit from the purchase and sale of "Gordon Downs". However, the company retained the rights to the coal underneath the property.

The matter to which I will draw attention was the subject of an extraordinary general meeting of the company on Monday, 13 February 1984, held at the registered office of the company on the 26th floor, AMP Place, 10 Eagle Street, Brisbane. According to the notice that was forwarded to share-holders advising them of the meeting, and which, according to some share-holders, arrived only a few days prior to the meeting, the business of the meeting was to consider and, if thought fit, to pass a special resolution and an ordinary resolution. The effect of the resolutions was to transfer management of Apex Oil N.L. from Tenneco Oil & Minerals of Aust. Inc., which had been performing these services but which is reportedly withdrawing its activities from Australia, to a company

called Prospect Energy Pty Ltd that is controlled by one of the directors of Apex Oil N.L., namely, Mr Robert B. Hope, who has a controlling interest in 1 080 000 shares in Apex Oil N.L.

According to information provided to Apex Oil N.L. shareholders, because Apex Oil N.L. has no employees, all its administrative, managerial and technical services have been provided by Tenneco Oil & Minerals of Aust. Inc.

Under the terms of the arrangement, Prospect Energy Pty Ltd will make the services of Mr Hope, who was the managing director of Houston Oil and Minerals Aust. Inc. when Apex Oil N.L. was formed, available for 160 days in each calendar year during the term of the agreement and will make the services of an exploration manager-geologist available for 170 days in each such calendar year, the services of a company secretary-accountant available for 200 days in each such calendar year, the services of a draughtsman-technical person available for 180 days in each calendar year, and the services of a secretary available for 200 days in each such calendar year.

For providing these services, Apex Oil N.L. will pay Prospect Energy Pty Ltd an annual fee of \$350,345 by monthly instalments, and this amount will be reviewed every three months in accordance with movements in the all groups consumer price index for Brisbane. Any additional services that may be supplied will cost extra.

In addition, where Apex Oil N.L. accepts an interest in any venture offered by Prospect Energy Pty Ltd, that company has the right to participate in 10 per cent of such interest on equivalent terms and conditions to Apex Oil N.L.

Further, the directors of Apex Oil N.L. have allotted to Prospect Energy Pty Ltd 4 500 000 ordinary 50c Apex Oil N.L. shares credited as paid to 1c. These shares are not listed on the Stock Exchange but do have proportionate voting rights. Also, no payment has to be made for the shares, but they can be paid up at any time to become listed and then sold, if desired, should their price be sufficiently attractive.

The small share-holders of Apex Oil N.L. consider that the terms of the agreement with Prospect Energy Pty Ltd for the services to be rendered are extremely generous. It is estimated that, in addition to the substantial share offer, the cost of managerial, technical and administration services to be performed are in excess of 50 per cent more than they should be.

However, at the extraordinary general meeting on Monday, 13 February, all criticisms were rejected and, as the chairman pointed out, because share proxies were held in the proportion of 1 680 500 in favour, with 1 041 500 against, and as he doubted that any of the 40 or so share-holders present controlled enough votes to upset the result, the resolutions were passed by a margin of 600 000 votes from a total of 2.7 million proxies received out of a total voting strength of 30 million.

Those Apex Oil N.L. share-holders who are opposed to the terms of the agreement with Prospect Energy Pty Ltd consider that Mr Hope who, as I have indicated already, was a director of Apex Oil N.L., will be one of the highest paid executives in Australia and, moreover, he will have the potential to become a very rich man without risking any of his own money apart from the shares that he owns in his own right.

The ordinary share-holders of Apex Oil N.L. are concerned that the door is now open for future holders of partly paid shares—possibly the directors—to participate in the same type of benefit. They are concerned that, despite substantial opposition from share-holders present at a meeting of share-holders, resolutions that establish such provisions can be steam-rolled through with such apparent ease.

The unfortunate question about this whole matter is: What can dissatisfied share-holders do? As I understand it, there is very little they can do other than move against the directors at the next annual meeting of share-holders. However, because of the number of proxy votes that the directors apparently have control of, there is little chance of such a move being successful.

So the dissatisfied share-holders must accept their situation, sell their shares in the company and sustain a loss on present share values, or hope that their payments to Prospect Energy Pty Ltd bear fruit.

In the interests of the small share-holders of Apex Oil N.L., I believe the matters I have spoken about today should be investigated. I believe that it is in the interests of all small share-holders that such matters be aired, because this is not the first time this sort of thing has happened, and it certainly will not be the last.

Any small share-holder in a company who has been to an annual meeting of the company knows that, in the main, the business of the meeting is cut and dried. The directors have the numbers one way or another to control the outcome of the meeting, because the big share-holders stick together and the small share-holders accept their lot because they realise the impossibility of organising sufficient numbers to change or defeat proposals put forward by the directors.

Although the small share-holders of Apex Oil N.L. may have to accept their situation, I believe it is time that something was done to protect the small share-holders of this State. If we want people to invest in this State's future, we have to assure them that their investment is secure and that they have a voice that will be heard.

As the Government, and the Premier, in particular, have always been very vocal about rank and file members of unions having a greater say in the running of unions, it is about time the rank and file share-holders of companies had a greater say in the running of their companies.

I therefore call on the Government to do something positive to protect the interests of the small share-holders of this State. Perhaps it might not be a bad idea if a small share-holders union was formed.

I now wish to refer to what the previous speaker said about the ambit log of claims lodged by the Plumbers and Gasfitters Union. Obviously, he does not realise that when a union lodges a claim with the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, it must serve that claim on every employer who is a party to the award. That could run into thousands of employers.

As I have said, it is an ambit claim and, under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, it has to be lodged to found a dispute. Unless a union wants to go through that procedure on every occasion on which it makes an application, it lodges an ambit claim that may operate for 10 or 20 years. That is the reason why the figures in the claim have to be inflated. They have to cover the period during which the claim will operate.

As I have said, an ambit claim has to be lodged to found a dispute, and the claim has to be served on every employer who is a party to the award.

(Time expired.)

Burdekin Rural Education Centre

Mr SMITH (Townsville West) (12.57 p.m.): I take this opportunity to draw public attention to a very serious problem that has arisen at the Burdekin Rural Education Centre. For some time now, very serious staff/student discontent has existed at the centre, and it has got totally out of hand.

Over recent years, there have been about 18 resignations, 16 of which have been forced resignations. Recently, a very senior member of the staff, Mr Cooper, who had the full confidence of the majority of his colleagues, was dismissed. Even though there was a court hearing and the conciliation commissioner recommended that the man ought to be reinstated, the board of the centre refused to do so. That has created the situation in which the students and staff are virtually in revolt.

Most members would be rather shocked to learn that the Minister for Education visited the centre, recommended that the man ought to be reinstated and asked the board to pull its horns in; but still there has been no action. This autocratic board, which apparently owes no responsibility to anybody, thinks that it can run the centre entirely in terms of the dictates of one or two people who appear to be particularly influential in deciding how the centre should operate.

Some remarkable events have occurred. One of the board members, Mr Bill Tudhope, resigned and has refused to rejoin the board. On 6 December last year, the principal relinquished his position and handed over his authority to a group called the Top Management Team. When that Top Management Team agreed to support the dismissal of Mr Cooper, the principal in fact resumed his functional role. Of course, it was somewhat modified; but he still received his original salary.

Last week matters reached a new low.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 36A, the time allotted for the debate on matters of public interest has now expired.

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

PAROLE ORDERS (TRANSFER) BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 4 April (see p. 2488) on Mr Muntz's motion—

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

Mr McELLIGOTT (Townsville) (2.15 p.m.): The Opposition supports the Bill. As the Minister for Welfare Services and Ethnic Affairs said in his second-reading speech, the practice of the interstate transfer of parolees has, in fact, been operating under a gentlemen's agreement for some time. Some people who are granted parole are, for family or personal reasons, better placed in their home State, and arrangements have been made in the past for those people to be supervised by parole officers in another State rather than by officers in the State in which the offence was committed. This legislation seeks to formalise that arrangement. More importantly, it seeks to give the State in which the parolee is located power to take action in the event of a break-down of the parole order.

This matter was considered urgent as far back as 1979 and I can only wonder why it has taken so long to introduce these necessary and worthwhile arrangements. It is not to Queensland's credit that it is one of the last States to come into line with this legislation. Nevertheless, the proposition before the House today is to legislate in accordance with a uniform arrangement throughout the Commonwealth, and the Opposition supports that notion.

The Opposition will not delay the passage of the Bill because, as I understand it, the arrangements are to become effective from 1 May. The legislation requires that applications for interstate transfers be checked out very thoroughly, and I understand that need. However, I am concerned that this will mean an additional work-load for the staff of the department.

I take this opportunity to comment unfavourably on the amount of work that is being undertaken by people employed in the department. I understand that some officers supervise up to 130 parolees and probationers at one time. Officers of the department have a tremendous responsibility because they are, in effect, supervising the rehabilitation of offenders; they are helping offenders who have deviated from the social norm for some reason, who have paid their penalty, and who, when paroled, will face some very important decisions about their future. That is a very important responsibility. A parolee just released from prison deserves and needs a large degree of advice, counselling and support.

Common sense indicates that the level of work undertaken by each of the departmental officers in supervising 130 offenders is certainly too great and the officers could not be expected to accept responsibility for every one of those offenders. Officers newly employed by the department begin their careers with tremendous enthusiasm and, because they are seeking to rehabilitate people who have strayed from the path—to ensure that the offenders take the right turn in life and not return to their former activities—they deserve the congratulations of all honourable members. Unless the officers can be relieved from that sort of pressure, there will be drop-outs of trained people from the department simply because the stress in the position is too much for them.

In addition to the supervisory role that I have spoken about, officers are required also to write pre-sentence reports for the courts, to write reports on parole applications and to initiate action in the event of breaches of parole orders. It is a very demanding task. Although I support the legislation, I hope that it does not substantially add to that pressure.

I hope that, in the near future, legislation will be introduced to cover the interstate transfer of prisoners. I should imagine that the Government is considering such legislation. During a recent visit to the Brisbane Prison by the Minister and myself, the Minister indicated to prisoners that such legislation would be brought forward in the near future. The desirability of having prisoners housed in their home State will be obvious to all honourable members.

Recently, a mother of a prisoner in Stuart Prison called to see me at my office in Townsville. She lives in New South Wales. She mentioned to me problems that her son was confronting, and her tale was a very sad one indeed. In addition to the problems that her lad had—she acknowledged that he had been found guilty of an offence and was paying the penalty—the whole family encountered problems. The parents live in New South Wales and, because they conduct a business in that State, are required to stay there. As well, the lad has a wife and young family. In an endeavour to provide support to the prisoner, his wife and family moved to Townsville, but they ran into all sorts of problems in trying to find suitable accommodation, send the children to school and so on. I can imagine the tremendous concern that those difficulties would cause the prisoner, because he was unable to provide much assistance to his wife and family.

To return to parole—it has been claimed that the Probation and Parole Service is the conscience of the Government. I take that to mean that, on the one hand, the Government punishes the wrong-doers who have transgressed the law and, on the other hand, as the representative of the community has a responsibility to try to indicate to a person on parole the direction that he should take in the future.

Officers in the service certainly need the maximum degree of flexibility in dealing with parolees. My understanding is that the service tends to be heavily bureaucracised. It needs increased staffing so that officers will be given the opportunity to deal with the problems to which I have referred, and to deal with them in a slower, thorough and more caring way.

As well, officers should be given the maximum discretion in dealing with parolees. All of us are aware that no two persons are exactly alike in temperament or make-up. Obviously, the parole officer needs to assess each person's strengths and weaknesses and to provide that person with the guidance that will get him back onto the straight and narrow path.

As I have said, Opposition members support the intent of the Bill. Like the Minister, we are conscious of the need to ensure that the safety of the public is paramount during the term of a parole order. That will require close supervision. I understand that not all parole orders are successful and that, unfortunately, there are those persons who do not grasp the opportunity to take their proper place in society. For one reason or another, those persons breach their parole orders.

On the other side of the coin, if I might put it that way, close supervision is required to ensure that the safety of the public is not put at risk by such a break-down in the system.

I stress the rehabilitative aspects of parole. I accept that I am new in the area of parole; but, as I have stated publicly, I cannot understand why it is not possible to give prisoners the reasons for refusing their applications for parole.

At the moment, I understand that a prisoner applies to the Parole Board for parole. He receives a simple "Yes" or "No". The reasons for a negative answer could be many and varied. They could involve his family situation, accommodation, his performance in prison, his temperament and so on. Unless a prisoner has access to the reasons for the refusal of his parole application, neither he nor his family is in a position to do anything about it. I have been informed of a number of instances in which prisoners believe that they have behaved in the way that they are expected to behave and have worked in the prison system to the best of their ability, but their applications for parole are refused. Very strong grounds exist to provide the prisoner with the reasons for refusal so that he and his family can talk about any deficiencies that exist, and strengthen his future application to the board.

I have discussed the Bill with the Minister. The only minor concern I had is that the Minister may delegate powers. I accept completely the need for that, but it is important that it be part of the system that the person to whom power is delegated should report back to the Minister and, through the Minister, to the Parliament. In his second-reading speech the Minister indicated that that certainly would be the case. Personally, I had some concerns that the Bill did not exactly provide that. I have spoken to the Minister about it. I understand that, for the Minister to reassure me in the way in which I was hoping to be reassured, would require amendments to a clause. Frankly,

I do not regard the problem as being serious enough to require the rewriting of that clause. On behalf of the Opposition, I do not intend to proceed with that objection. However, I place on record the Minister's assurance that in every case in which powers are delegated, the officer will be required to report back to the Minister on the exercise of that power.

The Opposition supports the Bill and welcomes the formalisation of the arrangement that has existed for the interstate transfer of parole orders. More importantly, the Opposition supports the measure that will ensure that future parole orders can be supervised in the State to which the parolee is transferred.

Mrs HARVEY (Greenslopes) (2.28 p.m.): I rise to support the legislation that appears to provide for the proper supervision of persons who are placed on parole in another State or Territory and who come to Queensland. I am pleased that the member for Townsville could offer no real criticism of this Bill and that he actually supplied some positive suggestions for the Minister's consideration.

I consider this legislation to be very important. A very high proportion of elderly people reside in my electorate of Greenslopes at a time when there is a considerable fear of violence and lawlessness. On going round my electorate I find a very high proportion of houses with screen doors, security locks and numerous protection devices. That indicates that people have a genuine fear of the possibility of attack or intrusion of some kind. A very high proportion of elderly widows aggravates that problem in my electorate. I would not want to be a party to any legislation that places any member of the community, let alone the elderly, at greater risk.

My understanding is that until the passing of this reciprocal legislation, persons placed on parole in another State who travel to Queensland are supervised by the Queensland Probation and Parole Service under a gentlemen's agreement. If persons on parole fail to comply with the conditions of their parole, the parole service in Queensland can take no legal action other than to report to the board that has granted the parole. The board could then apply to have the offending parolee extradited from Queensland. That could prove to be a long, tedious and, at times, rather slow procedure.

Under the new legislation, power is vested in the Queensland Minister for Welfare Services and Ethnic Affairs to accept a parolee from another State. That parolee becomes subject to Queensland law so that, if he breaks the conditions of his parole order, his parole can be terminated in Queensland and he suffers the appropriate penalty for that breach. Redress will be quick and effective. Queensland's public will have greater protection than ever before.

It is well known that one of the most effective ways, if not the most effective way, of preventing crime is to ensure that offenders are apprehended and brought to justice with certainty and swiftness. Although most prisoners released to parole in Queensland take the conditions of their release seriously and are prepared to abide by the requirements laid down by the Parole Board, there will always be a small element that believes it is free to behave as it wishes as long as no-one is about to wave the big stick. The Bill ensures that the big stick is there to be applied swiftly and certainly against prisoners who enjoy the advantage of parole and do not abide by the conditions of their parole, no matter where they reside in Australia.

Obviously, this legislation places pressure on offenders to conform and raises their motivation to abide by standards that are acceptable to the community. When one talks about parolees being supervised, one does not mean only that attempts are made to assist them. Supervision also means control and, when necessary, placing limitations on the behaviour of offenders living in the community. The legislation before the House puts teeth into the supervision process.

One of the apprehensions that the community may have about parolees coming from other States and Territories into Queensland is that other jurisdictions may attempt to get rid of their problem cases by sending them here. It is not suggested that this is happening at present or that officers of the Probation and Parole Service are not astute enough to recognise a problem case when requested to take one. What the legislation will do, however, is to ensure that an effective screening process takes place and that the public interest is considered fully before any parolee from another State or Territory is accepted for supervision in this State. One would not be surprised that the prospect

of coming to Queensland is appealing to many offenders—it is certainly appealing to the wider community in Australia—not because the law gives them an easy time here, but rather because this State offers so many opportunities and advantages to all people.

Every so often, the media report the release of a well-known or well-publicised offender, and it would not be surprising if the public became concerned in the knowledge that these people were moving freely throughout Australia with no control over their behaviour. The new legislation, once it has become uniform throughout the Commonwealth, will give the public increased confidence in the management of such offenders.

Parole in Queensland is working well, and honourable members can be assured that supervision of former prisoners in this State is being conducted in a responsible way that is maintaining the high reputation of Queensland's parole system throughout the country. Prisoners released subject to supervision have a far better rehabilitation record than those released at the end of their sentences.

I have spoken about the importance of control of parolees, but there are other advantages of the legislation in its provision for efficient and effective administration. This was raised earlier by the member for Townsville, and I hope in the next portion of my speech to answer the points that he raised.

Obviously, any parolee who wishes to move to another State will bear his own transfer costs, assuming he is granted permission to move in the first place. If, for some reason, the Queensland authorities, on their own initiatives, consider it desirable to request that a Queensland parole order be registered in another State or Territory, the Government may bear the cost of a rail or bus pass, but these instances will be rare.

Of more importance, however, is the question of uniformity of procedures. Obviously, if there is a set procedure which will operate throughout Australia, there is less room left for confusion on the part of the parolees or those who have to administer the system. At present, movement of parolees to Queensland, or their travelling from Queensland to another State or Territory, presents a problem for both jurisdictions in that they have offenders on their case loads subject to two different sets of rules. This will no longer be the case. When a parole order is registered in Queensland the parolee will be subject to the laws of Queensland.

The legislation also ensures that proper documentation precedes the transfer of a parolee to another State or Territory, and it is expected that the corresponding law of another State or Territory will ensure that proper documentation arrives before a parolee comes to Queensland from another place. This ensures that effective and adequate screening takes place.

The legislation further ensures that those people who should be notified about movements of offenders are fully advised and informed and that adequate records are kept. Moreover, the Bill before the House provides that accountability to the Minister is maintained, and that means ultimately that accountability to Parliament is maintained.

The benefits of the proposed legislation to Queensland are obvious, and the case for the Bill before the House is strong indeed. I support the Bill.

Mr GOSS (Salisbury) (2.37 p.m.): I must confess at mentally wincing at the thought of the member for Greenslopes using her big stick and cutting a swath through parolees and prospective parolees.

Government Members interjected.

Mr GOSS: I remind her, the Minister and the other Government back-benchers who are howling in unison in the background that unless that sort of big stick deterrent is complemented by fairness, openness and the appearance of a just approach, as well as the actuality, it will cause more problems than it solves.

In principle the move is a good one. It will give parole and the parole system greater flexibility and provide potential, worthwhile benefits and opportunities to parolees. Of course, hand in hand with this measure should go legislation to complete the proposed scheme for the interstate transfer of prisoners still serving a sentence. Until that comes in, the picture will not be complete.

When one looks at ensuring greater flexibility and a greater success of the parole system, one sees that the Minister and the Government are missing the boat and missing the point unless they address the defects in Queensland's parole system in their own back yard and provide a better and more just system under which people can apply for, and obtain, parole.

It is high time that the Minister made a serious response to the need to reform the Parole Board. Certainly he inherited this system, but he has had more than long enough now to do something about it. There has been more than enough provocation and reason to stir him into action.

It is high time that Queensland had a Parole Board that incorporated five important reforms. The first is that prisoners and their representatives have the right to know the evidence before the Parole Board on which decisions have been based. That is the only way to see that justice is done. I am aware of cases in which misleading and unreliable information has been put before the Parole Board and has apparently determined the board's decision, without the prisoner ever being advised of it. That that can happen is a disgrace, because it results in the potential of people serving years longer in gaol than would otherwise be the case if reliable information were put before the board or, alternatively, if the prisoner had an opportunity to challenge the unreliable evidence put before the board, usually by the superintendent.

The second reform would be to give prisoners a fair hearing before the board. They should be entitled to be present to argue their case or, if they wish, have present a representative such as a legally qualified person or a social worker.

Thirdly, the system will continue to be unjust, and to appear to be unjust, while the board and the Minister refuse to give reasons for the rejection of parole.

Fourthly, there should be some means of appeal.

Fifthly, the board should be re-formed in terms of its constitution. The membership of the board is too narrow, and has been for too long, and that membership should be broadened to include, for example, people with the sort of socio-economic background that would allow them to have a better understanding of the people applying for parole. There should be a representative approach, or a mix from relevant ethnic backgrounds and, in particular, a representative of the Aboriginal and Islander community, that group constituting a disproportionate section of our prison population. That is the fifth area of reform that I would urge upon the Minister in an attempt to make this parole system work in a broad sense rather than in just this narrow, but nevertheless important, reform that is being dealt with today.

I say that because the Parole Board is a hidden court, which denies the principles of natural justice and, as I said before, exercises great power, because the decision to grant or not grant parole can result in somebody spending years longer in gaol than he otherwise would.

As I recall it, the former Minister—now the member for Redcliffe—in about April 1982 promised a review of many of the matters of which I have been speaking and, in particular, he promised a review in relation to the providing of reasons.

Mr Fouras: The previous Minister, Mr Doumany, also promised that in 1979. They have been promising it for a decade.

Mr GOSS: That is a very good point made by the member for South Brisbane about Mr Doumany promising the same things before Mr White did so. Unfortunately, they all seem to suffer from the well-known Liberal trait of having the appearance of being well-meaning, but not matching it with action. Nevertheless, I would like to hear, from the Minister or the Government, the results of that review. What was the advice that came back from the department? Following on from that, what are the Minister's views in relation to those reforms and, in particular, the proposal that there should be reasons?

I understood that the former Minister was in favour of that proposal or had certainly expressed tentative approval of the concept of giving reasons for the rejection of a parole application. This is important not just to make the system fair but also in a practical way to remove the sense of great unrest and suspicion from the present system. Many prisoners have said to me that parole could be granted as a result of having connections in the right places or by paying bribes. I do not accept that that could ever happen at any level of

government in Queensland. Such a proposition would be quite strange and shocking to us all, I am sure. I note that members on the National Party back bench are yawning in wry amusement at that suggestion. Perhaps they know more than I do.

Nevertheless, one of the causes of the recent problems at the prisons was suspicion and distrust about the parole system and the Parole Board. If the Minister was prepared to take some positive steps towards these reforms, even if the Parole Board is working quite satisfactorily, he would achieve the very positive result of removing much of that suspicion and distrust about areas of his administration at the moment.

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (2.44 p.m.): It never ceases to amaze me that somewhere along the way Opposition members cannot help but be abrasive and ridicule the Government at any opportunity, even though the member for Salisbury said that the Opposition was in favour of the Bill.

Mr Fouras: Too little, too late, and not enough, as usual.

Mr STEPHAN: That is the honourable member's opinion, and like all of his opinions, it is not worth very much at all even within his own party, let alone in this House. The way in which the honourable member has been shifted from one shadow portfolio to another underlines what I have said.

Parole is playing an important role in the prison system. It is giving prisoners an incentive. No matter what people do, if they do not have an incentive they have not much to work for.

Recently, a prison inmate wrote to me and pointed out that he believes that after a very short stay in prison he has paid his price fully and has been reformed. That is his opinion. A court brought down its decision in that matter. It decided that that man should spend a certain length of time behind bars. Because of the parole system, the impact of imprisonment is lessened to a certain extent, which is to the advantage of the prisoner and to Queensland as a whole.

This year, 1984, actually marks a quarter century of the operation of the Queensland Probation and Parole Service. Queensland has been a leader with parole legislation, even prior to 1959. In 1937, for example, Queensland was the first State of Australia to introduce parole release legislation.

Mr Fouras: A Labor Government.

Mr STEPHAN: It does not matter which Government introduced the legislation. The honourable member was not a member of that Government and I do not think that he can take any credit for the legislation that was introduced at that time.

Mr Comben: You are quick to blame other Governments.

Mr STEPHAN: I am not blaming any other Government. I was just pointing out that the honourable member for South Brisbane was trying to take credit for introducing that legislation.

Mr Fouras: You are taking the credit.

Mr STEPHAN: I am not taking the credit; I am just stating the facts. If the honourable member is not prepared to accept that Queensland is playing a leading role in this area of parole, I feel sorry for him.

Procedures in the release and management of parolees have changed over the years since then, but the parole system in this State is arguably one of the best in Australia.

An Opposition Member: That is waffle.

Mr STEPHAN: No, it is not. The success rate of 86 per cent speaks highly of the quality of decisions made by the Parole Board and the supervision provided by parole officers. The honourable member for South Brisbane should remember that he is ridiculing a system that has a success rate of 86 per cent. Only 14 per cent of parolees have absconded or taken other action.

Mr Fouras: We are not ridiculing the system. We want the reasons given.

Mr STEPHAN: I am not too sure what the honourable member wants; also, I am not sure that he knows what he wants. Opposition members have made a couple of comments showing that they do not necessarily agree with one another. When the honourable member knows what he wants, I ask him to come along and tell me. Then I will know whether it agrees with the views of other members of his party.

In spite of this success, Opposition members have been critical of this State's system. They denigrate the system and the dedicated personnel by calling the Parole Board a hidden court. They are forever knocking and ridiculing the system that is working very well.

Opposition members suggest that, as a matter of right, an appeal should be available to prisoners against the carefully considered decisions of the Parole Board, and they support the highly stressful situation of having a prisoner appear in person before the Parole Board.

Serious criminal offenders in Queensland are sentenced to specific, finite terms of imprisonment. The sentence imposed is just and balanced. In determining the appropriate penalty in each case, judges and magistrates consider the seriousness of the offence, the degree of retribution required, the effects of deterrence on the offender and others, and the protection of the community. If either the defence or the Crown disagrees with the severity of the sentence imposed, it is entitled to contest that in the Court of Criminal Appeal and have the penalty reviewed.

Once sentenced to a term of imprisonment, an offender is entitled to remission of some of his sentence for good conduct. All offenders, if they meet the conduct requirements, may be released early. Similarly, parole—which means an even earlier date of release—is also dependent on the efforts of the prisoner.

When an offender has had the benefit of the due process of law in the courts and has been sentenced, one might ask whether he has the right to parole, or whether the community, through the Parole Board, has the right to parole the prisoner. One of the reasons why the parole system has fallen apart in other places is that the rights of the community have been placed second to the rights of the prisoner. That should never be forgotten. The rights of the community are sometimes forgotten.

Any person who is capable of committing an offence is potentially able to repeat that behaviour. There are, however, a group of people within the prison system who present only a limited risk to their fellow-men. While in custody, they are a drain on societal resources. They are capable of fulfilling a more meaningful and productive role in the community. It is at this stage that the differences between individuals within the prison system and individuals in the community become obvious.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr STEPHAN: I will only take a couple of minutes. The member for Brisbane Central can keep winding me up; he will hurt his arm.

All prisoners are entitled to apply for parole. Acknowledgement of receipt of an application is made to the prisoner concerned, and the decision of the board is forwarded to the applicant in writing. Procedures adopted by the Parole Board ensure that the widest possible range of material is available to board members in the process of making their decisions. Information from prison personnel, police, welfare officers, psychiatrists, medical officers and parole officers is generally available to the board.

In addition, all prisoners applying for parole in Queensland, with the exception of those claiming special circumstances, are interviewed personally by the Parole Advisory Committee chaired by the Deputy Comptroller-General of Prisons. Other members of the committee are a senior officer of the Probation and Parole Service and the Prisons Department psychologist. The purpose of these interviews is to allow an applicant a personal input into the decision-making process. Any problems with the application are clarified or made known to the applicant and advice is given to the applicant in any areas in which it is considered that the strength of the application might be increased. This procedure also allows the applicant to ask questions regarding parole and associated procedures so that he is able to put the best possible application before the board. The Parole Advisory Committee prepares a detailed report for the Parole Board.

Parole release involves the return to the community of an offender who has been sentenced to imprisonment. At some time during his or her sentence, the offender may be released on parole, subject to the supervision of a parole officer.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr STEPHAN: The member for Brisbane Central is still trying to wind me up, but I will not take his interjection at this point.

Parole supervision provides an effective means of monitoring the behaviour of the released prisoner and, at the same time, provides opportunities to give him help and assistance in overcoming the developed problems in a pattern of what may have been many years of inappropriate behaviour. The aim of parole supervision is to make the prisoner a more effective member of the community. It is very important that attempts be made to fit an offender back into the community, because in many cases he may have been disadvantaged and that may have led him to make a nuisance of himself.

This Bill will place under the jurisdiction of the Queensland Parole Board and the supervision of parole officers in Queensland a person granted parole in another State and wishing to come to Queensland. As has already been said, no person paroled in another State need be accepted into Queensland unless the Minister or his delegated officer is satisfied that the risk to the community is minimal.

The Bill will protect Queenslanders. Under its provisions, the Minister must be satisfied that a parolee has consented to his parole order and has requested to be paroled and transferred. As I said, when considering a parole application, the appropriate authorities must have available to them information about the behaviour of an offender while in prison.

It gives me pleasure to support the Parole Orders (Transfer) Bill.

Mr WHITE (Redcliffe) (2.55 p.m.): Members of the Liberal Party are very happy to support the Bill. It gives me personally a great deal of pleasure to see it before the House, as I was formerly the Minister in charge of this aspect of legislation.

Mr Davis: And one of the worst.

Mr WHITE: I am surprised that the honourable member for Brisbane Central is not cheering on this progressive legislation. It makes sense, particularly from a compassionate and humanitarian point of view and, more importantly, from a family point of view. It will enable parolees to be with their families.

In looking at corrective services, one tends to overlook the importance of the family and the impact that a sentence has on the family itself. As this Bill places a good deal of emphasis on the family, it and the Minister are to be commended.

Some criticism has been levelled by the honourable member for Salisbury. Like all lawyers, he wants to create even more courts. I do not support the granting of legal representation before the Parole Board. However, there is room for improvement in respect of the board. The preparation of material for the board needs an injection of information, particularly from the behavioural sciences.

In corrective services both in Queensland and throughout the nation, the tendency has been to become obsessed with security instead of looking at the long-term implications for people who are in corrective institutions and for those who are out on parole.

In the United States of America the parole system has been subjected to a good deal of criticism. In "Time" magazine of March 1984, this statement appeared—

"In eleven states, including California, parole release has been abolished for most offenders in favor of a fixed, or 'determinate', sentencing system. Under it, a judge must impose punishment from a narrow range of options set by the legislature or some administrative body."

The abolition of the parole system would be a disastrous move, but the Government must consider doing something between abolition and determinate sentencing. The Minister might consider making short-term sentences determinate sentences and leaving the parole system to deal with persons who really constitute a problem and who do need a great deal of support from their parole officers.

Members of the Opposition have levelled criticism at the system both in recent times and during my term of administration. Reference was made to staffing levels and the work-load that parole officers have to carry. My suggestion is a constructive one. The Minister could consider the introduction of determinate sentences for people who are sentenced to short terms of imprisonment and leave the parole system to look after those who are sentenced to lengthy terms of imprisonment. Such a system would reduce the work-load and pressure on parole officers and, as well, would get the officers into the area in which they are urgently needed.

Mr Davis: You get better ideas when you are out of office.

Mr WHITE: The honourable member for Brisbane Central has a very short memory. I remind him that during my term of administration, community service orders were introduced, a wide range of prisoner programs was implemented, scholarships were introduced, prison farms were upgraded, a new women's prison was opened, a release-to-work hostel was established, rorts in overtime were curtailed and constructive use was made of people at the university. Those are just a few steps that happen to come to mind.

Members of the Opposition are very good at rhetoric. Today the honourable member for Salisbury, as usual, denigrated the Government and the Liberal Party. I say to him and to all honourable members, "Do not look at what members of the Labor Party talk about; look at what they do in office. And let us go no farther than New South Wales." In that State, both the prison system and the parole system are an absolute disgrace, especially for a Labor Government that is supposed to have a social conscience.

Honourable members will recall what happened at Parramatta Gaol. In 1982 four people were murdered at that gaol. The medical officer was shot. Honourable members will recall what happened at Bathurst. Many of the recommendations that flowed from the Nagle inquiry have been implemented in Queensland. It is regrettable that the Wran Government did not have the fortitude to implement the recommendations. What did the Wran Government do to Tony Vincent? It disposed of him. That is what the Labor Party does in office. I do not take criticism from the Opposition seriously. The member for Salisbury (Mr Goss) has been a constant critic of the parole system. He has made some valid points that the Government ought to examine. His rhetoric about the Government and the Liberal Party ought to be considered not in terms of what the Labor Party talks about but in terms of what it does in office.

As I said, 11 States of the United States of America have abolished the parole system and introduced determinate sentences. I am pleased to hear that the New South Wales Government is considering the abolition of parole for short-term prisoners. That means that the matter must be left in the hands of the judiciary. The message could be circulated at seminars. I emphasise very strongly that we should examine the problems of major offenders and allow minor offences to be dealt with under a system of determinate sentencing.

Earlier I made reference to the utilisation of the great skills that are available in behavioural science. It is regrettable that input from that field is not used to a greater degree. I regret very much that during my period of administration I did not have the time to put that matter as strongly as I would have liked. Perhaps I could be criticised for that. However, the tremendous input by people from the psychology field can be utilised. If the Parole Board had more information about the background, the welfare and the behavioural patterns of people, better criteria could be developed and better decisions made by the Parole Board.

I support very strongly the view that has been put forward by many people that if a person's parole application is rejected, he ought to be told the reasons. It is unacceptable that that does not occur. Perhaps the Opposition has a right to be critical of me for not introducing such a provision. I intended to do something about that. As the Minister would know, the administration of the Welfare Services portfolio is not the easiest job in the Government. There are many challenges in it.

Over the years the Parole Board has done a magnificent job. The member for Gympie said that the Parole Board has a success rate of 86 per cent. That does not mean that everything is well. Whether or not those persons return to corrective institutions

is the matter that must be finally examined. To repeat what I said when I was Minister for Welfare Services—I do not think that the parole system in Queensland is perfect. There is room for a great deal of improvement.

It is obvious to all members of the House—indeed, the Opposition has recognised—that the introduction of community service orders has been a great success and has benefited the community. Approximately 300 000 hours of community service work has already been carried out. In other words, people who offend against the law are making some contribution. However, we should not walk away from it and say that, because community service orders are working and have a high success rate, that is the end of the problem. The most important aspect is the individual's ability, once having completed the community service order, to re-enter society successfully. If our parole officers were freed from some of their other tasks, they could profitably move into that field.

I repeat that the Liberal Party supports the legislation. We congratulate the Minister and commend the Government for proceeding with the amendment.

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Condamine) (3.6 p.m.): I thank members of the Opposition and the member for Redcliffe for supporting the legislation. Crime is a reality. Imprisonment, punishment and rehabilitation are necessities. Parole is part of the process of rehabilitation. As I see it, the Bill is a refinement of the parole system. As has been pointed out by the member for Gympie, Queensland has a history of considerable success in this field. Of those who have been paroled with their families, 86 per cent have been successfully rehabilitated. This is reciprocal legislation which will make the transfer provisions Australia-wide. I have every confidence that it will be a success Australia-wide.

There are two major points of rationale behind the parole system. Firstly, it is a major attempt to reduce the number of prisoners. Obviously, there are cost advantages to the community. After a given length of time—it varies from State to State—a person becomes eligible for consideration to be released on parole. When released, he is of course subject to being of good behaviour. That person's attitudes and chances of fitting into society are also assessed. He is released on the firm understanding that, if he breaches the provisions of his parole order, he will be back in prison to serve out the balance of his sentence.

The second point is the reintegration of offenders into the community. That is critical. While he is on parole, the parolee is guided in the development of his capacity to become a full citizen again. His attitudes and behaviour are of the utmost importance. It has been found by psychologists that those parolees who associate with their families have the best chance of not returning to law-breaking. That being so, the parole board and its officers have the power to direct with whom the offender may associate and where he may work.

Part of the Bill deals with the transfer of parolees from State to State. As has been pointed out, that has obvious benefits to family life. People become more stable, more easily fit into society and more readily integrate into the community. Another consideration in this part of the Bill is that the nature of employment followed by some people requires them to transfer interstate. In view of the present rate of unemployment, anyone who has a job is obviously anxious to keep it. Particularly does that relate to someone who has broken the law. Former prisoners usually find it more difficult to obtain employment. Once they have acquired a skill of some sort, if it is necessary for them to transfer interstate to remain in employment, the transfer provisions of the Bill will go a long way towards enabling them to remain as active participants in society. Their families will be able to accompany them. Given favourable circumstances, we will obtain optimum benefits from the parole system.

The member for Greenslopes spoke about how very carefully parolees are selected. In preparing the Bill, the Minister has thought deeply about the attitudes and behaviour of prisoners. He has considered the interests of the community and the interests of the family. We must remember the wife and children as well as the parolee himself. Every member of the family unit has an important part to play in the process of rehabilitation.

The Bill contains the legal power enabling the direction and control of the parolee so that, wherever he goes, he is under strong direction from the Parole Board and the parole officers.

The public are concerned that some sort of danger is involved in releasing prisoners into the community, but the Government believes that the work of well-trained parole officers should allay those fears. People should remember that sooner or later all prisoners are released.

The present system of parole in Queensland has proved to be highly successful. I have every confidence in believing that, Australia-wide, the scheme will be just as great a success. Queensland presently has 341 parole orders in effect, 39 being supervised in other States and 122 having transferred into Queensland from other States. In 1982-83, only 24 parole orders were cancelled.

The intention of the Department of Welfare Services is to widen its services and to establish offices at places such as Roma, Gladstone, Atherton, Beenleigh, Goodna, the Pine Rivers district, and in the northern and southern suburbs of Brisbane. The rationale is to have parole officers living in the local communities of the parolees. The department expects that to result in a higher success rate.

In supporting the Bill, the member for Townsville (Mr McElligott) spoke of the high work-load of parole officers. The Government concedes that they work extremely hard, and a success rate of 86 per cent displays their efficiency and bears out that their work-load is realistic. However, I concede that they are very valuable officers in the community.

Mr Fouras: You cannot argue that. That is a ridiculous argument!

Mr LITTLEPROUD: There is nothing wrong with that argument at all. A success rate of 86 per cent is pretty good. If the honourable member for South Brisbane had a success rate of 86 per cent in running in his school days, he would have been a champion.

Since 1980, the staff of the department has increased by 64 per cent, and in fact in this financial year alone, 17 additional officers have been appointed. Five of them will deal with the proposed fine option scheme, the legislation for which will be introduced to the House later this year. Next year a further five officers will be appointed to work on the same scheme. Those 10 officers will release other officers from clerical work and enable them to concentrate on the more difficult and professional aspects of correctional work.

Mr White: A big increase has occurred over the last three years.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I concede that point. The member for Redcliffe is taking some of the credit.

The public can have confidence that parole has been a success in Queensland and the provisions contained in this legislation will be a success in Australia. This is model legislation based on legislation in the Australian Capital Territory. Similar legislation will be enacted Australia-wide by 1 May. All the States have legislation in varying stages of readiness. The legislation is supported by the judiciary and is a positive response to a demonstrated need for a more effective program of prisoner rehabilitation. I support the Bill.

Hon. G. H. MUNTZ (Whitsunday—Minister for Welfare Services and Ethnic Affairs) (3.13 p.m.), in reply: I thank all members, including those in the Opposition, for their support of the Bill and their contributions.

The member for Townsville claimed that the legislation is late, but the introduction of uniform legislation of this sort right across Australia is associated with some difficulties. I believe he accepts that point. The legislation creates an additional work-load for the department. Attention has been given to that matter and during the current financial year approval has been given for 17 extra probation and parole service personnel. In addition to that, in the next financial year five officers will be appointed to deal with the fine option scheme.

Legislation for the interstate transfer of prisoners is additional and separate to the Bill. Queensland passed legislation in that regard in 1982 but draft regulations have been a problem. The present hold-up is the preparation of regulations, by agreement, in New South Wales. The legislation is almost ready for proclamation and I will pursue that with the vigour it deserves.

I am proud of the supervision carried out by my parole officers. The success rate speaks for itself. Other members have indicated that only 22 parole orders, or 14 per cent of the total, were cancelled by the Parole Board in 1982-83.

The honourable member for Townsville spoke to me before the sitting was resumed, and I give him a guarantee that the officer appointed under this legislation will report back to the Minister.

It is expected that parole units will be developed in Queensland prisons to assist parole applicants to develop sound parole plans. In other words, officers will be available to assist prisoners to make applications for parole. It must be realised that parole is a privilege, not a right; but, at the same time, prisoners should be encouraged and given every opportunity to use that avenue.

My colleague the honourable member for Greenslopes (Mrs Harvey) has shown that this legislation is designed also to provide efficient supervision of parolees from other States. The screening process provided by the legislation will prevent unwanted southern criminals coming to Queensland by way of the parole system. In fact, I am firmly convinced that the vigilance of the Queensland Parole Board, together with the reputation of the Queensland prison system, will deter from applying for transfer to Queensland those offenders who are not sincere about changing their behaviour. As the honourable member said, when a parole order is registered in Queensland, the parolee will be subject to the laws of Queensland.

It certainly came as no surprise to me that the honourable member for Salisbury (Mr Goss) should take this opportunity to criticise the Queensland Parole Board. I have every confidence in the existing board and its members. As usual, the Labor Party, and in particular Mr Goss, have reproduced the same hackneyed criticisms without commenting on how such proposals have made toothless tigers of parole boards in other countries.

The honourable member for Redcliffe (Mr White) and the former member for Kurilpa (Mr Doumany) are not members of this Government. The Government stands for law and order, protection of the community and support of those who are prepared to adopt the laws of our State. Government members are not prepared to entertain programs that will make lawlessness attractive. We will treat humanely those who are, unfortunately, caught up in the legal system and provide programs for those offenders who are prepared to change their lifestyle and help themselves. No prisoner can be helped if he is not prepared to help himself. He has to take the first step. Nobody can help a prisoner who is not prepared to take that initiative off his own bat. The Bill is designed to provide assistance. It will give offenders who have shown that they are prepared to change an opportunity of returning to their home State and accepting supervision from the relevant parole authorities.

As I have said already, the interstate transfer of prisoners is on the way. The honourable member for Salisbury might take note of that.

Evidence given to the Parole Board comes from senior prison officers, Government medical officers and psychologists, probation and parole officers and welfare officers. Psychiatric and other advice may be obtained if it is thought to be necessary. It would be unusual for the Parole Board to have advice from fewer than six experts, all of whom have interviewed the applicant at some length.

I am surprised that the honourable member for Salisbury would even consider that members of the Queensland Parole Board or the hard-working officers of my department would be open to bribes. I refute his suggestion and chastise him for even attempting to offer such criticism.

I am always prepared to look at any reasonable suggestions to improve the operations of the Parole Board and the parole system in Queensland, and I think I have proved that.

I thank the honourable member for Gympie (Mr Stephan) for his support of the Queensland Parole Board. Opposition members and unenlightened members of the media continually resurrect the perennial cliché of hidden courts, trial without representation, failure to provide reasons for refusal of parole, and the right of appeal. It is about time that those hoary clichés were put to rest. I fail to see how the Parole Board could be likened to a hidden court. Parole applicants have been tried by the courts using careful and thorough procedures that have been developed by our legal system over the years. As a result of those procedures, offenders are deprived of their liberty for specified periods.

Offenders coming within the prison system are classified according to their security rating at the time. Parole is an extension of that classification procedure. The Parole Board has the difficult task of deciding whether or not a prisoner has reached the stage that he

can, without threat to the community—that is the important point—serve the remainder of his sentence in that community. This is not a court procedure, as the Opposition would like us to believe; it is purely an administrative decision.

If a parole applicant has been tried and sentenced according to the law, why should there be any need for further legal representation? The rights of a prisoner are not being threatened by the existing parole procedure. If anything, it is the rights of the community that must be represented at the time. Certainly, the community should be represented on a footing that is equal to that of the prisoner.

I find it difficult to understand how it could be possible to give applicants who have had their parole refused a satisfactory reason for refusal. There may be occasions on which an applicant could benefit from information that could assist him to improve his parole plan. Where that is possible, the Parole Board would direct that the prisoner be advised. However, a difficulty arises when members of the Parole Board have different reasons for rejecting a parole application. To summarise a variety of reasons into one reason would result in the applicant receiving standard stock refusal notices. That would be just as bad as the present system. At least with the present system, those applicants who have some chance of parole may retain the hope of being released in the future. Again, the parole units, when they are instigated, will address that matter.

The right of appeal argument has the air of developing into a complicated administrative nightmare. Under the present system, applicants may re-apply for parole as often as they wish. Each time they do, their application is carefully considered by members of the board.

It is interesting to note that in all those countries in which the parole system has undergone radical changes, the final results have been total destruction of the parole system. It is not my intention to see that happen in Queensland, and I do not believe that that is the intention of the members of this House.

The Queensland Parole Board has a record of which I am proud. I take this opportunity of publicly expressing my appreciation and support for the dedication of the members of the Parole Board and the parole officers of my department. Other members have expressed that feeling today.

I thank the member for Redcliffe for his contribution and his support of the legislation. I have noted his remarks about support for the family unit. He knows full well that the National Party Government, because of its belief in the importance of the family, has declared 1984 as the Year of the Family. That is a major initiative, and I believe that it is receiving State-wide support.

I will consider the honourable member's suggestions for the representation of behavioural scientists on the Parole Board. Again, I must point out that I have every confidence in the present members of the board.

I am surprised by the honourable member's other suggestion about determinate sentences for short-term offenders. I must point to the trend to community corrections in this State, which has been very successful. I hope that community service orders will replace the sentences given to short-term offenders. Again I point out that I am considering parole units within the prison system.

The honourable member for Condamine (Mr Littleproud) has drawn attention to a major issue associated with parole. Parole provides for the supervision and guidance of a prisoner during the critical period of his re-entry into the community. Should there be a breakdown during that period, appropriate action may be taken to maximise protection of the community. Without the powers provided by this legislation, the parolee who wishes to escape being returned to prison may simply move to another State. The return of that offender to Queensland involves complicated and expensive extradition procedures. The Bill now before the House empowers the Minister responsible to transfer that offender's parole to the State in which he is living. The offender may then be arrested and returned to a prison in that State.

Like the honourable member for Condamine, I am proud of the record of the Queensland parole system. I am grateful that the honourable member has drawn attention to the success of that system and the positive steps that the Government has taken to provide a sound, decentralised parole service. It is important in a large State such as Queensland that all Government services be decentralised. Over the past six months,

Government departments have taken very positive steps in that direction. My department, in particular, is decentralising so that not only will parolees in large metropolitan centres be supervised, but also parolees in the remote areas of the State and in the provincial cities will be supervised.

The Bill has the support of all honourable members and I commend it to the House.
Motion (Mr Muntz) agreed to.

Committee

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Randell): Order! It has been brought to my attention that a clerical error appears in clause 9 of the Bill, at line 29. The word "the" should be inserted after the word "to" second occurring.

Clauses 1 to 14, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Muntz, by leave, read a third time.

WEEKEND DETENTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 4 April (see p. 2486) on Mr Muntz's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr McELLIGOTT (Townsville) (3.28 p.m.): Obviously, the Opposition supports this amending legislation which abandons week-end detention as a sentencing option. I use the word "obviously" because, in his second-reading speech, the Minister for Welfare Services referred to comments made in March 1983 by the then Opposition spokesman on Welfare Services (Mr Fouras) when the House considered the Weekend Detention Act Amendment Bill. The Opposition spokesman spoke strongly against the use of week-end detention. The Minister has now given the same reasons to explain the decision to abandon the scheme.

I took the Minister's advice and read that debate in "Hansard". I noted that the late member for Archerfield made a valuable contribution to it. One particular comment that Mr Hooper made is worth repeating today. With a touch of typical modesty, he said—

"The Prisons Act transcends party politics. If I put a good case to the Labor caucus, I am sure I could be seconded to assist the Minister, and, using my expertise in penology, help to rewrite the Prisons Act."

It is unfortunate that the Government did not seek Mr Hooper's assistance or that of other Opposition members in considering a review of the Prisons Act itself. Mr Hooper summed it up very wisely when he said "The Prisons Act transcends party politics" because it is a necessary evil to protect the community.

There will always be those who transgress decency and social behaviour. They will be a cause for concern on the part of the community at large. Obviously the means must be provided to punish such offenders.

Having said that, I suggest that the different philosophies of the Government and Opposition parties are indicated clearly. Government spokesmen repeatedly place emphasis on the punishment aspects of prison life—the big-stick mentality, if I might put it that way—whereas, in contrast, Opposition members tend to adopt a more humanitarian point of view and to place considerable emphasis on ensuring that those persons who do transgress are given every opportunity to mend their ways and to come back into the community as decent citizens.

Recently, considerable publicity was given to the conditions at the Brisbane Prison Complex in particular. Unfortunately, the Minister has publicly adopted a tough attitude in line with the type of Government thinking that I mentioned a moment ago. Personally, I do not believe that the opinions that he expressed publicly are his private opinions, but he did adopt a tough attitude.

A Government Member: And rightly so.

Mr McELLIGOTT: I would expect such an interjection to come from the Government side of the House.

I note with concern that further problems are arising at the Brisbane Prison Complex. I refer to a recent four-day hunger strike. I have not referred to these problems publicly because, as Opposition spokesman, I do not try to make political gain from every instance of disputation that occurs within the prison system. I acknowledge that administration of prisons is very difficult, and I admire the people who are responsible for the control of the prisons. The occurrence to which I have referred is one that the prison administration needs to sort out.

If the media reports are correct, the causes of the disputation are very minor. One such complaint concerned insufficient tea rations. I cannot understand how the Government can think in terms of punishing wrong-doers by limiting their ration of tea. It seems to me that prisoners should be provided with as much tea as they like to drink. Obviously, a reduction in tea rations is not a punishment in any real sense.

Opposition members would argue that the granting of certain privileges to prisoners would remove their frustrations and concerns and would, perhaps, encourage them to take part in rehabilitative programs.

Opposition members agree entirely with the contention that the week-end detention system has proved to be totally inappropriate and has caused more problems than it has solved. Today the Minister said that the community service order arrangement has proved successful. I am sure that is true and that greater use will be made of that arrangement in future.

I agree with the Minister that people who serve week-end detention are not really prisoners, in that they are in prison only temporarily and are not able to take part in any of the programs that are undertaken within prisons in an attempt to rehabilitate prisoners. Persons on week-end detention have very little to gain on the rehabilitative side.

It is important that within prisons programs be embarked upon to try to ensure that those people who transgress the law are guided back onto the correct road. I made that point in the debate on the previous Bill.

Having been given an opportunity eventually to inspect the Brisbane Prison Complex, I acknowledge that certain problems arise because of the age of the establishment. Obviously its whole environment is not what one would expect in this day and age. Nevertheless we have to live with it until such time as Governments can do something about it. However, again I submit that the treatment of prisoners is not merely a matter of buildings.

Unfortunately, many people regard prisoners as vicious criminals whose whole object in life is to disrupt society. Certainly, a proportion of them fit into that category. I was personally surprised to learn, and members may be surprised to learn also, that about 70 per cent of inmates in Queensland prisons are serving terms of imprisonment for motor vehicle related offences, such as drink-driving, driving without a licence and driving under suspension. Many people in Queensland gaols could not be classified as vicious criminals. They are there, and deservedly so, for breaking the law. They deserve all the rehabilitation assistance that can be rendered to them from the prison system.

Following my visit to the prison, I wrote to the Minister and suggested some immediate steps that he could take to improve the morale of prisoners and prison officers. Having researched "Hansard", I found that a complete review of the prison system, as well as the probation and parole system, has been promised since 1978. As I said, I realise that it is a difficult area. The reviews that have been promised and referred to by the Minister and his predecessor are taking too long to implement. That matter requires the urgent attention of the department to bring Queensland's prisons up to twentieth century standard.

In the discussions that I had with senior prison officers during my inspection of the Brisbane Prison complex, I was most impressed with their ideas for the future. My only concern is that it is a tragedy that the reforms to which they referred on the day of my visit and in which they strongly believe have not been implemented already. I gained the impression that the prison officers are very experienced in prison administration and have a great deal to offer. I hope that the Minister will encourage reforms of the type

referred to by the prison officers. The reforms about which they spoke are the sort of reforms that have been promised to this Assembly since 1978. It is hoped that the Queensland prison system will be brought up to modern-day standards.

In my letter to the Minister I referred to the very worthwhile objective of seeking community input. This morning I was a little disappointed because the Minister tended to regard the Prisoners Action Group as a mob of radicals who are hell-bent on destroying the Queensland prison system. I have had a number of discussions with that group. It has a very close knowledge of the prisoners' attitude to the system. That is not something on which anyone in this Chamber can contribute, certainly not the Minister. Those persons have knowledge about the other side of the system. From my discussions with them, I gained the impression that they are endeavouring to make worthwhile contributions to prison reform in Queensland. In any community group, particularly a group that works in such an area, some persons will be more outspoken than members of this House would be or would like them to be. It is necessary to listen to those persons and, if we see fit, to discard what they say. They have something to offer. I urge the Minister to seek public input into a review of the Queensland prison system.

I have a notice of motion on the Business Paper to establish an all-party committee to review the Queensland prison system. I doubt very much whether the Government will accept that proposal. Nevertheless, the notice of motion appears on the Business Paper. If the Government is not prepared to accept assistance and co-operation from both sides of the House, I urge him to seek community input, as indeed was done in the review of the Queensland services legislation. Although we have not seen it yet, I understand that the decision to seek community input has proven to be very worth while.

I suggest that a number of reforms could be implemented immediately without any cost to the Government. One is the establishment of a grievance committee within each prison. From the limited discussions I have had with prisoners, it does appear, as one would expect, that within each prison, which is a community within itself, there are prisoners who are respected by their fellows. It seems to me that if they were formed into a grievance committee, they could deal with some of the day-to-day irritations that cause relatively minor matters to flare up into major confrontation.

Prison officers are in a supervisory position. It seems to me that there will always be the potential for conflict between those seeking to impose discipline and those upon whom the discipline is imposed. If that circumstance is removed, the possibility of flare-up that unfortunately blows a relatively minor matter into something far more serious is reduced. The establishment of grievance committees—apparently they are in place in other States and working well—could be achieved very quickly and without cost.

Independent investigation of the complaints of prisoners against officers is often mentioned. It is a serious matter. As parliamentarians, we tend to assume that prison officers are competent and capable of assessing the rights and wrongs of incidents that occur in a prison. Obviously, they are not always right. In this Chamber are people who have served as schoolteachers. They would acknowledge that they were not always in a position to judge requests for discipline that were brought before them. Unless a prisoner has access to assistance of some sort to establish his case before prison authorities, he is always likely to experience discrimination.

In an earlier discussion, the Minister mentioned that we are not really talking about a court of law. Quite frankly, we on this side of the House believe that, although somebody is in prison, he has not lost his human rights. All honourable members know that a person can be punished, and punished severely, for breaches of discipline within the prison system. For example, his sentence can be extended. That must come as a tremendous blow. Before Government members rush in and accuse me of taking sides with vicious criminals, I repeat that prisoners are human beings. If they have transgressed the rules of discipline within the prison, they deserve to be punished. However, they also deserve the right to put their point of view and their side of the argument to an independent authority. The punishment to them is severe. They ought to have every opportunity to put their point of view.

A shortage of meaningful work is another problem that exists in our prison system. I cannot suggest a solution to the problem. The facilities that I saw within the prisons appeared to be excellent. Unfortunately, work cannot always be made available, even to those prisoners who want to work.

A suggestion that has been made to me—I think it is worthy of consideration—is that prisoners attending education classes within the prison should be paid the same amount of money as they would receive for working. Educational and remedial classes are available now; but not all prisoners are keen to attend them, even though such classes could be very beneficial indeed. The payment of that small amount of money—it is about \$1.50 a week—would provide some encouragement for people to attend remedial classes. It would not surprise honourable members to know that many inmates of Queensland prisons are illiterate and would certainly benefit from assistance of that sort.

I have mentioned already the need to advise prisoners of the grounds for refusal to grant parole applications. Another matter that has been mentioned publicly lately, which I support, is the introduction of contact visits under strict supervision. I realise that problems of discipline and security are involved in contact visits. However, I can think of many instances in which such a visit would remove many of the frustrations caused by being away from a family.

As one honourable member said on another piece of legislation, in this Year of the Family ways and means ought to be considered to keep family groups together. I can think of nothing designed more to create tension in a prisoner than to have a member of his family visit him and tell him of some sort of a crisis in the home. A man and wife, or a boyfriend and girlfriend would not be in a position to sit together, hold hands and talk confidentially about ways to overcome that crisis. At present, at the Brisbane Prison Complex, they are forced to speak through a telephone so I can imagine a prisoner going back to his cell in a very uptight condition, which would certainly help neither his morale nor prison morale.

The legislation contains a small reform to the Queensland prison system. It simply withdraws provision for week-end detention, which has always been opposed by the Opposition. The Opposition made it very clear that the system would not work, and that has proved to be the case. The Opposition supports the legislation and I accept the Minister's comment that more and more the type of offender who previously would have been sentenced to week-end detention will be given a community service order. To the Opposition, that seems to be a much more worthwhile way of punishing the offender while steering him towards the path of rehabilitation.

Mr CAHILL (Aspley) (3.47 p.m.): I am very happy to support the Bill, as the Opposition obviously has. Week-end detention was introduced as an alternative deterrent in August 1970. Since then other sentencing options involving a minimum of cost have been introduced. Honourable members have heard about community service orders and fine option orders, the latter of which was provided for in the 1983 Offenders Probation and Parole Act Amendment Bill, which is still to be proclaimed.

I wish to examine Government costs in relation to this matter. A community service order entails part-time supervision only. However, week-end detention involves the provision of housing, maintenance, including clothing and catering, and full-time supervision by prison officers, and that involves the payment of penalty rates. Obviously the trouble is that what began as a good theory in fact has caused problems.

In his second-reading speech the Minister mentioned a 1983 report entitled "Community Service: An Evaluation of the Impact of the Community Order Scheme in Queensland" prepared by Dr Sally Leivesley. At page 17, that reports states—

"A comparison was made of the costs of the Community Service Order Scheme and of the Prisons Department in the financial year 1981-82. It was found that the daily cost for a community service worker was \$1.52 whereas maintaining a prisoner cost \$49.13."

Since those figures were calculated, costs may have increased, but the proportionate costs would have remained the same.

Other problems have been outlined by the Minister and the member for Townsville. For instance, week-end detention is available only to persons who can serve the sentence in Her Majesty's Prisons at Brisbane, Rockhampton and Townsville. Because of transport difficulties for those who have to report to prisons in the provincial cities, the provision is rarely used in Rockhampton and Townsville. Other than in the Brisbane area, there is

very little suitable public transport and, because many offenders who are sentenced to week-end detention have lost their driver's licence for a driving offence, they have difficulty in attending prisons.

Suitable programs are available to inmates serving continuous imprisonment, but they are not available to week-end detainees, which is another reason that the Minister and his officers have decided to repeal the provision relating to week-end detention. Professional persons involved in the administration of prison programs work Monday to Friday. However, conditions that apply to inmates serving continuous imprisonment apply to week-end detainees. In the area of discipline—week-end detainees can misbehave in the knowledge that no really effective penalty can be imposed because they will be released on the Sunday afternoon.

Very little, if anything, can be done on the rehabilitation side. It is well known by all members, and certainly by a good many members of the public, that many week-end detainees report in an intoxicated condition. In addition, as has been already mentioned, the problem of drug-smuggling has arisen.

Persons who do not report to a prison to serve week-end detention are deemed to be escaped prisoners, and problems arise with the police having to chase and arrest them.

This Bill will abolish week-end detention as a sentencing option. Obviously community service programs are better. This Bill should be supported by all members, and the taxpayers generally. I have very much pleasure in supporting it and congratulating the Minister and his officers on bringing it forward.

Mr FOURAS (South Brisbane) (3.51 p.m.): In the debate on the Address In Reply in 1981 I said that I believed it was time that the Government brought its prison policies into the 1980s. I also said quite clearly that there was a need for a new Prisons Act with revamped regulations. I said that it was time the Government and the Minister eliminated the stupid week-end detention scheme because all it did was clog up prisons at week-ends. I said—

“It is certainly not helping in the rehabilitation of prisoners. It creates tremendous problems at the Brisbane Prison. I hope that the new Minister for Welfare Services will take steps to abolish that scheme.”

In March 1983 the Government introduced the Weekend Detention Act Amendment Bill in another attempt to overcome what was becoming a very serious problem in the prison system. Between 40 and 60 week-end detainees were turning up drunk at the remand section of the Brisbane Prison Complex, which is a rather terrible sort of place to be at any time. They had no hope of rehabilitation. It was said at that time that the Act was being amended because the transfer of week-end detainees would mean that they would have better employment opportunities and access to rehabilitation programs. That was in many ways a rather weak argument, although at the time I realised the necessity for the amendment, which was an attempt to get people out of the Brisbane Prison Complex. It became necessary because at that time the totally unacceptable situation emerged in which people who were charged at watch houses on week-ends were spending up to 72 hours in a watch house cell because they could not be transferred to the Brisbane Prison Complex which was clogged up by the 40 to 60 week-end detainees. The Opposition has no argument with what the Government is doing under this legislation. In fact, Opposition members have for a long time been advocating the abolition of week-end detention.

I was interested to note the different philosophical approaches taken by the member for Pine Rivers (Mrs Chapman) and me. By way of interjection she said, “I think you (meaning the Opposition) are losing sight of why prisoners are in there.” I do not believe that we have. We do not believe that prisoners are in gaol for punishment but that they are there for the protection of society. That is the only justification I can find for taking away anybody's liberty. The argument is that all they should lose is the right to their freedom. Their incarceration and nothing else should be their punishment. That is quite clearly the Opposition's stance. Society cannot cage people like animals and expect them to return to society and behave like human beings.

Mr Littleproud referred to the Offenders Probation and Parole Act and said that sooner or later most prisoners would be released. He also said that he preferred that it be sooner, and who does not? It is very expensive to put somebody into prison.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr FOURAS: The members of the National Party look at this matter in a simplistic way. When it comes to prisons, most of them have not got rid of their ideological blinkers. Although the Minister is a pleasant and likeable person, he has been badly advised by some of the more reactionary elements in the National Party, and that is very sad.

I shall talk briefly about where the Opposition differs from the Government.

Mrs Chapman: There is a story to be told.

Mr FOURAS: I shall tell the honourable member where our views differ from those of the Government.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr FOURAS: There are anti-Labor Governments in only two States out of six, and certainly not in the national Parliament. I am a perennial optimist: I believe that our day will come and that we will have an opportunity to clear up some of the mess.

In report after report by the Comptroller-General of Prisons, concern is expressed about the lack of employment opportunities in the Brisbane Prison Complex. In fact, more than 40 per cent of prisoners are not usefully employed. I know that the problem is not easy to overcome. The spokesman for the Opposition, in a very worthwhile contribution on this subject, said that perhaps the Government should consider providing more education in prisons. A person who has been locked up in prison for a lengthy period without anything useful to do cannot be expected to come out and become a useful member of the community. Of course, some good programs have been provided in the past.

Mr Littleproud interjected.

Mr FOURAS: The member for Condamine espoused the principle that it is better to let people out of prison sooner than later, and the Opposition agrees with that. Previously, work-release programs were provided. They were marvellous programs, but it would be very difficult to suggest that such a program should be provided in the present economic climate.

I shall look at the prison statistics in other countries. The prison population in other countries is a quarter of the prison population in this country. Why is that so? Why is the degree of propensity to crime greater in Australia than in the Scandinavian countries? The prison population in those countries is about 22 per 100 000. The figure is 88 per 100 000 in Queensland and 44 per 100 000 in Victoria.

I shall not refer to overseas countries because I do not want Government members to stretch their mental energies too far. I shall refer to the situation in Victoria. Some of the reforms about which I shall speak were introduced by a conservative Liberal Government. They were not introduced by the dreaded socialists who have two horns growing out of the top of their heads. I refer to the concept of attendance centres. Honourable members have been complimenting the Government for introducing community service orders. May I say that their introduction in Queensland was many years behind their introduction in the other States, but that is not unusual. When it comes to introducing reforms, Queensland is a long way behind the other States.

The whole concept of attendance centres should be seriously considered. The concept is that people attend one of these centres one week-end and spend the next week-end working in the community. The programs are designed to help people overcome their problems. A constituent in my electorate was continually being picked up for drink-driving and, in the end, for driving without a licence. He was a danger to the community. I support the right of the community to be protected from a person such as that. But sending him to week-end detention! He got sozzled every Friday night. I lived nearby and I know that between 3 and 5.30 on a Friday afternoon, he could not throw enough pots down. He was like lightning in the pub. Sending a man in that condition to prison could only cause problems, particularly if he was addicted to liquor.

He would benefit from an attendance centre at which he could get the services spoken about by the member for Redcliffe in the debate on the last Bill. He would benefit from the expertise of specialists in behavioural problems who could use psychology to help him. He would be encouraged to become interested in a sporting group or some other organisation to which he could be committed and to which he could make a contribution.

The attendance centre system is working marvellously well in Victoria. It is being used for offenders who have been sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment or less. An offender must be found guilty and his suitability for services offered by the attendance centre system must be ascertained by the judge before he can be admitted to a centre. Many inmates pay a high price in the way of imprisonment because they are a threat to the community but they could be rehabilitated at this type of attendance centre.

I would like to consider some problems that could blow the prison system apart. When I was prisons spokesman for the Labor Party in 1977 I regularly asked questions of the then Minister (Mr Herbert) about prison reform. He told me that he would not educate the greenhorn member for South Brisbane. All new members, such as the member for Condamine, come to this place a little green, but the late Mr Herbert said that he would not educate me, so he did not answer my questions. When Mr Doumany was Minister he agreed that the Prisons Act and its regulations were out of date. Many of the regulations were anachronisms because they were formulated in 1959. He set amendments in train. When Mr White was the Minister, he gave me similar answers to my questions, and necessary amendments were again set in train.

Regulation 220 provides that the superintendent shall inform every prisoner of his obligations and rights. That is a worthwhile regulation and it has an interesting background. It is right that prisoners should know of their rights in prison. However, the regulations are out of print and have been so for about five or six years. That is one problem.

Other regulations are absolutely ridiculous in the 1980s. A person can be charged with an offence of which he is unaware, and even the more reactionary members opposite would agree that that is very poor. Regulation 138 states that prison officers must refrain from conversation with prisoners except when it is a necessary part of their duty. What an anachronism! I imagine that that regulation is to ensure that prison officers do not get corrupted by the prisoners, but it disregards the idea of the humane treatment of prisoners.

Under the regulations, a prisoner does not have the right to vote in State elections. However, in Victoria, a prisoner may vote in any election no matter how long he is in prison. It is considered that he is part of the community and that that is an essential part of the rehabilitation process. The Federal legislation provides that any person in prison for less than 12 months may vote in Commonwealth elections. But in Queensland, even for a Federal election, the regulation does not give prisoners the right to vote.

Regulation 256 allows prisoners to complain about the way in which they have been treated. But, on the other hand, regulation 257 makes it an offence to complain if the complaint is proved groundless. That is really more of a big stick than a carrot.

Regulation 244 makes it an offence for a person to inflict a wound on himself. From persons who have been released from prison I have heard stories to the effect that prisoners have been charged with knocking the top off a sore. Although they did not do that on purpose, they were charged with the offence of wounding themselves.

For committing such an offence, prisoners were put in the "hole", which Government members claim did not exist. It has been used, yet Government members have told us ad nauseam that it does not exist. Prisoners have been put in the "hole", they have had to put their hands up against the brick wall, and they have been given a belting every time certain prison officers go by. Government members claim that that does not occur. What nonsense!

The international declaration on human rights has been abused in Queensland for decades. A classic example concerns a young prisoner who got the urge to write poetry. He told me that, because he was not given any books or paper, he used to write his poems on toilet paper. Every time he went to the toilet, he took a couple of extra sheets of toilet paper and used to write poems on them. He was charged with defacing Government property. How would you be!

To return to the Bill—Opposition members are sick and tired of calling for a new Prisons Act and for new regulations. The present regulations are outlandish, outmoded, outdated and absolutely horrendous.

A Government Member: They are coming.

Mr FOURAS: I know that new regulations are coming.

As the Opposition spokesman said, it is outrageous that prisoners cannot have contact visits. Even in the maximum-security cells in Pentridge Prison, prisoners are allowed to have contact visits. Certainly, prisoners have to earn the right to have such visits. In Queensland it is absolutely outlandish that a child who is taken to prison to visit its father cannot even be kissed or hugged by its father. How can a child understand a situation such as that? Similarly, it is outlandish that prison officers are empowered to read personal letters written by prisoners to their family.

The Opposition has no argument with the Bill. We claim that for a lengthy period the Act has been irrelevant. The Minister is to be commended for taking this one small step forward. Opposition members wait with bated breath for the new Prisons Act and regulations.

Mr LINGARD (Fassifern) (4.8 p.m.): It is my pleasure to support this Bill and also to support the honourable member for Aspley, who stated the details of the Bill. I compliment the Department of Welfare Services, in which the morale and co-operation of senior officers is excellent. Those members who are close to the department are aware that the preparation by officers of legislation is magnificent, that those officers provide excellent information on request and that they give the relevant details in a very efficient manner. I have been most impressed. The Queensland public needs to be made aware of the efficiency of the department. It is a department that receives many, many demands; it is also a department at which criticism is levelled; and it is a department that provides a service for people under stress. I compliment its officers.

The Government has a high regard for the Police Department and prison officials. Quite obviously, over recent years, members of the Opposition have concentrated many personal attacks on members of the police force. The end result has been a lack of confidence in the Labor Party, and that becomes quite obvious when anyone speaks to officers in the Police Department. How can they have confidence in the Opposition when they hear politically actuated comments such as those made during the last few nights by the Prisoners Action Group? In the media, it tried to make certain implications concerning the death of John Stuart.

Look at the way in which Opposition members have used this House for the purpose of dropping the bucket on police officers and prison officials. Police officers carrying out their normal duties have been ridiculed by insinuations of the Opposition. The Minister has indeed shielded the police and prison officials from abuse by the public, the media and the Opposition. As a former public servant, I know how important it is that those at the top support those who have to make demanding judgments, which at times can only be regarded as value judgments. I congratulate the Minister.

I congratulate the Minister also on introducing new legislation, especially the Bill before the House, which is a piece of commonsense legislation. I congratulate him also on the liaison that he has created between the departments, the organisation that he has demanded in the departments and the rapport that he has established with the ethnic groups. I congratulate him also on his handling of the Year of the Family, and also for his organisation of next year's International Year of the Youth.

The media and the Opposition have tried to use prison discontent to cast the Minister as an authoritarian. Today an attack was made by the Leader of the Opposition, whose snarling, grumbling attitude is well known by the public. Unfortunately for the Opposition, it fails for two reasons. The Minister's authority, discipline and control have always been mixed with warmth and courtesy. That gained the support of the Department of Welfare Services. It also gained the support of prison officials, and they stopped with him.

The Opposition also forgot that the people of Queensland want authority and control from the Government. The Opposition failed in the last election because it tried to cast the Premier as a dictator. The Opposition failed in that strategy because people want care and control in society.

In my maiden speech I spoke about two parents who might show care, control and warmth. Some parents set definite aims for their children. When those aims are not met by their children, the parents refuse to budge and the children must meet those demands. The parents say, "This is what the rules must be." When the children challenge their parents, they say, "OK, we will waive those rules." That can be seen from the Opposition's marijuana policy. The member for Wolston has advocated the legalisation of brothels. The member for Salisbury referred to corporal punishment and criticised Government members

who criticised it. A Labor Party senator has written to school principals and parents and said, "Don't let your children receive corporal punishment. Don't observe the rules of dress at these schools." That is what we see in the Labor Party. We see a welfare type of mentality. People are encouraged to sit back and wait for the Government to provide things. We see a cargo cult mentality appearing. Fortunately, the National Party has a Premier who is well organised and adopts a disciplined approach. That is what society wants.

A commonsense approach has been adopted by the Government and by the Minister for Welfare Services by amending the Weekend Detention Act. No Government elects to have a gaol within its society. However, all societies to date have found that it is necessary to have rules and laws to allow the people in the community to live an orderly life. In early history societies were able to exclude or exile those who did not obey the rules of the group. Some societies now set themselves up as small groups with special ideals and invite into the group people who share similar ideals. They forget that by doing that they are excluding most of these people for whom rules are designed, that is, those who do not obey society's rules. However, almost all societies find it necessary to remove those persons who do not observe the rules, and generally that removal is made to a gaol or institution.

None of us like the idea any more than our forbears. We must make sure that only those persons who pose a threat to society are gaoled. Many reasons exist for taking drastic action against persons who present problems, such as failure to pay alimony and fines, to which reference was made by the member for Townsville, but there is less reason to remove them from the rest of society. A form of punishment must be added to a means of personal rehabilitation that is suitable to society and, most importantly, suitable to the offender. That is what the legislation is about. Already the Department of Welfare Services has shown examples of that. An excellent example is Boys Town at Beaudesert. Last Friday I had the pleasure of once again visiting that magnificent institution south of Beaudesert. It is conducted by the De La Salle Brothers under the principal, Brother Paul. I was accompanied by Senator Bjelke-Petersen, the Minister for Welfare Services (Mr Muntz) and members of his department.

What a pleasure it was to see young people who have faced personal problems previously with parents, school or police finding love and care in such an institution. The care given by the De La Salle Brothers is marvellous. They provide educational facilities, magnificent sporting facilities and extra-curricular activities which the children really look forward to. Boys Town is very appreciative of the great support given to it by the community, and it also acknowledges that the Government has been very generous. Over \$1m has recently been provided, and Boys Town is appreciative of the support of this Minister and also the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing (Mr Hinze), who gives magnificent support to the Boys Town races.

Also in my electorate is "The Outlook", which is located at Boonah. That facility offers a wide range of programs designed to rebuild self-esteem, promote participation and improve the general outlook of the young people who come under the care and protection of the department. Activities include horse-riding, canoeing, rock-climbing and camping.

Once again at Palen Creek, which is also in my electorate, magnificent community projects are available. Those within Palen Creek are given complete freedom and are involved in such worthwhile activities as spray painting and attending to the dairy, piggery, vegetables, water supply, butchery and the kitchen.

Similar activities occur at Woodford. There are great projects there for the community—playground equipment and educational programs and remedial help for some of the people there.

At Wacol special projects are involved with bread and milk production. Special mention must be given to the Wacol inmates for the gluten-free bread made by them for people with coeliac disease.

I congratulate the Minister and his department. The legislation will be accepted by the community and still be a deterrent to the offender. It will also be a form of rehabilitation, which members of the Opposition have made such a big thing about. It will be a service to the community and will save the community considerable expense. I support the Bill.

Mr WHITE (Redcliffe) (4.17 p.m.): The Liberal Party supports the legislation. Quite rightly, the Opposition, and particularly the member for South Brisbane (Mr Fouras), have been critical of week-end detention for quite some time. Indeed, it was noted in my period in this portfolio. We attempted to reorganise it to make something of it. Basically, the fault with week-end detention was having it domiciled within a gaol. If we had opted for some type of attendance centre or placement within the community, perhaps something could have been made of week-end detention.

The Minister has made it clear that people in these circumstances are far better on community service orders and things of that nature where they can do something constructive. The Liberal Party very strongly supports that attitude. As I said earlier this afternoon, one of the great pleasures I had in my parliamentary life was to introduce community service orders. Most honourable members support them.

In his reply to the second-reading debate on the Parole Orders (Transfer) Bill the Minister made a brief reference that indicated that he may have mistaken a point of view that I put. I suggested that the Government look at determinate sentences. I was referring to people serving a sentence of three or four years' imprisonment. If determinate sentences were introduced, those people could be given two years without any messing round, rather than being left hanging and having to apply for parole. I am not saying that, just because it has worked overseas, that is the way to go. However, it could be useful for the Minister and his department to look at it. It would certainly take the pressure off parole officers.

Reference has been made to the cost of week-end detention in terms of dollars and cents. What we do not take note of, however, is the impact on the family and the stigma associated with it. The person who has been an habitual drink-driver and has had to serve week-end detention is, in the eyes of many people in the community, regarded simply as a gaol-bird. That is a terrible indictment. It is a terrible stigma to have to live with. For that reason alone the Minister should be commended for doing away with week-end detention and adopting a community orientation.

Attendance centres, which have been particularly successful with young people in South Australia, are nothing new. The department should consider them as another alternative sentencing option. Given the resources, those centres can do more for the personal development of the offenders themselves.

As I said earlier this afternoon, to put somebody on a community service order or for somebody to finish his parole is all very well; but that is not necessarily the end of the story. Many people with behavioural problems really need a great deal of assistance.

As all honourable members know, the rate of recidivism is alarmingly high. From memory, I think it is of the order of 50 per cent, although in recent years it has declined a little. That problem needs a great deal of attention. If those people who are coming to the attention of the law and returning to the State's institutions could be helped, the community would be far more productive, the people concerned could lead far more fulfilling lives, and it would certainly be a constructive step towards limiting the breakdowns in marriages. The Government has made much of the Year of the Family, which is absolutely marvellous. I might take a little bit of credit in the sense that it was discussed in 1983. I am so pleased that it has gone ahead.

I ought to place on record the Liberal Party's attitude towards incarceration. The Liberal Party does not believe that, because a person has been sentenced to gaol, he ought to be punished by being locked up and fed, as it were, on bread and water and left to vegetate. My party's basic approach to matters of this nature is that the denial of freedom is the punishment and that enlightened prison administration has a responsibility to endeavour to do something constructive for those people who are incarcerated.

During the latter days of Mr Herbert's administration, during Mr Doumany's administration, and during the three years of my administration, considerable progress was made in Queensland. I am pleased that the Minister has indicated that he will consider the development of programs that will be beneficial in terms of reducing the rate of recidivism. Something must be done. I think it is fair criticism to say that the extreme hard line, the provocative statements and the stupidity of some attitudes to prisons ought to be put to rest. I am pleased that in recent times the Minister seems to have got away from that. If he does that, he will be very successful in his job.

Ministers have a grave responsibility in terms of the formation of attitudes. If a Minister takes what might be regarded as an extreme line, that has a deleterious impact on his administration, particularly in respect of his officers and the people for whom he is responsible, namely, the prisoners. I am not one to go easy on hardened criminals—far from it—but as has been said by the Opposition—indeed, on many occasions I have said the same—the great majority of offenders in gaol are not hardened, vicious criminals, as some members of the Government seem to imply. The member for South Brisbane (Mr Fouras) was quite right when he expressed that point of view in this Chamber this afternoon and on numerous other occasions. Members of all parties have a responsibility to those people. They are disadvantaged. The great majority of people in gaol are illiterate, lack numeracy skills and do not have the skills needed to get a job, which in many cases is the principal reason why they are in gaol. So a great deal must be done. In fairness to the Minister and to the Government, I admit that I know only too well that it is very easy to be a critic. One week one is criticised for being too tough; the next week one is criticised for being a softie. In reality, one has to walk a treacherous and tortuous path down the middle, and it is not easy.

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr WHITE: The tyranny of numbers is a terrible thing to have to face up to. Nevertheless, one lives to fight another day.

I mentioned earlier the need for a further input of skills from the behavioural sciences. I know that when one makes statements such as that, ill-informed, hard-nosed people make stupid statements like, "Don't have anything to do with those mad people from the university." People from the university have skills that ought to be used. Those skills are used in industry and commerce to the great benefit of our society, and they ought to be used more in the prison system.

One point that ought to be made when dealing with the concept of and approach to prison management is that there can be an over-emphasis on security. As I said, I am not one to underrate the importance of security, but there are a number of ways of securing people in gaol. The most important, practical and down-to-earth thing that can be done with a large prison population is to have people usefully employed in worthwhile activities. I state categorically that most of the problems in gaols in Queensland, and, indeed, throughout Australia, arise because the inmates do not have enough productive activities in which to involve themselves. The problem is not easy to face up to, and I know the difficulty of the challenge. I hope that the Minister will take that on board. His attitude to his job displays keenness and sincerity.

I point out also that it is terribly important—almost mandatory—that the Government push on with the upgrading of training of prison officers. In recent years, I had the opportunity to introduce a scholarship system and the upgrading of further training. I notice that the Minister has been commenting about some of those things recently.

It is all very well for honourable members to stand here and make pious statements. In reality, the departmental officers are the ones who, on a day-to-day basis, face the real difficulties of dealing with the inmates and the system. Unless they have the training and develop the necessary skills and expertise, an effective prison system will never be developed.

I am under no illusion that many prison officers are not up to the necessary standard. There are some excellent officers, of course; but the way in which some prison officers have abused the overtime system over the years is nothing short of a rort. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have gone down the tube because prison officers have manipulated the overtime system. That was something on which I took a very strong line when I was in the Ministry, and it is fair to say that I saved the tax-payers millions of dollars over the last three years. I hope the Minister will keep that in mind, because, for some, it is so easy to rip off the system.

Recently, there has been considerable criticism in relation to the riot at Brisbane Prison. Enough has been said about it; things can be overdone. I have made my point of view quite clear. Those Opposition members who made a big deal out of it have conveniently overlooked some of the great difficulties faced by their own people in other States.

The great challenge, of course, is to get on with the job of upgrading the system. A great start has been made in the restructuring of the department, the creation of new positions and the introduction of scholarships, training programs and so on. But that is only the beginning. I hope that the Minister presses on.

The member for South Brisbane referred to goal statistics in Queensland and compared them unfavourably with the statistics in Victoria. Over the years Victoria has probably been the most adventurous State in this matter. However, one matter that some people overlook is that the high Aboriginal population in Queensland goals tends to distort the figures in Queensland, as it does in Western Australia.

The Opposition has criticised the delay in the introduction of a Bill to amend the Prisons Act. It has been a long time coming. It was well in shape before I left the Welfare Services portfolio, and the Minister has indicated that he has taken the matter on board. We all look forward to its introduction.

Finally, I extend appreciation to the Minister, and particularly to his officers, some of whom are sitting in the precincts of the Chamber. I refer to other officers who are not here, such as Tom King, who is doing a tremendous job in Woodford. Prisoners from the Woodford prison have done a good deal of work in the Woodford area, which is in the electorate of Caboolture. They have built kindergartens, painted churches and restored buildings. They have played a great part in building a village in Caboolture. Perhaps the member for Caboolture could remind me of its name.

Mr Newton: The historical village.

Mr WHITE: The historical or heritage village, which is being built in Caboolture.

The Liberal Party supports the Bill. It recognises that the Minister has some difficulties to overcome.

Mr COMBEN (Windsor) (4.32 p.m.): On 20 December last year, in my second speech in this House, I spoke to the Welfare Estimates. In that speech I questioned substantially the place of short-term and week-end imprisonment in Queensland. It was a typical speech of a new member in this place. Many hours of work had gone into it. I had spoken to a number of probation officers about community service orders and to a prison officer about short-term imprisonment.

I said at the time, in relation to short-term imprisonment, that the cost of a prison term to the individual offender is immense and should be taken into account at all times. Prison brings the prisoner into contact with more serious offenders. More serious anti-social behaviour may develop. In the case of many crimes and many offenders, imprisonment may be the only practical or appropriate course of action. Certainly ALP policy clearly recognises that when it states that the Australian Labor Party accepts imprisonment as being necessary for the protection of the society. It goes on to say that imprisonment should be the last resort and that alternatives to imprisonment should be used as extensively as possible.

As so often happens in this place, the Minister for Welfare Services and Ethnic Affairs chose to totally ignore the words of a new member or even to listen to what was being said by Opposition members.

Mr Menzel: That is a bit hard.

Mr COMBEN: In actual fact, that is what happened. In his reply to the debate, when referring to what I said, the Minister said—

Mr Muntz: You did not contribute anything, as I recall, and that is what I said.

Mr COMBEN: I shall tell the Minister what he said. He said—

"The honourable member for Windsor (Mr Comben) is obviously not up to date with his information about the Probation and Parole Service. His trendy, left-wing economic analysis of the comparative costs of imprisonment and community service provides little comfort to the victims of crime."

What did the Minister say in his second-reading speech on this Bill? To what did he refer? He referred to a report entitled "Community Service: An Evaluation of the Impact of the Community Order Scheme in Queensland", and quoted from it as follows—

"A comparison was made of the costs of the Community Service Order Scheme and of the Prisons Department in the financial year 1981-82. It was found that the daily cost of a community service worker was \$1.52 whereas maintaining a prisoner cost \$49.13."

I spent 33 minutes debating the Welfare Estimates in December last year and trying to explain to the Minister that there could be savings to the community along those lines, but he pooh-poohed me with statements about trendy left-wing economics.

Mr Muntz: It has been a reasonable debate until now; don't spoil it.

Mr COMBEN: I am quite prepared to have a go——

Mr Muntz: You spoiled the Estimates debate; don't spoil this one, please.

Mr COMBEN: The Opposition is in this Chamber to contribute. Opposition members are part of democracy and are entitled to air their views and to debate constructively——

Mr Muntz: I am waiting with bated breath.

Mr COMBEN: The Minister can have his say.

Opposition members are here to provide balance in contrast to the conservative policies of the Government. We are offering the people of Queensland an alternative Government and we will be accepted by them in 1986. The talent in Opposition ranks will ensure that the Government is demoralised over the next three years.

Government Members interjected.

Mr COMBEN: If Government members think that they have been winning the debates over the last three weeks, they should start reading the newspapers.

What are some of the alternatives to community service orders? In the Estimates debate I said something to the effect that the Government should be considering alternatives to week-end detention. At that time I referred to the problems that face community service schemes in various parts of the State. In areas such as Inala and Beenleigh very few community projects can be undertaken because the general voluntary organisations and service organisations in those places do not have the money to provide the basic materials—paint and sandpaper—necessary for community order projects. In contrast, in areas such as Holland Park, service organisations are able to carry out the project.

So, to a large extent, the Government is not putting money into community service orders and is not contributing to the probation service. If a little more money was spent in those areas, the State could be saved several million dollars. In addition, the system is being distorted. If a person is convicted in a Magistrates Court of a minor offence, he might be sentenced to week-end detention or short-term imprisonment. However, in other Magistrates Courts in areas in which community service schemes are in operation, an offender could be ordered to carry out a community service project. The probation officer, for example, might say that the local scout hall needed painting. It is only in some instances that community service orders can be made, and that distortion is wrong. The Government should consider the entire system and allocate money to the areas of need.

The fine option provision introduced in legislation four months ago has yet to be proclaimed. I remember that I told the Minister at that time what I thought of the proclamation date being 1 April or April Fool's Day. That date has gone by and the Bill has not yet been proclaimed.

The community service order is the most appropriate alternative to week-end detention. It is most appropriate in family situations so that there is less disruption for the individual and for the family. The Government should be making more money available for community service projects and providing more staff for their supervision.

The Government Whip is indicating that I should wind up. The Opposition Whip has told me that, whenever the Government Whip tells me to wind up, I should keep going; I will do what the Opposition Whip has told me to do.

So that the community service projects can be carried out, money must be provided for materials. As the shadow Minister has indicated, the Opposition does not object to the Bill because it is a good piece of progressive legislation. I support the comments made by the shadow Minister.

Hon. G. H. MUNTZ (Whitsunday—Minister for Welfare Services and Ethnic Affairs) (4.40 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate. Firstly, I thank the Opposition spokesman (Mr McElligott) for his support for the Bill and also for his contribution.

I certainly hope that the new Prisons Act will transcend party politics. When the Bill introducing that Act is debated, the honourable member will have the chance to demonstrate his good faith. I assure him that I am working in all good faith to present that legislation as soon as possible.

The Government owes it to the community to control prisons; it is as simple as that. Loss of liberty is imposed by the courts as a punishment. The prison system seeks to contain prisoners, not to punish them in addition to that punishment.

There is a prison review committee, which reports to me. I hope that over the next few months it will report to me in full. A number of options are being considered, and I assure the House that the Government is well down the road towards a complete review of the prison system.

I acknowledge the receipt of the letter that the Opposition spokesman forwarded to me some time ago. I assure him that I am giving it my full consideration.

I want to say that it is the officers of the Government, not the prisoners, who are responsible for the prisons. It is true that in recent disturbances I took a hard line. However, I make no excuses for that. Again I believe that the Government owes that responsibility to the community. Security of the prison system and security for those outside the prison are the No. 1 priority. At the same time, top priority is given to the humane containment and rehabilitation of prisoners.

I remind honourable members that for every prisoner inside a prison there is outside the prison at least one person who has been either maimed, raped, hurt or whatever. As well, there are members of a family who have been totally devastated, and there is a community that has been disillusioned. So that, in talking about privileges for prisoners and in making excuses for prisoners, people should remember that outside the prison there are women and children who have been hurt very seriously.

A forward plan is under way and new initiatives are being undertaken for both prisoners and prison officers. Great importance is placed on the training of prison officers.

At this stage, I pay the highest tribute to those prison officers who were involved in the disturbances in November. They acted totally in good faith and very professionally. Both the Government and the community owe them a debt of gratitude for the manner in which they contained those disturbances.

One aspect that has been overlooked and not stressed, particularly by the press, is that during those disturbances no-one was either hurt or killed. In disturbances in southern States, in which prisons are controlled by other elements, lives were lost. However, in the disturbances that occurred in our prisons, nobody was hurt and no lives were lost. That is to the credit of the prison officers. Honourable members have praised them for the work that they do.

As for the Prisoners Action Group, which was mentioned by the Opposition spokesman—there is no doubt that it is disruptive to the prison system. I do not consider it necessary to listen to input from it. I acknowledge that certain members of the group would adopt a responsible attitude. However, within it there is a very destructive element. The only advice that I can give the Opposition spokesman and his colleagues is that, in dealing with those persons who are in control of the Prisoners Action Group, they should tread very cautiously. Advice that I have received is along those same lines.

I do not believe that there is a need to set up an all-party committee to review the prison system. Such a review is the responsibility of this House, my department and the committees that I, as Minister, appoint.

Grievance committees have been found to be unsatisfactory in other States. In the Queensland prison system, prisoners can lodge complaints to the prison superintendent, who has made himself available at every opportunity, to the visiting justice, to the Comptroller-General, and to me. Each week I receive dozens of letters from prisoners on different matters. Full consideration is given to them.

A relatively small percentage of prisoners is unemployed. I am afraid that there seems to be a concentration on the Brisbane prison system. I admit that there is an employment problem within that prison. The Woodford system, the Wacol system, the prison farms and Rockhampton prison are examples of excellent prisons. As far as I am concerned, they are the best in Australia.

Without any shadow of doubt, the women's prison in Brisbane is the best in the world. We should be proud of our record and the system under which we operate. I acknowledge that there is room for improvement in any prison system. I have admitted that there is room for improvement in the Brisbane prison system. The Government is doing its best to address those problems. In the months ahead, the progress that is necessary for improvement will be undertaken.

Remedial classes and other classes are well supported in the Woodford, Wacol and Brisbane prisons. Contact visits are allowed at Wacol and Rockhampton and at the State prison farms. They are also allowed to some extent at Woodford prison. Some prisoners at Brisbane prison have contact visits. Last month, 20 such visits took place.

I thank the Opposition spokesman for his contribution. I will certainly consider his suggestions. I repeat that I will not listen to the Prisoners Action Group. If Opposition members wish to align themselves with Mr Kennedy and Mr Arrowsmith, they can do so, but they will go down the same track. That group has not taken a responsible attitude. It has a great deal to answer for in relation to the disturbances at prisons and their cost to the community. Approximately \$640,000 worth of damage was caused to the prison system through the involvement of the Prisoners Action Group.

Mr Davis: You blame everybody except yourself.

Mr MUNTZ: No, I do not. I am just indicating what I think about the Prisoners Action Group. The majority of the community would agree with me.

I thank the member for Aspley for his contribution. He expressed his support for community service orders. The cost of operating those orders must be met. The answer to short-term imprisonment is community service orders. They have been very successful in various centres throughout Queensland. I have had an opportunity to visit and talk to those offenders who are carrying out community service orders. Recently in Brisbane I spoke to 18 and 19-year-old offenders. One offender who was working at an establishment has sought employment at that establishment, having completed his community service order. Another young man has returned to a centre to work outside his community service order but within the same community. The success of the system is a credit to those persons who supervise the community service orders.

Week-end detention has been carried out at Brisbane, Rockhampton and Townsville prisons. Suitable programs for definite terms are not available to week-end detainees. No rehabilitation is provided for week-end detainees. That is one of the reasons why the Government has considered repealing the Weekend Detention Act. Alcohol and drug-smuggling are of concern within the week-end detention system. Unfortunately, the number of week-end escapes is also high. The Government is addressing that problem. I thank the member for Aspley for his support.

The member for South Brisbane (Mr Fouras) said that the National Party Government is abolishing week-end detention, and he has no great complaint about that. He supports the Bill. Most of what he has said has been said before, but he manages to say it with more emotion. He continues to complain about the National Party's ideological blinkers. I can assure him that we are moving as quickly as we can in the direction of community correction, as he knows. There will be fewer people in prison and more work available for those who are there. I assure the member for South Brisbane that the Prisons Act and Regulations are under review. The Prisons Regulations have been reprinted

and are available to the public from the Government Printer. As the member for South Brisbane knows, at my instructions the detention unit has been dismantled at Brisbane prison. I instructed that it be used as a store-room. A chaplain has indicated that he would like to use that area as a chapel. It has a use and we ought not to destroy it. It would be a waste of public money.

I thank the member for Fassifern for his contribution. He acknowledges that the department has many responsibilities. He acknowledged the work of my officers in both welfare and prisons. He agrees with me that the Prisoners Action Group has disseminated inaccurate and damaging information to some sections of the media. I place on record the support that we as a Government have received from prison officials both during and after the recent disturbances. I look forward to their support in a two-way communication. Gaol should not be used to extreme, as the member for Fassifern said. He is correct.

He mentioned the Boys Town establishment and "The Outlook" centre at Boonah, both of which are in his electorate. As he said, we had an opportunity to inspect Boys Town last week. It is a wonderful environment for rehabilitating offenders into the community. I take my hat off to Brother Paul and the other Brothers and teachers who are involved in that institution. We have given them total support. As the member for Fassifern said, over \$1m of Government finance has been injected into the program. I certainly look forward to the same measure of support in the future. Palen Creek State Farm is also in Fassifern. As a prison farm, it has wonderful sporting opportunities and other programs. Contact visits are permitted.

The member for Redcliffe (Mr White) mentioned attendance centres for adults. They are being considered, but they will not overcome the problems which beset week-end detention, to which I drew attention in my reply to the second-reading debate on the previous Bill. Those problems are not limited to cost. Attendance centres for youthful offenders are also under consideration, as the member for Redcliffe will see tomorrow, when I table a draft Family and Community Development Bill. The draft legislation is a comprehensive piece of legislation addressing itself to family and community development within the community. That same type of development can make an input into the prison system.

The member for Redcliffe mentioned our hard-line attitude. Again, I make no apology for the line we took during the recent disturbances. The community expected no less. The consequences of late have proved that we took the right action. Areas of concern were being addressed at the time of the disturbances. When I took over the portfolio last August, as the member for Redcliffe knows, action had been taken. If it had not been for those disturbances, the programs would have been implemented much sooner.

Training of prison staff will begin in the very near future, as the member for Redcliffe foreshadowed. We are currently building a prison staff college at Wacol. It is imperative that we address ourselves to the training of staff.

I am well down the track with prison reform. I have to work quietly, not in the glare of the prison reform spotlight. It is a very difficult and sensitive area. However, I assure the member for Redcliffe that we are working towards prison reform in all areas.

The party to which the honourable member for Windsor (Mr Comben) belongs supports the abolition of week-end detention, which is what the Bill is all about. As I said in the Estimates debate, the member for Windsor, in his usual manner, contributed very little. He quite unnecessarily criticised the Government. He is not even interested enough to stay in the House to listen to my reply to his remarks. He simply served up some trendy arguments. Whether he thinks it or not, he is a left-wing socialist. He contributed absolutely nothing. The former member for Windsor (Mr Moore) would be astounded at the type of representation that the current member provides for his constituents. I simply mention to the member for Windsor that legislation for the fine option order program is close to proclamation. I certainly have not wasted any time in ensuring that it is proclaimed.

As I have stated, the intention of the original legislation to introduce week-end detention was good; there was no reason why it should not have been introduced at that time. Serious problems inherent in the week-end detention program have disrupted the efficient management of prisons in this State. Unlike other sentencing alternatives, such as probation and community service orders, week-end detention has been limited in its operation.

The week-end detention program has been a costly one and has resulted in little, if any, benefit to offenders. Other non-custodial options that have been introduced have proved to be cheaper and more beneficial in terms of rehabilitation of offenders and cheaper and more beneficial to the community at large. I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion (Mr Muntz) agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Muntz, by leave, read a third time.

COMMUNITY SERVICES (TORRES STRAIT) BILL

Hon. R. C. KATTER (Flinders—Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide for support, administrative services and assistance for communities resident in Torres Strait or deemed so to be and for management of lands for use by those communities and for related purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Katter, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. R. C. KATTER (Flinders—Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs) (5 p.m.): I move—

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

This afternoon we have before us one of two Bills which are designed to provide for the administration, the supply of town services to, and the good government of areas set aside for use of Torres Strait Islanders and Aborigines through deed of grant in trust legislation already passed by this House.

For the information of honourable members, the Bill that they will have before them will be indetical in almost every single way to the Bill relating to Aborigines, except there there will be a three-year phase-in period with respect to the Aboriginal areas, and I will have more to say on that when the Bill relating to Aborigines is introduced tomorrow.

I will be brief in my comments this afternoon, as I wish to speak at greater length when the second Bill, concerning Aboriginal reserves, is introduced.

This Bill refers to the local government, the supply of town and social services, and the provision of law and order in the island communities of the Torres Strait. It gives the island councils the power and authority to make decisions which affect their own people and their own area. It outlines new roles for the Island Advisory Council and the Island Industries Board and establishes a Torres Strait Islander executive committee.

This legislation makes no new provisions concerning lands available to Aboriginal and Islander people. We are not setting up a special or in any way privileged group of people under this legislation. They will own their land in the same way as does anyone else in Queensland. We are not handing over to the Islander people anything at variance with local government in other areas of Queensland, bearing in mind that these communities are at various stages of development and none as yet receive Grants Commission funding. What we are doing is giving notice that the vital decisions affecting Torres Strait Islanders must be made by Torres Strait Islanders, and these decisions must fairly represent a balance of community interests.

As with other local authorities in Queensland, where Government funds are being spent, we have an obligation to see they are being spent responsibly. In doing so, we are again bringing these communities into line with the rest of the State. We are not setting

up a separate State, as some of our political opponents seem determined to do. We are conscious that separatist attitudes in other parts of the Commonwealth have caused disillusionment amongst many Aboriginal and Islander people and have caused them to be side-tracked from their real task of economic development.

I have said before, and I reiterate now, economic independence is the only way that Aboriginal and Islander people will ever be complete masters of their own destiny. Most are willing and eager to take on these challenges and responsibilities. The Department of Community Services will be available in the background to assist, if so requested.

This legislation facilitates the transition of the island communities, and promotes free enterprise and private ownership on the islands. It requires the island councils to be corporate bodies whose members will be elected at elections conducted in conjunction with other local authority elections in Queensland. It requires these councils to accept the wide powers, authorities, and responsibilities that will fall upon them.

During our extensive talks with them, the Islanders have indicated their acceptance of these responsibilities, and I have every confidence of their ability to carry out these duties and obligations and take their place in the mainstream of Queensland society.

The Queensland Government has moved progressively over the past 26 years, and now the time has come to move again, to take another step forward. This Bill represents a positive and responsible Government response to the very real desires of the Islanders to take on their own shoulders the future direction of their people.

I must thank my predecessors in this portfolio, and two people who are in this place who have helped with the Bill. They are Mr Claude Wharton and the Premier who have brought us successfully to where this critical stage of development can now take place. I also thank people of the department who have worked hard over the years, and the National Party parliamentary committee, which must receive special praise for the enormous amount of time and effort that they have put into the drafting of this Bill. They have travelled all over Queensland. They have laboured for over 40 hours translating into this legislation the wishes of the people of Queensland's deed of grant in trust areas. Most of all, thanks must go to the people themselves and, in commending this Bill to the House, I will conclude by quoting verbatim from a speech to the people of Yarrabah by one of the Yarrabah councillors—

“What this legislation is saying is your big sit down is over. This Council is going to give you nothing except higher rates, higher rent, higher charges. You'll be paying your way. Sitting in the sun all day on the grog is over. From now on, You'll be working.”

I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central): The Opposition resents the way in which this Bill has been introduced. Therefore, I move—

“That the debate be now adjourned for a period of not less than seven days to allow the people of Queensland time to consider the Bill.”

Question put; and the House divided—

Ayes, 32

Campbell
Casey
Comben
D'Arcy
Davis
De Lacy
Eaton
Fouras
Goss
Hamill
Innes
Knox

Kruger
Lee
Mackenroth
McElligott
McLean
Milliner
Prest
Scott
Shaw
Underwood
Vaughan
Veivers

Warburton
Warner, A. M.
White
Wilson
Wright
Yewdale

Tellers:

Burns
Price

Noes, 41

Ahern
Alison
Bailey
Bjelke-Petersen
Booth
Borbidge
Chapman
Cooper
Elliott
FitzGerald
Gibbs, I. J.
Glasson
Goleby
Gunn
Harper

Harvey
Henderson
Jennings
Katter
Kaus
Lane
Lester
Lingard
Littleproud
McKechnie
McPhie
Menzel
Miller
Muntz
Newton

Powell
Randell
Simpson
Stephan
Stoneman
Tenni
Turner
Warner, J. H.
Wharton

Tellers:

Cahill
Neal

Resolved in the negative.

Debate, on motion of Mr Scott, adjourned.

Mr KATTER: I move—

“That the resumption of the debate be made an order of the day for tomorrow.”

Mr Scott interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I warn the honourable member for Cook under Standing Order 123A.

Motion (Mr Katter) agreed to.

GOLDEN CASKET ART UNION ACT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 5 April (see p. 2535) on Mr Gunn's motion—

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

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate) (5.15 p.m.): The introduction of Instant Casket into Queensland on 1 July, which this Bill is designed to facilitate, could easily encourage observers to reach the conclusion that the Queensland Government believes in a gambling-led economic recovery for the State. Legalised forms of gambling in Queensland have become a \$100m money-spinner for the Queensland Government. We are led to believe that next financial year the introduction of Instant Casket will add another \$20m or so. Despite this huge rake-off from gambling, the Government's thirst for further gambling revenue seems to be quite unquenchable.

The Government tolerates in-line gambling machines that provide pay-outs of as low as 10 per cent of the take. Yet on the issue of legalising poker machines, the Government endeavours to give the impression that it is opposed to any extension of legalised gambling within the community. The Government's hypocrisy in its approach to gambling is widely recognised and is now being exposed in much greater detail.

Perhaps the fact that the present Queensland Budget is running at a deficit of approximately \$50m is one of the reasons why this Government is anxious to foist yet another form of dubious gambling upon citizens. This game of Instant Casket will provide to the Government almost the same amount of revenue as does Gold Lotto. From the repayment percentage of Instant Casket, it can be seen that people will have better odds if they take a free “pokey” bus to Tweed Heads and play the “pokies”.

In Instant Casket, only 60 per cent of subscriptions will be returned to players as prizes.

An Opposition Member: Only 60 per cent?

Mr WARBURTON: That is right. Of 500 000 tickets in a game, only 75 000 will be prize-winners. That is the information that has been given to Opposition members. As I say, the odds on the poker machines are much better.

In New South Wales, between 80 and 90 per cent of revenue obtained through poker machines is paid as prizes, depending on club policy. In the Australian Capital Territory, it is legally required that all poker machines have an 80 per cent repayment level. I am drawing comparisons between what is happening in other States, which, of course, have heavy gambling commitments, and what will happen in Queensland with this gambling bonanza that the Queensland Government seems to be perpetrating.

Compare that 80 per cent repayment level with the 10 per cent repayment level for in-line machines, which this Government tolerates, and the 60 per cent repayment level for Instant Casket. I am sure that such a comparison will show who is actually being ripped off. The odds of winning on a poker machine are higher than on any type of legalised gambling available in Queensland.

The ALP's policy of supporting the introduction of poker machines into licensed clubs is based on the fact that profits from poker machine revenue can be ploughed back into the clubs to provide sporting, recreational, entertainment and other facilities, all of which are sadly lacking in Queensland. Club members and the community generally benefit from well-appointed club facilities. I do not run away from my party's policy.

The Opposition strongly believes that Government revenue raised through approved forms of gambling should be returned directly to community services. Opposition members have always maintained that Governments should follow that concept.

That was so at one stage, but it is no longer so. The majority of funds now go directly into consolidated revenue. From its inception in 1916 to 20 June 1975, the net proceeds of the Golden Casket were distributed amongst hospitals, clinics, charitable organisations and patriotic funds, with hospitals receiving the vast majority of those funds. In fact, from 1 July 1920 to 30 June 1974, \$98.3m was distributed, of which \$85.8m went to hospitals.

It is incredible how gambling has grown in Queensland over the past few years. In the 54-year period from 1920 to 1974, \$98m in profit was made on the Golden Casket. In this present age, legalised gambling is bringing in that amount of money every year. Since 1 July 1975, net proceeds from the Golden Casket have gone into the Cultural Capital Development Fund, which is used to provide cultural facilities in Queensland. Section 12 of the Golden Casket Art Union Act requires the net proceeds to be paid into the Cultural Capital Development Fund or such other fund as the Governor in Council approves. In 1982-83, \$7.9m was paid into that fund by the Golden Casket Office. Next year, if this Parliament decides to accept Instant Casket, which is another form of gambling, the payment to the Cultural Capital Development Fund will be boosted by another \$20m.

The Queensland gambling dollar, which is presently stretched to its limit, will be stretched that little bit more. However, with Gold Lotto there is no requirement to plough revenue back into community facilities.

Section 13 of the Gold Lotto Act directs net proceeds to be paid into consolidated revenue, from which all or part may be distributed to the Sports and Youth Fund, the Cultural Capital Development Fund or such other fund as the Governor in Council may approve.

In 1982-83, \$21.3m from Gold Lotto operations was paid into consolidated revenue, from which the Government magnanimously gave \$2m to the Cultural Capital Development Fund and a further \$2m to the Sports and Youth Fund, which, incidentally, was down from the \$2.7m received by the fund in the 1981-82 financial year.

Prior to 1975, all net proceeds went into community facilities, largely hospitals. Now, only a small proportion of the total provides cultural facilities. The vast majority of gambling revenue goes straight into consolidated revenue. This financial year, from gambling receipts that will total over \$70m, \$8m to \$10m will be provided for the Cultural Development Fund and \$60m will be paid into consolidated revenue.

When all forms of legalised gambling in Queensland are listed, it is a revelation to see how gambling revenue has grown in the last few years. Revenue is obtained from Golden Casket, Gold Lotto, totalisator and betting taxes, book-makers' turnover, soccer pools, bingo, lucky numbers, in-line machines, and so on. Approval will be given to mid-week Lotto, 6 Pic Jackpot and Instant Casket. I have not mentioned the casinos that operate in Queensland. That makes gambling really big business. Gambling is now a bigger money-spinner than mining royalties in the State of Queensland.

Without any intention of being disrespectful, I say that if Brisbane today was Jerusalem 2 000 years ago, a certain reverend gentleman would be overturning more than a few tables in a temple. To continue that Christian analogy—it is interesting to note that the Minister justifies the need for additional gambling revenue by referring to the protestant notion of good works. Gambling revenue will help finance these good works, argues the Minister. Unfortunately, very little gambling revenue finds its way directly into good works.

I now compare Queensland's record with that of New South Wales, with particular reference to poker machine revenue. This financial year the New South Wales Government expects to earn \$154m in poker machine tax, all of which will be assigned directly to hospital subsidies. What do Queensland hospitals receive directly from gambling—and I reiterate “directly”? Absolutely nothing! In New South Wales, Government revenue raised through approved forms of gambling is returned directly to community facilities. Not so here in Queensland. Only about 10 per cent of the total is so returned.

Most Queenslanders, whether they gamble or not, view as absolutely hypocritical the willingness of the Queensland Government to promote these new forms of gambling while it is absolutely hysterical in its opposition to poker machines in licensed clubs. Perhaps our gambling Government considers that the pay-out rate of poker machines is too high in comparison with the existing approved forms of gambling such as in-line machines, which have a pay-out rate of 10 per cent. Perhaps our gambling Government considers that poker machines would allow too many facilities to be provided to the public in the clubs of Queensland. Whatever the reason, gambling in Queensland is being used to provide additional revenue for the Consolidated Revenue Fund instead of being used to provide funds directly for long-term, beneficial, improved community facilities.

The Opposition has consistently pursued a policy designed to give our Queensland clubs legal means—and I emphasise “legal means”—to improve their facilities in the interests of club members and patrons. In our opinion, the proposed additional form of instant gambling, which is designed to help no-one but State Treasury, could further erode club income. That is of great concern to the Opposition. It is for that reason that we oppose the Bill in its entirety. Nothing I can find in the Act or the Bill prevents a young person from purchasing a Golden Casket ticket. Youngsters can purchase Golden Casket tickets, as we know them, from agencies and win prizes. My understanding, however, is that moneys won are generally held in trust until the winner attains the age of 18 years.

Some time ago, in this Chamber—I forget whether we were dealing with a Golden Casket Bill or another gambling Bill—the matter of young people having access to the purchase of Golden Casket tickets was debated at some length. The feeling at that time was that there was no real harm in a juvenile going to an agent's desk for a mother, father, relative or friend and purchasing a ticket. The important point is what is happening now the Government is hell-bent on introducing further forms of gambling into Queensland when it is supposedly promoting the family. In the two previous Bills dealt with today, we heard much about the Year of the Family, but in this measure the Government is encouraging the young people of our State to gamble. Nothing I can find in the Act prevents our young people from participating in this new gambling game of Instant Casket. The Opposition regards that as absolutely obnoxious and will not support it. Because most honourable members have families of their own, they can understand the appeal that this sort of operation, if it is allowed to go unchecked, will have for young people.

Mr Gunn: It will not go unchecked. There will be a set of rules; don't worry about that!

Mr WARBURTON: That is what is always said. Always there will be sets of rules, but, in his second-reading speech, the Minister said nothing about that. Now that he has been alerted to the fact, the House hears that rules will be applied.

Mr Gunn: Even the Labor States have rules.

Mr WARBURTON: If that was to be the case, because it is such a serious matter, the Minister should have told the House when he introduced the Bill.

Because the matter is very important, I visualise the scenario of young people actually queueing up on footpaths.

Mr Gunn: Oh!

Mr WARBURTON: It is not a joke; it is very serious. If the Minister tells me that that is something he should have told the House about, I will accept it. I am glad that the Opposition has brought the Minister out of his shell. He should have had the decency to tell the House of that initially. This is a very serious matter. It is one of the things that prevent the Opposition from supporting the Bill. If the Minister had stated his intention initially, the Opposition might have had an opportunity to reconsider its position.

As of now, except for what the Minister said, the Opposition's stand is clear. Until the Opposition gets some clearer evidence from the Minister, the Opposition will oppose the Bill. The Opposition cannot amend the Bill in its present form. The rules that the Minister mentioned should be included in the legislation. The Opposition is unable to counter what it considers to be a major problem, which constitutes another good reason to oppose the Bill.

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (5.33 p.m.): Personally, I am bitterly opposed to the Bill. When the Government carries on with its God-fearing ways about the evils of poker machines and at the same time introduces even more new gambling games, I never cease to be amazed at its hypocrisy. Under this legislation, everybody—young people, old people, pensioners and the unemployed—will be exposed to gambling.

Mr Neal: There is a big difference between the Golden Casket and poker machines.

Mr De LACY: There is not much difference, particularly with the Instant Casket. The fact is that people who gamble on poker machines make a conscious decision to go to a club to gamble.

Mr Borbidge: Why did your Government in Victoria reject poker machines?

Mr De LACY: It is not our Government in Victoria. The other thing that never ceases to amaze me is the way in which members of the Government make examples of the Labor States when they, allegedly, are wrong and on other occasions use them to justify their own actions.

My main purpose in speaking is to put forward the views of country people, who are outraged at the fact that the Government wants to introduce two new gambling games. Country people are outraged and upset for three reasons. The first is the Government's total hypocrisy, which I have mentioned. On moral grounds, the Government is categorically opposed to poker machines, yet in recent times it has approved not only these two gambling games provided for in the legislation but also gambling six days a week on the TAB, and I will speak about the dealings of the TAB during the debate on a later Bill. It has legalised casinos, and it receives revenue from the Golden Casket, Gold Lotto, Soccer Pools and pin-ball machines on which kids spend all their lunch money.

Recently there has been a lot of talk about in-line machines in clubs. One of the Liberal members referred to the games of chance being promoted by the big newspapers. All those sorts of things are going on, yet in the next breath Government members say, "We are good, God-fearing people and we don't agree with poker machines because they are no good for the family. They break down family life." If that is not hypocrisy, I would like to hear the Government's definition of it.

The main reason why country people are upset is that the Government is out in the market-place competing with local charities, sporting clubs and other organisations for the scarce gambling dollar. When these two games were first mooted, the Minister said that he expected to take \$100m out of the community. There is only so much surplus money available in the community, and they intend to pillage the lot.

I can remember the old days when collections were made only for the local football club, the boy scouts and perhaps the local parents and citizens association. But these days a proliferation of clubs and charity organisations is looking for money. Many legitimate charities need more and more money. They should be regarded as more than charities, because they are doing jobs which the Government ought to be doing. I attend meetings of my local parents and citizens association, and I find that they are no longer raising money merely to send children away on sporting trips and so on. They are now raising money to buy duplicating paper and photocopiers, and even lawn-mowers and petrol to keep the schoolgrounds tidy. Association members have to get out in the market-place to earn money by selling raffle tickets, and the Government is competing with them.

I am also associated with football clubs and charities which are having a lot of trouble making sufficient money to keep their heads above water. In the old days, it was easy. They ran raffles and people would willingly spend money to support the charity of their choice. In those days football clubs raised money only to buy guernseys and perhaps pay for insurance. Now they have to pay players and a lot of other things. But is the Government supporting them? No! The Government is actually competing with them.

Mr Simpson interjected.

Mr De LACY: I am certain that the football clubs with which I am associated would prefer that the Government got out of this scene and let them make their own money by running their own raffles. They would prefer not to be subsidised, because they are either receiving nothing or so little that it does not help them.

The stage is being reached where country areas have the worst of all worlds. All of the gambling avenues are available but none of the advantages from them come back into the local area. The big advantage of poker machines is that the money generated by them is spent in providing facilities, employment and entertainment in the local area. That does not happen with the gambling games that the Government is pushing on to the community, and which the community does not want.

Where do the profits from these gambling games finish up? If the residents of Cairns gamble on the new mid-week Lotto, where will the profits go?

Mr Gunn: Out into the community.

Mr De LACY: They certainly will not come to Cairns. I will tell members where the profits will go. I am led to believe that the Government will use them to build prestige buildings in Brisbane which are of no advantage to country people. The Government is competing with local charities and sporting clubs in country areas, but the profits from its gambling games will be spent on prestige developments in the city. For instance, I believe that this money will be used to pay for the escalating price of the Cultural Centre. Somebody mentioned \$51m; but I am led to believe that that is only half the amount of money that will be required for the Cultural Centre. People in Cairns will be putting their hands in their pockets to help build that centre, but they will never see it.

Mr Price: And it doesn't create any employment.

Mr De LACY: As the member for Mt Isa said, it does not create any employment. It will certainly create no employment in the areas in which the money is raised.

The Labor Party opposes this Bill on three grounds: Firstly, because of the hypocrisy and double-standards of the Government; secondly, because the Government is competing with charities and sporting clubs for the scarce dollar; and, thirdly, because the profits that the Government will make from Instant Casket and mid-week Lotto will be spent in Brisbane and not in country areas.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise) (5.41 p.m.): In rising to support the Bill, I certainly express surprise at some of the comments that have been made by Opposition members. I can understand their reluctance not to accept any interjections. They are saying that the Government is making a terrible mistake in adopting as policy basically the same guide-lines for these forms of gambling that their counterparts in every other State have laid down. They are also saying that the Government should be introducing poker machines. That is one of the best examples that I have seen of petty political point scoring, of scaremongering and of blatant and absolute hypocrisy.

Opposition members have spent a lot of time talking about poker machines. If they have the time or the inclination, I invite them to go to the Parliamentary Library and read the Wilcox report that Premier John Cain commissioned in Victoria. If they cannot be bothered doing that, I refer them to a very good summary entitled "Victorian Government notes", No. 39 of 15 December 1983. If one wants an argument to demolish the proposal for the introduction of poker machines that Opposition members have advanced, one could not get a better argument than the report that was commissioned by their own ALP colleagues in Victoria.

Mr Simpson: Their caucus down there.

Mr BORBIDGE: Yes. They came up and campaigned for the ALP in the last State election.

I shall refer to the Wilcox report. I can understand the sensitivity of the two Opposition members who preceded me in this debate. Obviously they are in the camp of Mr Vibert and Mr Ainsworth.

Mr Simpson interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: As my friend the honourable member for Cooroora says, we need to ask questions about the connection between Mr Vibert and Mr Ainsworth and the Labor Party in this State. Why is the Labor Party so keen to promote poker machines and no other form of gambling? Apparently Queensland cannot have the other types of gambling that are acceptable to Opposition members' counterparts in every other State of Australia. Of all the Labor Governments in Australia, only the New South Wales Government allows poker machines, and it admits privately that that was a mistake.

The document entitled "Victorian Government Notes" states—

"Poker Machine Inquiry

The Premier John Cain, announced recently the Government's acceptance of the Wilcox Report of the Board of Inquiry into Poker Machines. This report, recommends that poker machines not be permitted in Victoria. The Government has adopted the recommendations.

There is no doubt that poker machines would be used by large numbers of Victorians and might generate significant funds for those organisations allowed to operate them. The net employment effects would probably be positive, but minimal.

Three Major Objections

However, these beneficial factors are outweighed by three major objections—

The certainty of increased criminal activities in Victoria as a direct result of the introduction of poker machines. The extent of the likely increase depends directly on the number of premises in which machines are permitted and the stringency of the controls imposed.

The adverse effects upon many existing businesses, especially hotels and some types of restaurants. If the model existing in New South Wales, where poker machines are permitted only in licensed clubs, were adopted for Victoria, the effects upon individual existing businesses would range from significant to devastating.

These businesses could not compete with businesses whose operations are subsidised by the proceeds of a lucrative State conferred gambling monopoly."

Mr Simpson interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the honourable member for Cooroora said, small sporting clubs would also suffer.

Another major objection was—

"The certainty that some Victorians will use the machines to gamble to an extent which is beyond their financial capacity and that many will gamble to an extent which causes them serious concern."

The document from which I am reading is entitled "Victorian Government Notes" and it bears a photograph of Mr Cain. The Opposition's colleagues in Victoria have decided not to introduce poker machines and, because of that, Opposition members in this place are condemned for the stand that they are taking.

The document goes on to say—

"Each one of these objections represents a powerful argument against the legalisation of poker machines in Victoria. Considered together, the case is overwhelming.

Further, unless poker machines were permitted in both clubs and hotels, and were Government owned and operated so as to allow only nominal profits to the site owner, the net benefits to Government revenue would be minimal.

This model, which could result in poker machines being installed in almost 2,000 separate premises in the State, is the worst possible solution in terms of the degree and control of criminal activities and the social problem of excessive gambling."

Opposition members have been destroyed by their own colleagues in Government in Victoria.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the honourable member for Lockyer said, hoist on their own petard. To permit machines to operate——

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: The honourable member should go to the library and read the report. It is one of the most detailed reports on the poker machine industry in Australia for some time. Opposition members have advocated that poker machines be introduced in Queensland and have said that the Government should not be amending legislation that will bring real benefit to the people of this State. They have adopted a hopelessly hypocritical attitude.

In summary, the report says——

“To permit machines to operate in licensed clubs alone, as in New South Wales, may actually reduce Government revenue. Much poker machine expenditure would come from funds now spent on alternative forms of gambling for which the taxation rate is much higher than would be practical for poker machines.”

That is a logical argument. It is the most detailed analysis of the poker machine industry that has been done in Australia for many years. It behoves all members of the Parliament to make themselves aware of the recommendations of the Wilcox report. They should be aware also that the Cain Labor Government, in its wisdom, upheld the recommendations in that report.

Despite the comments by Opposition members, the legislation before the House will bring immense benefits to the State of Queensland. It is interesting to note that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who refused to accept interjections in his tirade of abuse against the Government and the Treasury, suggested that the Government was introducing legislation to save some sort of imaginary Budget deficit. What a load of rubbish! It is on public record that the accumulated deficit in the Consolidated Revenue Fund in the State of Queensland since 1859 amounts only to about \$800,000.

The same cannot be said of New South Wales or Victoria. In Victoria, in the short space of 12 months, Mr Cain turned a \$6m Budget surplus into a \$90m Budget deficit. It is no wonder that Opposition members are embarrassed by the performance of the Queensland Government. However, they criticise it for introducing legislation that is in line with legislation introduced in the other States and that is consistent with the desire of this Government to ensure that, where gambling does take place, there is a legitimate return to the Government and the people in the provision of goods and services.

I suggest to members of the Opposition that, before they again claim that poker machines should be installed in Queensland, and before they support their friends, such as Mr Ainsworth and Mr Vibert—we are aware of their history before the courts in other parts of Australia—who in turn, support them, they should go over to the Parliamentary Library and read the Wilcox report. In addition, they should read what their colleagues in Victoria have adopted as their policy, and that policy is a responsible one.

I support this legislation, and I commend the Minister for taking this initiative.

Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (5.51 p.m.): I voice my disapproval at the introduction of yet another form of gambling. It was only two weeks ago that the Minister for Justice told this House that Queensland is fortunate because it has a Christian Government. A Christian Government! This Government is introducing another form of gambling that will take even more money from the average family—money that it can ill afford to part with if it is to maintain an acceptable living standard. The Government is poking under the noses of mothers and fathers a form of gambling that will deny families of a certain amount of their income. Mothers and fathers will be engaging in yet another form of get-rich-quick gambling.

Mr Warburton: You mean get-broke-quick gambling.

Mr PREST: That is exactly it. I have no doubt that, with Instant Casket, a person who wins \$2, \$5 or even \$10 will immediately put that money back into trying to win a bigger prize. I am astounded that this self-proclaimed Christian Government and those God-fearing members on the Government side of the House want to introduce another form of gambling.

I am concerned for the charities and sporting clubs in Queensland, which stand to lose millions of dollars as a result of the Government's decision to introduce instant lotteries. I refer to the comments of Mr Jock McKendry, who is the secretary-manager of Brothers Rugby League Club in Brisbane.

At the annual meeting of the Confraternity of Brothers Clubs in Brisbane he said—

"The club industry—struggling to maintain membership levels in the face of tough drink-driving laws—is concerned instant lotteries will attract thousands of gamblers away from bingo and other fund-raising ventures. All instant lottery is going to do is rob clubs and charities to pay the Government."

Later, he said—

"Small gamblers were more likely to try for a \$10,000 instant lottery prize than the cash offered at the hundreds of bingo sessions in Queensland every day.

Surely our clubs are more family orientated and deserving of grants and interest-free loans than the racing clubs."

I go along with certain of Mr McKendry's comments. I can imagine how much money will go from the TAB into the Racing Development Fund, and I admit that that money is serving a purpose. In contrast, however, the money that will be raised from Instant Casket will not go back into the community, nor will it go to the clubs, which are struggling to exist in spite of the fact that they are providing recreation and recreational facilities not only for senior members of families but also for juniors. The Government should be supporting those clubs whole-heartedly.

I would not be concerned to any great extent if the revenue that will come from this new form of gambling was to be put to good use, namely, to provide recreation and recreational facilities in Queensland.

It will do the opposite. It will take away from the clubs the revenue that they have been able to raise through their long hours in bingo sessions and the long hours spent by members selling raffle tickets. All that revenue will be taken away. The community has a certain amount of money to spend. Most members of the community try to obtain a little more than they have. They are never satisfied. With the introduction of Instant Casket, people will not be satisfied with the small prize; they will put their money back into Instant Casket and go home broke. The ones who will pay the piper will be the mother and the children.

Two weeks ago a pensioner entered my office two days after he was paid. He said to me, "Could you lend me some money?" I said, "What happened?" He said, "I went into the TAB, tried to get a bit more and I did my money." Honourable members can be assured that if a pensioner will do that, the family man will do it also. Some people put gambling and getting rich quickly before the needs of their families. Because of the present economic climate, no-one has very much money to spare. A person thinks that there is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow and that he will receive part of it. I have concern for the sporting clubs. I feel very strongly that the Government is doing the wrong thing. We can cop the Racing Development Fund. When a person enters a TAB he knows that if he continues to gamble the Government will take 15 or 16 per cent of the money that he invests. It is the same with Gold Lotto. The money goes into the Treasury coffers.

Previous speakers have said that perhaps the Government may have some trouble balancing its Budget. I do not care whether that is so. I am more concerned about the sporting clubs in Queensland being able to balance their budgets. The introduction of instant lotteries will deprive the sporting organisations of revenue and thereby deprive the children of sporting facilities. Sport is most essential.

People have said that the Labor Party wants to introduce poker machines. If a person wins money from a poker machine and keeps playing it all night, he will go broke. He must have some will-power. As the member for Sandgate said, a person will not need to go to a club to play Instant Casket. Children of all ages will be able to play it. I do not think that that is a good thing. If some form of instant lotteries is to be introduced, it should benefit

the sporting clubs. Agencies should be provided by the sporting clubs instead of being provided by newsagencies. The profits should go to the sporting clubs instead of to the Government.

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

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer) (7.15 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions. Most spoke in a similar vein.

There seems to be a general misunderstanding of the Bill. Instant Casket now operates in five States, four of which are controlled by Labor. It operates in exactly the same way as it will be operating in this State. It is interesting to note that only one of those States has poker machines.

Much has been made of poker machines and their benefits to an area. I remind members opposite that 60 per cent of Instant Casket receipts will be allocated as prize-money. That speaks for itself. One in every seven players will win a prize.

It was mentioned that the money would go straight into consolidated revenue. That is not so. The first amounts will be allocated to the new library, which is estimated to cost \$26m. An enormous amount of money has gone to the Cultural Centre from the Casket, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition well knows. It was directed to hospitals—

Mr Davis: It is not a great amount.

Mr GUNN: In excess of \$50m has gone to the Cultural Centre from the Goldern Casket, which produces revenue of about \$8m each year. Contrary to the statement made by members opposite, that money has not been directed to consolidated revenue.

The honourable member for Surfers Paradise is knowledgeable about the contents of the Bill. He is aware that poker machines were not allowed in Victoria. However, Instant Casket has been adopted there.

Over the last three years, \$260m has been invested in Instant Casket. Obviously, it will mean a lot to Queensland and will contribute much to the community.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that young people would be playing this game. He mentioned minors.

Mr Warburton: Juveniles.

Mr GUNN: Juveniles can now buy a Casket ticket, as he well knows. If a prohibition had been written into this Bill, which amends the Act governing the Goldern Casket, juveniles would have been excluded from buying Casket tickets. There is a book of rules—

Mr Warburton interjected.

Mr GUNN: Yes, that is so. That is what the draftsman has told me. Rules will apply. No juveniles will be allowed to participate.

Mr Warburton: Up to what age?

Mr GUNN: Minors.

Mr Warburton: What age is that?

Mr GUNN: Well, 16 or 18. Anyway, it will be in the book of rules. It is all right. I might add that minors can buy Casket tickets now. There is no problem about that; there is a rule for every game. Instant Casket will operate exactly as it operates in the other States, so the honourable member need not worry about that.

Mr Warburton: We are always being told.

Mr GUNN: That is a load of rubbish.

Once again, I thank honourable members for their contributions.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time (Mr Gunn's motion)—put; and the House divided—

Ayes, 42

Ahern
Alison
Bailey
Bjelke-Petersen
Booth
Borbridge
Chapman
Cooper
Elliott
FitzGerald
Gibbs, I. J.
Glasson
Goleby
Gunn
Harvey

Henderson
Hinze
Innes
Jennings
Katter
Kaus
Lane
Lee
Lester
Lingard
Littleproud
McKechnie
McPhie
Menzel
Miller

Muntz
Newton
Powell
Randell
Simpson
Stephan
Stoneman
Tenni
Turner
Wharton

Tellers:

Cahill
Neal

Noes, 26

Campbell
Casey
Comben
D'Arcy
Davis
De Lacy
Eaton
Fouras
Gibbs, R. J.
Goss

Hamill
Kruger
McElligott
Prest
Scott
Shaw
Underwood
Vaughan
Veivers
Warburton

Warner, A. M.
Wilson
Wright
Yewdale

Tellers:

Burns
Price

Resolved in the affirmative.

Committee

Mr Booth (Warwick) in the chair; Hon. W. A. M. Gunn (Somerset—Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of s. 4; Interpretation—

Mr WARBURTON (7.27 p.m.): This is the provision which by definition allows this new form of gambling to be implemented. I use this opportunity to advise the Minister that the Opposition is unhappy with his explanation in respect to juveniles—people of a young age—who will obviously be able to purchase tickets on the footpath outside agencies. As I said, we in the Opposition find that quite obnoxious. It appears that juveniles will be able to claim moneys and purchase more tickets.

The Minister replied that he would provide for the age limit in the regulations. But that is not in keeping with the Opposition's requirements. The Minister has now said that the regulations will prohibit minors who I understand to be people under the age of 18 years.

Mr Gunn: Yes.

Mr WARBURTON: If that is the situation, that will satisfy the Opposition.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 5 to 11, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS: PASSING OF CERTAIN BILLS

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House), by leave, without notice:
I move—

“That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would otherwise prevent the passing of the remaining stages of certain Bills read a first time on 10, 11 and 12 April 1984, during this week’s sitting.”

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (7.31 p.m.): I seek the indulgence of the House to present our opposition to this procedure. Last year, after a considerable study of the Standing Orders by the Standing Orders Committee, the decision was made to allow a period of two days in which to study Bills that were introduced into the Parliament.

The Leader of the House is saying that a Bill dealing with Aboriginal and Islander matters, which was introduced into the Chamber this afternoon, will be debated within the next 36 hours. The same procedure will be followed with the City of Brisbane Act Amendment Bill. Every honourable member has known for six or seven months that a Bill would have to be introduced to deal with Aboriginal and Islander matters.

The dogs have been barking that the Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs has not been able to get the Bill prepared. Special meetings of Cabinet and of the Government party have been held. We have had to wait and wait because the Minister and his departmental advisers could not even get the Bill printed. A Bill in which people throughout the nation are interested has been introduced in the dying hours of this session. That is not a fair go for the Opposition or for the people of the Aboriginal and Islander communities who are interested in this matter.

A Bill has been introduced to change the system of electing the Lord Mayor of Brisbane. About 10 or 12 years ago, the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing (Mr Hinze) and other members of his party argued in this Parliament to change the system for electing the Lord Mayor of Brisbane. Now they are changing the system back to what it was. About five or six months ago, the Minister announced that that would happen. Through sheer incompetence and indifference on the part of the Minister or some of his officers, the Standing Orders have to be put aside in the dying hours of this session so that this Bill can be rushed through. It is not good enough.

If the Ministers, their advisers and the members on their committees are not competent or are not doing their job properly, they ought to be sacked. The legislation should be introduced into the Parliament in accordance with the Standing Orders so that it can be properly considered by the community at large and debated in this Chamber. It is no wonder that people laugh at this Parliament and at its politicians. The Government cannot organise its business in such a way that sufficient time is allowed for the Parliament to deal with legislation properly.

Government Members interjected.

Mr BURNS: Those Government back-bench members who are interjecting do not understand the democratic system. It does not matter whether they have the numbers and can gag the Opposition; the fact is that we should be given an opportunity to debate legislation properly. I charge the Ministers with sheer and utter incompetence in the way in which they have handled these matters.

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House) (7.34 p.m.), in reply: I have very little to say in reply, except to point out that the Queensland Parliament has had an extremely busy session since it began sitting in November last year. Today, Wednesday, 11 April 1984, is the thirty-fourth day of the session. The latest available comparative figures show that the Queensland Parliament has a very good record in the time that it has provided for the conduct of the business of the House. The figures, which are for the period between 22 November last year and 6 March this year, show the number of sitting days for the lower Houses of the various Federal and State Parliaments. They are: Commonwealth, 18 days; New South Wales, 13 days; Queensland, 24 days; South Australia, 6 days; Victoria, 11 days; and Western Australia, 12 days.

Until yesterday, Tuesday, 10 April 1984, the Queensland Parliament had enacted 60 pieces of legislation. Other Bills have been introduced but have not yet been finalised. It follows that there has been the pressure of business throughout the entire session and that is particularly so in this, the last week.

In an endeavour to promote good legislation in the best interests of all Queenslanders, I commend the motion to the House.

Question—That the motion (Mr Wharton) be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

Ayes, 41

Ahern
Alison
Bailey
Bjelke-Petersen
Booth
Borbidge
Cahill
Chapman
Cooper
Elliott
FitzGerald
Gibbs, I. J.
Glasson
Goleby
Gunn

Hartwig
Harvey
Henderson
Hinze
Jennings
Katter
Kaus
Lane
Lester
Lingard
Littleproud
McKechnie
McPhie
Menzel
Miller

Muntz
Newton
Powell
Simpson
Stephan
Stoneman
Tenni
Turner
Wharton

Tellers:

Neal
Randell

Noes, 30

Campbell
Casey
Comben
D'Arcy
Davis
De Lacy
Eaton
Fouras
Gibbs, R. J.
Goss
Hamill

Innes
Kruger
Lee
Lickiss
McElligott
Prest
Scott
Shaw
Smith
Underwood
Vaughan

Veivers
Warburton
Warner, A. M.
Wilson
Wright
Yewdale

Tellers:

Burns
Price

Resolved in the affirmative.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Racing Development Fund

Hon. R. J. HINZE (South Coast—Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing) (7.44 p.m.), by leave: My ministerial statement is in relation to recent adverse publicity which has been aired concerning the Racing Development Fund.

In accordance with previous undertakings I shall table the following documents in relation to the fund—

- (a) A 10-year cash flow to the year 1992-93;
- (b) A list of approvals made by the Governor in Council since the proclamation on 1 July 1981 of the Racing and Betting Act 1980-1983;
- (c) Lists of applications on hand and projects under consideration; and
- (d) A statement showing consolidated revenue's take from the racing industry over the last six years.

As honourable members will see from the cash flow, there is a surplus in each of the financial years shown. Indeed, towards the end of the 10-year period, a surplus approaching \$8m is evident.

The list of approvals totals just over \$58m, and it is this amount or, rather, an amount of \$55m, that has been referred to on a number of occasions.

By way of explanation—of that \$58m, approximately \$21m has been advanced directly from the Racing Development Fund since 1 July 1981. The other \$37m involves borrowings by racing organisations from legitimate financial institutions, with the fund paying interest and redemption payments thereon over periods up to 10 years.

I can assure honourable members that lending institutions, such as the National Australia Bank and the Westpac Banking Corporation, would not have become involved in these approvals if they were not totally satisfied about the viability and integrity of the fund and the Racing Development Corporation which, in terms of the Racing and Betting Act, is the Minister for Racing.

I will also table a list of applications on hand. They have not been approved and, indeed, it may be that when assessed many of them will not proceed at all. The applicant racing organisations have been advised that their applications have been noted for future consideration because, as Minister, I have to view the racing scene as a whole when considering individual applications. Regardless of that, no approvals will be recommended beyond the stated surpluses such that the Racing Development Fund would become over-committed.

The same comments apply to the list of projects under consideration, and I repeat that no approvals will be recommended beyond the means of the Racing Development Fund to finance them. Honourable members will see that since 1978-79 the racing industry has provided consolidated revenue with nearly \$154m. Honourable members will also note that since I became Minister not one cent of the racing industry's return to consolidated revenue of over \$90m has been paid back to the racing industry. The \$90m provided to consolidated revenue by the racing industry during the last three years has, in fact, been channelled to hospitals, schools and Government areas of responsibility.

When I became Minister for Racing there was \$3,754,968.09 in the Racing Development Fund. Today it has a credit balance of \$2,485,994.76. I make the comparison to show honourable members that the fund has the ability through its income to finance the commitments made to racing in all three codes throughout the State.

Queensland can be proud of what has been achieved in the racing industry in the last three to four years. The facilities at racecourses throughout the State are second to none in the world and certainly lead the field in Australia. The employment created by these works is incalculable, and I am sure that honourable members on the opposite side of the House are aware of the importance of racing's current boom.

I table the documents to which I referred.

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the documents on the table.

RACING AND BETTING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 10 April (see p. 2564) on Mr Hinze's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate) (7.48 p.m.): Whilst some members in the Chamber might be thankful to the Minister for his unusual approach to this debate by making a ministerial statement seconds before he knew that I was to rise to my feet, I suppose I might say that it was reasonably good tactics on the part of a National Party Minister.

Although the Opposition has been calling for some weeks for the tabling of those documents that have obviously been available for some time, the Minister has seen fit to table them only seconds before the resumption of the debate. That gives my colleagues and me no time to peruse them and no time to reach any conclusions as to whether the Minister's statements were correct or not.

By way of interjection, the member for South Brisbane said that if the Opposition did not have the reports that it needed to make a proper assessment, the documents that have been tabled by the Minister are of little use. It is no secret that over a period the Opposition has expressed a great deal of concern about the overcommitment of the Racing Development Fund by the Minister. I accept that many arguments can be advanced about commitments and overcommitments. Really, I am speaking in terms of publicly announced projects that the Minister has promised. I am speaking about commitments to existing racing facilities through interest and redemption payments from the fund.

It is a matter of assessment. Irrespective of what the Minister has said, the Opposition continues to believe that there is an overcommitment. The very fact that the Bill is before the House tonight proves that what the Opposition has been saying is correct. If the

Minister needs more money from the Totalisator Administration Board—and he obviously does—that is money over and above that which normally flows into the fund as a result of the provisions of the Racing and Betting Act. Obviously, he needs that money to meet commitments. It is a simple argument. The Minister might be able to say tonight, “I have the money. I have succeeded. I have beaten Sir Edward Lyons.” In the Minister’s estimation, Sir Edward Lyons was only a second-rater, anyway. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen whether what the Minister has done is fair and reasonable.

As far back as April 1980, in response to the second-reading speech by Dr Edwards, as he then was, in respect of what might be termed the first of the restructured Racing and Betting Bills—it will be recalled that Dr Edwards was then the Minister in charge of racing—I made it clear on behalf of the Opposition that we welcomed the move that was being made at that time to divert more racing revenue into the Racing Development Fund.

Unclaimed dividends and fractions that were being shunted directly into the Consolidated Revenue Fund were to be placed in the new Racing Development Fund. The result would be an increased annual input of money into the fund, allowing the racing industry a much better return for what was at that time, I agree, a much-needed improvement of racing facilities. Provision was also made for Parliament to appropriate money for the fund in the event of that need occurring.

However, having said that, let me make it clear that the Opposition is not prepared to sit idly by when it believes that public funds are being misused or when this Government has its funding priorities out of order. We believe that it is our responsibility as an Opposition, on behalf of the public of this State, to scrutinise improper procedures of that sort.

When the second restructured Racing and Betting Bill came before Parliament in 1981, Queensland had a new Minister for Racing—none other than the Honourable Russell Hinze, who proceeded to tell us that the provisions of the 1980 Act relating to the fund were to be amended to clarify the position that grants as well as interest-free and low-interest loans might be made to clubs, control bodies and the Totalisator Administration Board. The proposed amendments would also widen the purposes for which development funding might be made available and would permit the Minister, with approval of the Governor in Council, to vary the rate of interest to be charged on development funding advanced by way of loans. The improved funding arrangements for the fund as originally announced were retained. In the financial year 1981-82, the Racing Development Fund received \$4,796,024 from tote levies, unpaid fractions and unclaimed dividends, etc.

It is important to state—I wish to reiterate this later in my speech on the second reading—that the Act is clear. Both the previous and present Ministers responsible for racing gave full support to the funding of the Racing Development Fund by three methods: a percentage of TAB turnover; fractions and unpaid dividends; and other minor amounts that became available. In the financial year 1982-83, the fund received \$6,598,131 from the same sources, those sources being clearly outlined in the Racing and Betting Act.

So that people have a general understanding of the immensity of the amounts of money about which I am speaking, it is important that I state that the Opposition is aware that totalisator levies of \$2,275,187, unpaid fractions of \$1,679,150, unclaimed dividends of \$2,245,857 and miscellaneous receipts of \$397,937 were credited to the fund during the year 1982-83; that payments out of the fund comprised grants of \$1,989,662, interest free interminable loans of \$2,889,791, repayable loans and advances of \$475,365 and special payments of \$2,707,850; and that the cash balance of the fund as at 30 June 1983 was \$533,452.

The Auditor-General advised in his report for the year ended 30 June 1983 that the commitments of the fund as at 30 June 1983 comprised \$2,588,739 to be made available by way of grants, repayable loans or interest free interminable loans to race clubs for the provision of new or upgraded facilities, long term commitments of \$23,389,500 with respect to redemption of loans under approved facility agreements and interest at varying rates relative to such loans. I am advised also that such commitments reported upon by the Auditor-General were authorised by the Governor in Council.

Suffice it to say that the total indebtedness of clubs to the Racing Development Fund as at 30 June 1983 was \$11,801,593, which comprised mainly interest free interminable loans of \$11,116,228. Towards the end of 1983, it became evident that further spending commitments from the fund had entered the pipeline.

I am carrying the story through at this stage because of the importance of understanding the official reports in relation to the fund as well as information that the Opposition gained from the Minister's statements and various newspaper reports.

The Minister announced that there was to be a new \$1.25m—I think that was the figure—grandstand complex for the Redcliffe trots, and that Rocklea was to share a quarter-horse racing complex worth approximately \$1.75m.

Mr Hinze: They have not been approved, yet.

Mr WARBURTON: I know that, but the Minister announced them. I know that they are in the planning stages. I am suggesting to the Minister that when people talked about commitments, they were his commitments.

Mr Hinze: They could be in the pipeline by this time next year.

Mr WARBURTON: That is true. If the Minister gets his own way and the additional money needed to allow him to meet his commitments, because on his own promises he is overcommitted at the present time, then I have no doubt—and the Minister's history shows this quite conclusively—that he will proceed.

An amount of \$3.6m was to go to the Townsville trots, and major contributions were to go to the Toowoomba greyhounds, the Ipswich trots and the Gold Coast trots and greyhounds. The Gold Coast is never left out because the Minister has many friends there who depend to a considerable degree on his generosity. To the best of my knowledge, none of the commitments presently in the planning stages have ever received Cabinet or Governor in Council approval, and I believe that the Minister indicated this by way of interjection.

In November last year, it became apparent when the 1983 annual report of the TAB became available that the board had somehow been convinced—people like me would not dare make any comments on how we think it might have been convinced—to transfer the sum of \$4m from its profit and loss for future loans to the Racing Development Corporation.

The first payment of \$2m was made in July 1983—that was a most unusual event—and the second \$2m went from the TAB to the corporation in January 1984. So two instalments of \$2m passed from TAB funds into the Racing Development Fund through the Racing Development Corporation. That totalled a massive \$4m. People started to wonder, "Good heavens, if this money can be found so easily to prop up what appears to be an ailing fund, why can't it be used for other purposes?" That was the type of story that floated round the public arena. The Minister can understand that because a lot of people approached this Government for assistance from time to time and obviously are rejected. When they see that sort of money forthcoming so easily, they wonder what on earth is going on.

The first payment of \$2m was made in July 1983, and the second \$2m went to the corporation and then through to the fund in January. That was a total of \$4m, and I understand that it was, subject to an agreement, to be repaid free of interest. That in itself was a rather peculiar thing to happen. I have no idea of the terms of the loans and I doubt whether I will ever find out. Opposition members have been endeavouring to probe this matter for a considerable period. We only wanted to know what on earth prompted the TAB to make this fine gesture. We wanted to know whether the loan would attract interest and the nature of the loan. We wanted to know whether there was any intention, finally, to make a repayment. I do not think there was, but it was a way, of course, of describing this very, very fruitful exercise for the fund.

By early 1984 the Minister was being asked to explain the position of the fund, particularly because of his own admission—I could be corrected on this, but certainly there was never any denial—that the commitment to projects for Queensland racing clubs was currently estimated at \$55m. It was claimed in numerous newspaper articles that that was the extent of commitment at that time.

With commitments in respect to interest on and redemption of loans under approved facility agreements—these are the facilities in the pipeline at the moment—now totalling \$37.5m, together with non-approved commitments totalling approximately \$18m for the projects to which I previously referred, one can come to the reasonable assumption that that is probably where the figure of \$55m came from.

The Minister clashed with the TAB chairman, Sir Edward Lyons, over the Minister's insistence that he wanted unfettered access to further TAB funds. The Premier, presumably on Treasury advice, sought a written report from the Racing Minister on the financial state of the Racing Development Fund. A document referred to as the Hielscher report makes some sort of a scathing attack on the financial position of the fund and states that even if the Minister gets away with milking the TAB of the sum of \$16m, there still remains a shortfall of more than \$6m, and this is even if commitments can be curtailed to some extent.

That is the story that has been floating round for some time. As I have indicated, the Minister has tabled some documents. Obviously I have not had an opportunity to peruse them to enable me to make an assessment. Unfortunately, despite our continued requests, the report that was prepared by the Under Secretary of the Treasury Department is not among the documents that have been tabled. If it had been tabled, I would have been prepared to accept that that was a true assessment of the position of the fund.

The Minister had intentions of giving himself full control over TAB funds by way of legislation. It is indeed interesting to see that the TAB chairman has at least been successful in ensuring that the board retains the discretionary powers in respect of extra moneys granted to the Racing Development Corporation for fund purposes.

We have been able to follow this matter through. It is as plain as the nose on one's face. We know about the meetings that have been held and the way in which the Minister has operated for some time. We have followed the activities of Sir Edward Lyons and also the Premier, who was the intermediary at this great meeting that was held last week. We are able to put the jigsaw together and see what has occurred.

It could be said that the chairman of the board has been successful in protecting the statutory rights of the board. I suppose that that is the best way of putting it. So it now becomes a numbers game, and the amount of money that the Minister is able finally to wring out of the TAB in the future will depend on the number of votes that he can muster on the TAB. Of course, the board consists of a number of persons, not exceeding 10, who are appointed by the Governor in Council upon the nomination of the Minister.

We all well remember the great controversy that took place when the present board was steamrolled through Cabinet by National Party Ministers in that marriage of convenience, which was called a coalition. Honourable members will recall the role played by the previous Treasurer (Dr Edwards). He stormed out of Cabinet. What he was not going to do was nobody's business. He was not going to sign documents, and Sir Edward Lyons was not going to be appointed chairman. I also think that there was some objection to Mr Galway, who was related to a former Minister, Mr Tomkins. There was a big hullabaloo. The Liberal Ministers were going to play merry hell. Of course, the National Party Ministers dominated the scene. I simply relate that story to indicate that I believe that when it comes to the crunch, the same sort of thing will happen again.

The term for TAB members is three years under normal circumstances, and positions are up for grabs in the very near future. The present board was appointed as from 30 June 1981, so it will be very interesting to see what occurs in June, when the new board is appointed by Cabinet on the recommendation of the Honourable the Minister, Mr Hinze.

Mr Hinze: Beloved Minister.

Mr WARBURTON: I am trying to be nice to the Minister.

I now turn to a very important point. Why has it been necessary to force this legislation through Parliament? I have used the word "force" correctly. Could not the legislation wait until the August session and the new financial year? The Minister may care to respond to my questions. Could it be that legal advice and recommendations in the Hielscher report cast doubt upon the legality of the \$4m transfer of funds from the TAB to the Racing Development Corporation? I do not know.

Mr Hinze: The answer is, "No"

Mr WARBURTON: Well, the Minister could have told the Parliament about that weeks ago instead of responding viciously to my colleague the member for Ashgrove. The Minister has told me that he regrets that incident, and it was not one of his better efforts.

The Minister says that the haste in pushing this legislation through is not the result of advice received about the legality of the transfer of funds. I would like to look at the Hielscher report, but probably it will have to fall off the back of a truck before I can. Only the tabling of that report and any other advice given to the Minister about the transfer of funds will reveal the truth. Some material was tabled tonight, just seconds before I began to speak, and I have not had a chance to study it. The Minister made a commitment to table all relevant documents, and I will be interested to see whether the documents tabled tonight fill the bill.

In early 1981, the Minister for Racing played Santa Claus to a number of racing clubs that had been given loans from the previous fund. At the time, the Minister said that the loans had been converted to interest-free non-repayable loans, or words to that effect. One of the strangest things—

Mr Hinze: They were given an electoral promise and I carried out that promise.

Mr WARBURTON: Certainly; I am not doubting that. I simply point out that the loans were converted to grants. I do not know why the loans were described in those terms—it was an official description from the department—and I found it rather unusual.

If my memory serves me correctly, the Gold Coast Racing Club, which had certain financial difficulties at that time, had a loan in excess of \$2m conveniently converted to a grant. Needless to say, Mr Hollendale, who is a member of the Totalisator Administration Board—I have no doubt that he will continue that membership after 30 June—was overjoyed at the kind gesture by the Minister. It is worth noting that Mr Hollendale is also connected with the Gold Coast Racing Club.

Mr Veivers: Has that been forgiven?

Mr WARBURTON: I think a lot of things have been forgiven in the racing industry.

The Bill before the House provides that any of the terms and conditions of the original advance, such as in the case of the Gold Coast club, may, by Order in Council, be varied and may have retrospective effect.

The only reason for such a provision is that, again, it seems that the way in which the Minister acted early in 1981 was either illegal or, to say the least, highly improper. We should be told the full facts as to why this proposed amendment is necessary. This House is being asked to validate the conversion of a huge sum of money. I think the total was about \$11m.

Mr Hinze: \$7m.

Mr WARBURTON: \$7m. The House is being asked to validate Government actions that, because of legal advice, have been found to be rather dubious, to say the least.

I have concentrated on one aspect of the Bill because of the public concern that has been expressed at the handling by the Queensland Government of public funds from time to time. However, I reiterate that the Opposition supports the concept of a reasonable return of racing funds being made to the industry, provided priorities are correct. Not only have we consistently supported that concept; as well, we proposed improved funding when the Racing portfolio was under the Treasury. That is recorded in "Hansard"

The Opposition's objection is to the way that this is being done. If honourable members were to read section 116 of the Racing and Betting Act, they would see under the heading "Racing Development Fund" the manner in which the fund is to be financed. I would have thought that if it was necessary to get more finance into that fund to assist the industry, that is the provision that should have been amended. By some other means, funds should have been filtered on a completely usual and permanent basis, just as fractions, dividends and a certain percentage of TAB turnover are filtered. Perhaps the Minister may have seen fit to increase the percentage of TAB turnover, but Opposition members object to the way in which additional funds are being provided for the fund.

A good deal of public opinion is that, in respect of the amount of money entering the fund, enough is enough. That has been said. Obviously, the Minister will not agree that that is correct; nevertheless, the public are saying that. The public are quite correct in saying that, although the Government cries "poor" when it is asked to provide funds for the unemployed, the sick, the elderly and junior sports people—although it refuses to provide what amounts to a handful of dollars to send disabled sports people to their world games—at the flick of a wrist, \$4m appears from the TAB funds and is transferred to the Racing Development Fund.

Is it any wonder that Queenslanders see this Government as having its spending priorities completely out of order?

Mr Borbidge: That is your opinion.

Mr WARBURTON: I am suggesting that thousands of people are saying that. I will be followed by other Opposition speakers. Let the honourable member for Surfers Paradise ask those who have close associations with junior sporting bodies what they felt when the percentages that their associations were used to receiving were cut back a few years ago. Let the honourable member ask those Opposition members what they think of the fact that the Minister for Racing can manage to acquire \$4m from TAB funds.

The argument put forward by the people in the racing industry—and I have mixed with the racing industry since I was knee-high to a grasshopper—is that as they provide the money they should get it back. The punters of this State provide the finance. Almost \$30m in TAB turnover tax and book-makers' turnover tax goes directly into the Treasury coffers. That is not a bad rake-off. Many punters who have never set foot on a racecourse are providing the funds. It is very difficult for them to swallow that this money has suddenly appeared when it has never appeared before.

I intend to leave any further comments about the provisions of the Bill until the Committee stage.

Mr LEE (Yeronga) (8.21 p.m.): It is not my intention to go into as much detail as the member for Sandgate did. I compliment the Minister. He has done more for racing than any other Minister. I will give credit where credit is due. Nobody in Australia can deny that Russell Hinze, the Minister for Racing, has done better than anybody else, including former Ministers. He understands the racing industry, and he is a successful owner and trainer. He will soon become a successful breeder. Recently he purchased the stallion Copper Kingdom. I wish the Minister good luck. I hope that Copper Kingdom sires many good horses. At present the Minister is racing some very good horses by that stallion.

Despite the praise that I have given the Minister, it is still my right to question some of his activities. Because I say that he is a good Minister does not mean that I must agree with everything that he does. Queensland is lucky to have a man with such an understanding of the racing industry. Many monuments have been erected in this State and named after the Minister for Racing. Buildings and race-tracks worth more than \$50m will be built throughout Queensland. Many will bear the name "Russell J. Hinze". Many of the monuments to the Minister are well deserved. The Minister should not forget that the development is being financed with punters' money. That money could be returned to owners by way of increased prize-money. I ask the Minister to be wise when he spends the money. He should not overspend it. Without the owners and the punters to keep the racing industry going, the Minister would not have the money to build monuments to himself.

I am one of those poor owners. Some people say that I am a lucky owner. In my time I have had a couple of brumbies. I think that one of them was called Prince Ruling. He won about \$350,000 in prize-money. Had he been racing today, the equivalent prize-money would be at least \$700,000. Because Prince Ruling raced three or four years ago, the prize-money that he earned was \$350,000. The prize-money would not have been as high as that had he not done a great deal of his racing in the south where the prize-money was very good.

Mr Yewdale: He would have won a lot more if you hadn't hooked him as often as you did.

Mr LEE: That is what the member for Rockhampton North thinks. Because a horse loses now and again and he has put his money on it, like everybody else he believes that somebody has hooked it. He believes what he thinks. He thinks that an owner hooks a horse. I have never done it. Unlike the honourable member for Rockhampton North, I cannot see myself doing it in the future.

I have another horse now called He's a Warrior. He's not a bad nag. He has won in the vicinity of \$60,000 to date. He has won four races straight. By next Saturday week he will have won another \$100,000.

Mr Turner: What won Yeronga?

Mr LEE: I have done that for 20 years.

There will be another \$100,000 in the Doncaster, which will take the total to \$162,000, plus a couple of trophies on the way.

The owners today would be much poorer had prize-money not been raised. Again, I give credit to the Minister. Through his efforts, the racing industry in Queensland has come alive.

Mr Prest: Pecuniary interest.

Mr LEE: The Minister might own a couple of racehorses—or 20, 30 or 40; whatever it may be—but it is wrong for the member for Port Curtis to impute an improper motive by saying "pecuniary interest". If the Minister benefits, he benefits the racing industry as a whole.

People from all over Australia are looking to Queensland. They are looking north and looking forward to the winter racing carnival. Southern horses are being enticed here by the prize-money being offered. The coming winter carnival will be the best ever. I hope I take some of the prize-money with a couple of the brumbies that I have.

Mr Yewdale: What about the punter?

Mr LEE: I have said that it is important to look after the punter. The punter and the owner keep the racing industry going. Without them there would never be a racing industry, and that should never be forgotten.

Mr Yewdale: He provides you with your prize-money.

Mr LEE: I feed a number of horses. The member for Rockhampton North hasn't fed one yet.

Many provisions in the Bill are excellent. However, I wish to speak in detail on some of the clauses. In clause 11 the phrase "or special purpose" is used. I would like to know how far "special" extends. What does "special" mean? It could cover many things. It leaves that provision wide open.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I remind the honourable member for Yeronga that detailed discussion on the clauses is reserved for the Committee stage. The honourable member may refer to the general provisions of the Bill now and discuss the clauses at the Committee stage.

Mr LEE: I thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

The Bill establishes a tribunal. That may be necessary for greyhounds and harness-racing, as it is now described. I do not know enough about that to pass an opinion. However, I do know that a tribunal is not required for gallopers. I warn the Minister about allowing this to be the first leg in to establishing a tribunal for the flat-gallop industry. This could be the first leg in. If that were to happen, I would be very disappointed indeed. The QTC and the other principal clubs have done a great job over many years.

If a tribunal were to override decisions made by the major clubs, that would be a shame. Many a QTC steward's decision has been appealed against in court. To my knowledge, over the years I have been connected with racing, not one of those appeals has been upheld. The avenue of appeal to the court is available. If the stewards made bad decisions, appeals against them would be upheld. So I ask the Minister to ensure that the tribunal has nothing to do with the gallopers.

I notice that the Bill provides that the tribunal is for racing purposes. Why does it not specify greyhounds and harness racing?

Mr Hinze: It was asked for by the Queensland Harness Racing Board—trotting and greyhounds.

Mr LEE: I accept that. I did not have sufficient knowledge about that.

However, I am sure the Minister would accept that the galloping fraternity did not ask for the tribunal.

Mr Hinze: That is right.

Mr LEE: It is not the Minister's intention to include galloping?

Mr Hinze: No.

Mr Vaughan: Why shouldn't it be included?

Mr LEE: The Minister knows far more about the industry than the honourable member. The Minister has given me an undertaking that the tribunal will not deal with the galloping industry.

As far as I am concerned, every morning members of the Gold Coast Harness Racing Club should get down on their knees and say, "Thank you, Big Russ." That club is getting something that no other club in Queensland could get. It is near his own electorate and near to his own heart; it is where he races a few horses. So perhaps the Minister is entitled to do that.

One thing about which I am concerned is the break-up of the TAB money that goes to the different sections of the industry. The trotting and greyhound industries are bleeding the racing industry to build facilities for their own use.

I intend to speak to many of the clauses of the Bill. I hope that the Minister will give me some of the assurances that I seek. It would be a shame to see a Minister who has done so much for the racing industry go badly astray on a few things that are wrong in the industry.

Mr VEIVERS (Ashgrove) (8.33 p.m.): I am very pleased to follow the member for Yeronga. Obviously, he was delighted with some of the tips the Minister gave him last Saturday. Congratulations, Norm, you must have won a packet.

Over the years, the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing has held a number of portfolios. Fortunately, one portfolio that he has not held is that of an Australian cricket selector. I gather that if he had been, I would not have made the grade.

Mr Hinze: No way in the world! I will withdraw that. Perhaps I would have put you in as twelfth man—drink-waiter.

Mr VEIVERS: I will bet that, to make up the numbers, the Minister always has 13 on his side.

Since mid-January this year—for the last 13 weeks—a consistent black cloud has hung over the racing industry, in particular over the financial arrangements, the funding—I stress that—and the commitments of the Racing Development Fund. I note that the Minister tabled some documents in the House tonight; I note also that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that the Opposition has not had time to peruse them. I suspect that the information sought by the Opposition about the funding arrangements for the Racing Development Fund is not available in those documents.

The Minister has treated both the Parliament and the racing industry with contempt. He has continually refused to answer questions about the Racing Development Fund and has evaded the issue. On every occasion on which he has been questioned by me and by other honourable members in this House, and outside by the media, he has resorted to bully-boy tactics, using words such as "mugs" and "idiots" and indulging in personal attacks on individuals.

Is it any wonder, therefore, that people believe that, because of his attitude, the Minister has had something to hide? Opposition members have been genuinely—I stress the word “genuinely”—trying to establish for the information of this Assembly, the people of this State and the racing industry what the position is. This Parliament and the racing industry have every right to know where they stand. Large sums of public money are involved. But, in spite of the continual probing and uproar in the House last week when I asked the Minister to table all the documents involved, including, in particular, the report on the fund handed to the Treasury on 12 March, he has refused to clear the air. The Minister is still refusing to come clean about that document. I am not sure whether it has been tabled in the House tonight. I suspect that it has not, because the information in it is what the Opposition really wants. So much for the open Government in this State! So much for the Westminster system and parliamentary democracy!

Mr Hinze: I can assure the honourable member that documents relating to all of the funds coming under my control have been tabled here this evening.

Mr VEIVERS: I am particularly interested in the report to the Treasury.

At no stage have I or any other member of the Opposition stated that we are not in favour of reasonable development of the racing industry or the provision of decent facilities for the supporting public. We have always supported reasonable development for the industry. We are, however, concerned about the fairness of the Government's appropriations and the correct procedures and the funding under the terms of the Racing and Betting Act.

The Opposition now has proof that the Racing Development Fund is overcommitted. Sections of this Bill vary the terms and conditions of the loans, making them retrospective, and also empower the TAB to make gifts or forgive the Racing Development Corporation for loans made to it. If anyone wants proof that the fund is overcommitted, they have it in this legislation. In other words, the Act has been changed to solve the problem.

There are four major aspects of the issue to which I will refer. The first is the evasive tactics adopted by the Minister and the Premier in relation to queries raised about the industry, and particularly about the fund. Just what is going on? No-one knows; no-one has been told. Obviously, there has been a cover-up; in fact, I submit that both the Premier and the Racing Minister have misled the House.

I refer now to questions that have been asked of the Minister. On 7 February, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr Warburton) asked the Minister for Racing whether the fund was overdrawn. Mr Hinze replied, “The fund is not overcommitted.” On 28 February, I asked the Minister, in part—

“... a recent report which quoted him as saying that there was nothing wrong with merchant bankers. I now ask: Have funds been obtained from merchant banks for the Racing Development Fund and has that been done with the approval of Cabinet?”

In response the Minister said—

“I repeat that, as far as I am aware, the Racing Development Fund today is stronger than it has been.”

On 29 February, I asked the Premier and Treasurer, in part—

“What are the future financial commitments of the fund and how does the Government propose meeting them?”

In his reply the Premier said—

“The Racing Development Fund is not presently overdrawn and I have received no approach from the Honourable Minister seeking approval for the fund to be overdrawn.”

That is a significant answer. Obviously they were not talking to each other at that stage about very important matters and very large sums of money.

It was reported on 13 March that the Minister was seeking Cabinet approval to obtain \$12m from the TAB in grants over the next four years to fund loan commitments. If that does not mean that the fund is overcommitted, what does it mean?

I believe that the Minister should resign because he misled the Parliament in answering those questions. He has misled this House.

Mr Hinze interjected.

Mr VEIVERS: I have just repeated the questions that the Minister was asked. This Parliament has been misled.

Mr Glasson: You are joking!

Mr VEIVERS: I am not joking. I have just read out the answers to the questions that were asked in this House. Tonight we have evidence that the House has been misled.

The Premier obviously has also been involved in the deception that has taken place. He has known about it. As Premier, he should have upheld the principles of the Westminster system. He has not. He is also in desperate trouble.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I would like to hear what the member is saying.

Mr VEIVERS: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The income of the Racing Development Fund comes mostly from tote levies, unpaid fractions and unclaimed dividends. For the year ended 30 June 1983, it amounted to \$6.6m. Commitments to the fund to 30 June 1983 amounted to nearly \$26m. Even at that stage, things were starting to get out of hand. Since then, on the Minister's own figure of at least \$55m, although I believe that it should be \$58m—is that correct?

Mr Hinze: Use your own figure.

Mr VEIVERS: Well, at least \$55m. The commitments to the fund have exploded to preposterous proportions. That is what has caused alarm for Treasury officials. Where will the money be found? When will this unbridled spending spree end? Treasury officials have obviously been very concerned about it; hence the call for a report on the fund.

Rumours have persisted about money being borrowed from merchant banks. The Minister refused to admit that outside financial institutions were involved for some time. The information was eventually drawn out in an answer to a question that I asked on 28 February. On that date I asked the Minister whether merchant banks were involved, as reported. He replied—

“Funds are made available by various banking authorities, such as BAC, National Australia and Westpac.”

Confusion about the finances of the industry reigned supreme when the Premier, in answer to a question from the member for Archerfield (the late Kev Hooper), replied that the TAB had invested \$6.5m with the merchant bank, Rothwells, which is owned by Sir Edward Lyons, chairman of the TAB.

A Government Member: It is not owned by him.

Mr VEIVERS: Well, he is the chairman, and he must have a very substantial interest in the bank. I accept that he may not own the bank, but he certainly holds an influential position in it. The point I make is that \$6.5m of TAB funds were invested with that bank. So the plot has thickened.

What is going on? The racing industry is surrounded by a web of intrigue and unanswered questions. The Minister and the Premier have refused to state clearly what the financial commitments and the funding arrangements of the Racing Development Fund are. That is the cause of the Minister's problems. He has allowed the situation to go on for 13 weeks. This Parliament and the industry are entitled to know.

Mr Bailey: What is the problem?

Mr VEIVERS: The member for Toowong has obviously not been listening. It is only fair to the Parliament, to the people and to the industry itself that a clear indication be given about this matter.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr VEIVERS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I find it very difficult to hear myself.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I am concerned that imputations of improper motives are being made, and if I hear any member making such imputations, I will stop him. The member for Ashgrove will continue with his speech.

Mr VEIVERS: The third point that I wish to raise relates to the Government's overall policy on the funding of the racing industry compared with other sports. Queensland has 87 recognised sporting bodies and associations. In this financial year those organisations will receive \$4.5m from the Government. That is a joke when one compares that figure to the amount being spent by the Government to develop the racing industry. I have not heard a word of protest from the Minister for Sport (Mr McKechnie), who is not in the Chamber at the moment, or from the Minister for Welfare Services (Mr Muntz) about the lopsided approach to help the development of sporting and recreation facilities in the State. What happens in Cabinet? Do the Ministers just sit back and acquiesce? At some stage they will pay the penalty for their inaction. It is no wonder that sportsmen, sportswomen and sporting associations are up in arms about the massive sums of money being poured into the racing industry. Who could blame them?

I wonder whether the Minister has ever seen the broken-down wooden sheds or the old tin sheds, surrounded by dust and mud, from which many sporting bodies operate. The mothers of the children in the teams and their supporters are cooped up inside those broken-down old buildings selling a few pies and sausage rolls and barely make enough money to pay for the enjoyment of those children. Sporting groups at junior and senior levels are desperately in need of funds to provide adequate facilities, to maintain those facilities and to keep abreast of the recent improvements in equipment. For the physical and mental health of Queensland's young people, sport generally deserves a fairer go than it has been getting from this Government.

It is obvious that the Government has to take more money from the TAB to prop up the spending spree of the Minister. It is interesting to wonder how much of that money could have been used to help the needy. At the moment, 110 000 families are affected by unemployment. But what is being done about that? The Government can spend millions of dollars building these castles in the air, while 110 000 families are suffering because of unemployment. Some of the money being used for the racing industry could be directed to other projects. For example, it has been admitted that greater financial aid is needed to improve the state of Queensland roads. There is a big need for more welfare housing, and the public transport system should be improved. I could name many other areas of need.

It is all very well for the Minister to talk about what he has done for the racing industry. I concede that he has done some extraordinary things for it. But the Government should be thinking about the real quality of life issues. I am not denying that a need exists to assist the industry and the public by the provisions of good facilities. However, I question the extent of that assistance. I question the priorities of the Minister and the Government.

Mr Deputy Speaker, you have found yourself in——

An Honourable Member: Whoops!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member for Ashgrove to direct his comments to the Bill.

Mr VEIVERS: I was directing my remarks to the Minister who, I notice, is engaging in a conversation with the Leader of the House.

The Minister found himself in quicksand in relation to the matters that I have raised. He called for help, for someone to pull him out. Unfortunately, the people in the Treasury did not throw him a rope. The Minister decided to change the Act to make the terms and conditions of the loans retrospective and to convert some loans to grants.

I will be very interested tonight to see how the Liberal members vote on this Bill and where they stand on the issues that I have raised. Although the honourable member for Yeronga is walking towards the door, I gather that he has already made up his mind. I challenge Liberal members to show where they stand on the issues that have been raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and me.

There must also be a number of National Party back-benchers whose consciences are pricking them on this issue. Nevertheless, I suppose that the Minister will get the numbers and, as usual, will tell all of us to go jump in the lake.

Mr HARTWIG (Callide) (8.51 p.m.): This Bill has been brought in by a man who has done more than anyone else for racing not only in Queensland and in Australia but throughout Australasia, including New Zealand. He is the envy of the Labor States throughout this Commonwealth and I will explain why. With his tremendous zest and involvement, he has built racing from what, years ago, was a hick industry into one of the greatest industries in Queensland. This winter, one of the best race-meetings ever held in Queensland is to be conducted. I am at a loss to understand why the member who has just resumed his seat constantly ticked off the Minister and tried to undermine him.

As for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who likes to have a bet—he, too, went crook about the Racing and Betting Act; but a few years ago I saw him presenting the Labor Day Cup, and he was in all his glory. Tonight, he said that Opposition members did not have sufficient time to study the legislation.

The honourable member for Ashgrove has been constantly peppering the Minister with demands such as, "Put this on the table," and, "Show us some documents." He has been doing that for weeks. And the Deputy Leader of the Opposition says that he did not have time to study the legislation! He knew that it was coming before the House.

The Minister is recognised as a racing man and a racing Minister. He has put Queensland on the map more than any other Minister has done. Russ Hinze is more than a Minister for Racing. I was at Trentham when he purchased 12 horses—the cream of New Zealand's thoroughbreds. He brought them to Queensland.

Mr Campbell: You are not suggesting that he is looking after himself, are you?

Mr HARTWIG: Buying a horse is like betting on a race; it is a bit of a punt. There are good horses, and there are horses that are not so good. But at least the Minister is prepared to put his money where his mouth is.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! Will the honourable member for Callide please refer to some of the provisions in the Bill?

Mr HARTWIG: With deference to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I have listened to denigration of the Minister by members of the Opposition. But I shall certainly return to the Bill.

Since 1981, loans or non-repayable advances have been made to racing clubs throughout Queensland. Race-meetings are held in my electorate at places such as Wowan and Ridgeland, and even at Thangool, racing is held on every second Saturday, which means that 20-odd meetings are held each year. The meetings attract 16 starters, and starting stalls and photo-finish facilities are provided.

Mr Campbell: Get your priorities right.

Mr HARTWIG: What does the honourable member do on a week-end?

Mr Campbell: I look after my family.

Mr HARTWIG: The honourable member can look after his job and I will look after mine.

Interest free loans are made available to racing clubs throughout Queensland. I will wager London to a brick that no other industry has so much capital involvement as the racing industry. Some yearlings are sold for half a million dollars. At a sale in New Zealand attended by 300 Australian buyers and visitors from Australia 480-odd yearlings worth \$29m were sold. Reference was made at that sale to Queensland's Minister for Racing. He is attracting the cream of racing from the other States and New Zealand. Tommy Smith has just purchased the Bruce McLachlan stables. I received my information from persons in the real estate industry. That is what he thinks about Queensland racing.

I am pleased to see the members of the Racing Development Corporation in the precincts of the Chamber. The corporation will administer the money that will be made available to clubs. Those clubs need guidance because they are run by persons who may not have a great deal of knowledge of financial matters.

Last year the great Melbourne racing carnival boasted prize-money of \$3.9m, which includes the Melbourne Cup prize-money. The Melbourne Cup is the richest race in the southern hemisphere. During the 1984 winter racing carnival in Brisbane, more than \$3.5m will be provided for prize-money. Queensland is presently rivalling Victorian racing. Victoria has always had by far the richest racing carnival in Australia. In 1980, before the present Minister for Racing was given his current portfolio, the Labor Day Cup was worth \$6,000.

Mr Hinze: Do you know where most of the horses will be trained? They will be trained at Deagon.

Mr HARTWIG: Yes.

The Labor Day Cup in 1984 will be worth \$20,000 plus trophies.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr HARTWIG: Why does the ALP want to give a cup when it does not believe in racing?

Mr Warburton: Who doesn't believe in racing?

Mr HARTWIG: The ALP, or whatever it is.

Tattersalls Cup in 1981 was worth \$25,000. In 1984 it is worth \$50,000. In 1983, the Brisbane Cup was worth \$105,000. This year it is worth \$155,000. In 1982 the Queensland Cup was worth only \$20,000. My horse was pipped on the line for second place. This year the Queensland Cup will be worth \$50,000. I repeat that this year the prize-money offered for the winter racing carnival is \$3.5m. I commend the Minister for the work that he has done. He has delivered the goods and racing has come of age in Queensland.

Mr D'ARCY (Woodridge) (8.59 p.m.): I appreciate this opportunity to speak to the Racing and Betting Act Amendment Bill. As the previous speaker has ably put forward, no-one in Queensland can doubt the Minister's enthusiasm for the racing industry, and we all recognise that tremendous impetus has been given to the racing industry since the Minister assumed this portfolio.

During this period of tremendous growth, Queensland has gained an Australia-wide reputation within the racing industry. The winter galloping carnival is one of the highlights of Australian galloping, and Albion Park has set the pace for the whole of Australia where harness-racing is concerned.

I am sure that, without the current Minister and his interest, Queensland would not have the racing facilities it enjoys. So much for praise for the Minister.

While praising the Minister for his performances to date, I must examine some of the serious criticisms that have been levelled at him and his expenditure in the racing portfolio. I do this to try to evaluate the current position and the long-term prospects for Queensland from investment in the industry.

The Minister has been criticised by the Opposition for not giving full details of the expenditure on racing and the projected spending in Queensland. I call upon the Minister to table, as he promised, what has become known as the Hielscher report. The Minister, when he came under fire in this Parliament, promised to table that report. The Opposition now demands the tabling of that report, as do the people of Queensland.

The documents the Minister has tabled and referred to tonight are a cover-up of the real implications of that report. The Minister knows it. He realises what he is doing. In fact, the documents he has tabled have been carefully selected to mislead. Any refusal by the Minister to table the Hielscher report will prove beyond all doubt that there is a massive cover-up on racing expenditure in this State. One does not have to be an economist to realise the implications.

The Minister obviously has not done his sums on his expenditure. He must be accused of imprudent lending. He has simply gone too far in spending the money of the people of Queensland. It is the people's money. Regardless of what Government members may say, it is the tax-payers' money. It might come from the racing industry, but it cannot be

denied that it is revenue raised by the TAB. It is a tax raised in Queensland, moneys that should be expended in the best interests of the people of Queensland. In the last three years the Queensland TAB raised a massive \$70m. I must congratulate the administration on its achievements.

In the past, I have been one of the strongest critics of the TAB. I could probably claim some credit for the efficient operation of the TAB today. Many of the newly elected members would not remember the great TAB scandal, concerning which I outlined the huge losses incurred by the people of Queensland as a result of maladministration in the racing industry and the TAB. The increased revenue from the TAB proves that I was right. Because many of the figures that have been presented have not been sufficiently explicit, I present the following information: At the end of 1977, the net profit of the TAB was \$3.5m; in 1978, it was \$4.4m; in 1979, \$5.3m; and in 1980, \$5.7m. In 1981, it fell to \$5.77m. However, between 1977 and 1980, a massive \$11.7m of Treasury funds—that is, the Queensland people's money—was used to subsidise the racing industry to help the race clubs. That money has not been returned. In 1981, the last year in which a subsidy was paid by the Queensland Treasury to the racing industry, a massive \$2.58m was provided by the Treasury to the industry.

The last two years, however, have seen a significant change. In 1982 the net profit of the TAB jumped from \$5.77m to \$12m, and last year the profit was a massive \$18.5m.

Those figures prove conclusively that the TAB has progressed from an organisation subsidised by Government capital to a most profitable organisation. If the Minister has done his sums on the TAB's income of the last three years, one could say that he is probably correct in assuming that the figures will remain constant; hence it has been a successful gamble—a gamble, I might add, with the assets and money of the Queensland people.

A competent economist, the Under Treasurer of Queensland, Mr Leo Hielscher, more correctly classes the Minister as an incompetent fool.

Mr HINZE: I rise to a point of order. I do not know whether I heard correctly, but did the member say that Hielscher referred to me as an incompetent fool?

Mr D'Arcy: No, not exactly.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I heard the words "incompetent fool" and ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr D'ARCY: I will withdraw them.

Obviously, the Minister's projections rely on ever-increasing TAB contributions. If, for any reason, that does not occur—and there are many reasons why there could be a downturn—the Treasury, that is, the people of Queensland, will be heavily subsidising the Minister's imprudent spending.

Let me analyse what is actually occurring. On last assessable figures, the TAB contributed approximately \$22m to Treasury, almost \$4m to the Racecourse Development and Assistance Fund from fractions and unclaimed dividends and \$10m to the various race clubs assessed by the formula on prize-money.

The Bill allows the Minister to tap the special loans that he allowed the TAB to grant to race clubs some 18 months ago which will now be classified as non-repayable grants. In real terms, that means that the Minister is tapping the reserves of the TAB, which he regards as a bottomless pit.

The Bill is a result of the Minister's bulldozing the TAB. Obviously, the Solicitor-General's Office has taken objection to the Minister's modus operandi, and the Bill is an attempt to legalise what the Minister has already done. In fact, the Solicitor-General's Office has advised that, unless the Bill is passed, the Minister could be charged. The Bill proves that the Minister misled the Parliament.

For the benefit of the economically uninitiated, let me explain how the massive spending is co-ordinated. The Minister asks the clubs for projects. The clubs prepare a list of demands on which the Minister sets priorities. Currently, according to figures given tonight, there is \$58m worth of race club development.

A club is then authorised to borrow loan moneys from a local bank or local institution and the Government guarantees them. The Government also commits itself, through the non-repayable grants, to the payment of the interest and redemption. That, I might add, is the normal *modus operandi*, which means that the Minister is committing TAB reserves to the payment of interest and redemption on some \$58m worth of projects, with a projection up to \$100m.

It is not difficult to understand why a competent economist such as Mr Hielscher would find the Minister's figures a nightmare. If translated into corporate lending terms they would not be accepted by any financial institution in this country because of the high-risk of bankruptcy.

Although many of these project developments have been beneficial to the racing industry, let me outline their potential for escalation. The Albion Park training complex began at \$10m and ended at \$16m. The Doomben complex began at \$6m and finished at \$12m. The Caloundra project, which is returning nothing to racing, started at \$3.3m, is two or three years behind schedule, and at the moment is expected to cost about \$7m.

It is no wonder that, under the Bill, the Minister has finally allowed the corporation to engage "such consultants and legal and technical advisers as the corporation considers necessary". At long last, he may be heeding some of his Cabinet and Government colleagues, who have publicly and privately expressed dismay, if not downright shock, at the Minister's imprudent spending spree. Many Queenslanders have been shocked by the opulence and luxury that many club executives have provided for themselves. That is a public scandal, and I hope the consultants will be better protectors of the public purse than the secretaries of some clubs.

At Doomben and Albion Park, diminishing crowds and lower returns will mean bankruptcy. The Minister claims that Silks restaurant at Albion Park is a success. I put it that not one restaurant in the world could meet repayments on \$16m—not even Maxim's in Paris.

This is all about the ability to repay moneys to the public purse, because one must remember that those TAB reserves are public moneys that could have been spent on other essential services such as main roads, which are included in the Minister's portfolio. One wonders whether the ghosts of the 52 people killed between Beerburrum and the Caloundra turn-off since the Minister promised completion of that section of the road are haunting the ill-fated Caloundra race club project situated only a few miles away. Net cost of the work on that road has been only \$0.6m. The Minister said tonight that \$4.5m had been spent on the race club during the past couple of years.

Let me return to the Caloundra scandal. I am convinced from my investigations that even the Minister has been shocked by developments on the Sunshine Coast.

When granting over \$1m for earthworks, his department departed from procedure and gave the initial moneys to the race club, requiring only the secretary's signature and a signed note saying that reasonable prices had been charged. The contractors are no longer on the job—rumour has it that they are bankrupt or out the door—and, currently, work is being carried out by day labour under the engineer's supervision.

A full departmental investigation is warranted into just this section of Government spending. After all, it is the people's money.

The fact is that, despite their percentage of income, the gallops and the dogs have been the poor cousins as far as expenditure is concerned. The Minister has taken a tremendous gamble with the harness-racing industry of this State, and so far it has not performed. A careful examination of the figures shows that that section of the industry has benefited greatly by the Minister's activities.

One must ask also whether the Minister, by originally giving that money to the Caloundra race club in such a way, acted unconstitutionally.

The Caloundra fiasco started in 1980, with the Coolum proposal losing to Caloundra. Local papers stated that Coolum could have been too close to the National Party track at Gympie. That is why it was discarded.

On 19 May 1981 the "Sunshine Coast Daily" stated in bold headlines, "Cabinet grants racing licence to Caloundra and hopes to be racing at its planned \$4 million centre within 12 months." Of course, they are still not racing. Even at that time, with projections,

people must have wondered what Mr Hinze was up to, because the Sunshine Coast does not have sufficient projected population to support such a race-track. In fact, the Gold Coast, with a permanent population of 150,000, swelling to 1 million at holiday times, moved to Saturday race-meetings only three years ago.

On 22 September 1981, the State Government asked the Sunshine Coast Turf Club to rethink its plans for a \$5.7m racing centre at Corbould Park, Caloundra. At the time, Mr Hinze said that the club had been asked to either submit a cheaper proposal or show other financing for the project. He said that the Government could not come into anything as high as \$5.7m. A turf club spokesman, Mr Tony Long, said the club would present a plan to the Government within a month, but everything went dead.

In three months, the cost of the project has already risen \$1.7m without any intervening news, other than that the contractors had gone broke. On 26 July 1982, the "Sunshine Coast Daily" stated that the Caloundra race-track had been given a grant of \$1m by the State Government, which Mr Hinze announced when he inspected the track site on that Saturday during a break in the National Party conference. Of course, racing should have already started by then.

The same report stated that the Government had already given \$40,000 to the Caloundra race-track. On 5 November 1982, the "Sunshine Coast Daily" showed earth-moving equipment at the track. That was five months after the first projected opening date.

On 29 July 1983—two years after the expected opening date—"The Courier-Mail" reported that the track area and drainage was about 40 per cent completed and that the bill was \$4.2m. It also reported that former Gold Coast Turf Club secretary, Des Cooper, had been appointed—perhaps to clean up the mess!

On 25 August 1983, the "Sunshine Coast Daily" again announced, "Coast race plans win \$2m boost". The article stated—

"The Sunshine Coast racing industry received a massive push yesterday with formal State Government approval of a \$2 million funding boost.

The funds will be made available to the Sunshine Coast Turf Club in the form of a loan from the National Australia Bank. The loan will be repaid by the Racing Development Corporation."

The same report also stated that by late November the committee would be able to release details of the 1984 racing calendar.

On 16 December 1983, the same newspaper stated—

"June 16th next year has been set as the target date for the first race meeting at the multi-million-dollar Corbould Park project under construction at Caloundra."

Mr Tom Hennessey, the chairman of the club, also said in that report—

"Contracts have either been formally let or are being let for the automatic irrigation system, sub-surface drainage and course track surfacing, including topsoil and kikuyu turfing."

This is work that had apparently been carried out in the last allocations.

On 27 March 1984, only a few days ago, the headline, again in the "Sunshine Coast Daily", read "Government boosts race funds. Extra \$2m for coast project." The report stated—

"The total cost of the project is now estimated at between \$5 million and \$6 million.

State Racing Branch administrative officer Bob Masson said \$6 million had been allowed in the course proposal, but the turf club 'may need more'. Funds were granted in stages so the branch could keep a 'closer eye' on spending, he said."

Obviously the Government was worried about what was happening at Caloundra. The report continued—

"Coast turf club chairman, Tom Hennessey said the initial \$2.5 million had now been spent, mainly on earthworks and the laying of the track.

Mr Hennessey said the track was ready to be grassed but, he said, he doubted if there would be any racing before 1985."

The report continued—

“Previously, tentative dates of November, 1982 and June this year were announced as start times for racing.”

It continued—

“Works scheduled include track surfacing, track and general drainage, parking, day stalls for horses, veterinary and farriers’ facilities, race day management facilities including jockeys’ and stewards’ rooms and administration centre, judges box, photo-finish tower, tote building, entrance control, catering facilities, toilets, water and electricity supplies and public address and communication systems.

Member for Landsborough, Mike Ahern, said the extra \$2 million did not hamper other Government projects as it came directly from the Racing Development Fund. This fund received money from the TAB and on-course tote operations, and was re-invested in the racing industry.”

Mr Ahern interjected.

Mr D’ARCY: Whether the Minister likes it or not, this is public money.

The Minister (Mr Hinze) totally misled Cabinet and the Parliament regarding the Caloundra Race Club when he said that he could not come at anything as high as \$5.7m. There needs to be an inquiry into what has happened at Caloundra and how the money has been spent. I have no doubt that the Minister is as concerned as I am about the Caloundra scandal, and I have no doubt that the appointment of consultants bears a direct relationship to this problem. One hopes that there is no impropriety, but the rumours of impropriety must be investigated.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): I do not see how this long reference to the history of the development of racing in various parts of Queensland has any direct relationship with the provisions of the Bill. I ask the honourable member to relate his comments to the Bill.

Mr D’ARCY: I have been told on reliable source that not all the money can be traced and some of that which could be traced will not stand up to thorough investigation. A race-track that was originally mooted for \$4m in 1981 and should have opened in 1982, but now looks as though it will not open until 1985 and will cost round \$7m, becomes a massive scandal when the tax-payers’ money is being spent for a facility that does not have enough population to service it.

Tonight the Minister has admitted that already \$4.58m has been spent on the Sunshine Coast. Some 80-odd per cent of Queenslanders do not follow racing, but they care about such mundane things as roads and the preservation of their lives on those roads.

I again demand the tabling of the Hielscher report, which will prove that the Minister has been culpable in misleading this Parliament and his Cabinet colleagues and that he has been publicly a liar. Because of that report the Premier will demand the resignation of the Minister for Racing.

Mr HINZE: I rise to a point of order. I do not know whether I heard the member for Woodridge correctly, but I thought he said that I was publicly a liar.

Mr D’Arcy: I said that the report—

Mr HINZE: Which report?

Mr D’Arcy: I said that if the Minister tabled the Hielscher report—

Mr HINZE: The member for Woodridge knows something that I obviously know nothing about. He is referring to a document that says that I am publicly a liar. I object to that statement, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I ask the honourable member for Woodridge to repeat the remarks to which the Minister objects.

Mr D’ARCY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I will withdraw those words unless you want me to repeat them. I will bow to your ruling.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the member state the words that he intends to withdraw?

Mr D'ARCY: Whichever you prefer, Mr Deputy Speaker; I will repeat them or I will withdraw them.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I want the honourable member to repeat the words that he intends to withdraw.

Mr D'ARCY: We again demand the tabling of the Hielscher report, Mr Deputy Speaker, which will prove the Minister to be culpable in misleading his Cabinet colleagues and will prove him publicly a liar.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member for Woodridge to withdraw those remarks.

Mr D'ARCY: I withdraw those remarks.

The Minister's Cabinet colleagues are predicting his demise by the end of the year. No-one denies the benefits that the Minister has brought to the racing industry, but it is an economic gamble. The people of Queensland do not need this gamble.

Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (9.22 p.m.): In his second-reading speech, the Minister for Racing said that, in the main, the amendments were designed for the better conduct of racing in this State. That is very commendable because attempts to improve the conduct of racing are long overdue.

I am particularly concerned about the setting up of the Racing Appeal Tribunal. The Bill provides that the tribunal will only be concerned with trotting and greyhound racing. It will consist of three members to be nominated by the Minister and appointed by the Governor in Council.

A number of members of Parliament are identities in the racing world and own gallopers and trotters. The Minister for Racing owns trotters and they usually win up to three races at any meeting at Albion Park. The decision of the tribunal will be final and the parties to the appeal will be required to comply with its decision. There is no way that the trotters from the Hinze stable, if they are the subject of appeal, will ever be in any trouble because the members of the tribunal hearing appeals will be appointed by the Minister; that is unacceptable.

The member for Yeronga has already stated that one of his horses won in the vicinity of \$360,000 and another horse has won his last four starts and \$60,000. The member for Yeronga said that that horse will win the Doncaster Handicap.

Mr Lee: I hope it will.

Mr PREST: For Queensland's sake, I hope it will.

The member for Callide is also a well-known racing identity. Both he and the member for Yeronga have commented on the wonderful things that the Minister is doing for racing, and that may be so for the owners in relation to the prize-money offered.

The punters of this State are keeping racing going. If they do not pass through the turnstiles, there will be no book-makers and if there are no book-makers, there is no betting and, therefore, no racing.

The owners and trainers have a part to play in racing, but the industry must be conducted fairly and properly. The Minister said that the Bill will clean up racing in Queensland. The Bill is long overdue.

I have been a punter, and I am concerned at the mixed runs that horses make from week to week. Anyone on the racecourse who studies price fluctuations knows that the message is out that a strong arm is on top of a certain horse and it is not his day. The punters at any race-meeting should be given a fair go.

Recently, a New South Wales trainer who in Queensland raced a horse named Risley, which was very well backed throughout Australia but ran second last, was found tortured, burnt and killed in his motor car. An anonymous telephone caller made a death threat against the jockey who rode the horse, Risley, and that horse became the centre of the hunt for the trainer's murderer. The caller telephoned Maurice Logue's former Brisbane home on Wednesday—that would have been in the vicinity of 5 March—and said, "You're next." Incidents such as that in the racing industry cause grave concern.

I was concerned also at a Channel O news sports program on 31 January this year, during which a very well-known licensed trainer in Queensland, whose horse Get to the Point had run a shocking race on the previous Saturday, stated that very big money was to be made in the racing game, especially if one could arrange for a favourite to be beaten.

On 7 February I asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing the following question—

“With reference to a Channel O news sports program on 31 January during which a licensed trainer stated that there was very big money to be made in the racing game, especially if one can arrange for a favourite to be beaten—

(1) Who, from among jockeys, trainers, owners or other persons, is getting this big money to have a favourite beaten?

(2) As this statement has clouded the minds of punters as to the conduct of the racing game, who is paying this big money?

(3) Will he have an immediate investigation conducted into this statement made on that particular program?”

The Minister's answer was as follows—

“I share the honourable member's concern. If he and/or the person who made the allegations were to provide me with substantial evidence of any such corruption, I would be only too pleased to refer the matter to my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Police for detailed investigation.”

He would sweep it under the carpet, anyway. The answer went on as follows—

“In the meantime, I would say to the honourable member that the administration of racing in this State shares his concern, is always alert to potential problems of this nature, and does everything in its power to maintain the integrity of the industry in the eyes of the public.

I have recently had discussions with the acting chairman of the principal clubs, Mr Peter Gallagher, in order to try to introduce into Queensland the systems of pre-race swabbing operating in New South Wales and Victoria, as well as any other innovation that the Government believes is necessary to wipe out any corruption in the industry in this State. I reiterate that, if the honourable member can assist me in any possible way, I will be only too pleased to hear from him.”

Sufficient information was provided on that television program to warrant an investigation into the statement made by the well-known licensed trainer.

One of his horses, Get to the Point, ran a shocking race two or three days before. The trainer believed that somebody had got to the horse. The Minister stated that he was concerned about the direction in which racing was heading in Queensland. He said that if I could assist him in any possible way, he would be only too pleased to hear from me. I gave him the necessary information in case he did not see the sports program on Channel O. The steward is in charge of a race-meeting for one month following the race-meeting at which the horse appeared to have been swabbed. However, that was the answer that was received. It was not good enough. Since then, the Minister said—

Mr Hinze: Do you believe that I should direct the principal clubs to introduce pre-race swabbing?

Mr PREST. The Minister should.

In an article it is reported that the Minister had recently had discussions with the acting chairman and the principal of the club, Mr Peter Gallagher, to try to introduce into Queensland the system of pre-race swabbing that is operating in New South Wales and Victoria. Let us not forget that it was only within the last fortnight or so that a very prominent horse-owner in this State with a team of 20 horses, one of which was Lady Lustre, one of the best two-year-old fillies in this State, pulled out of the racing game in Queensland. He took the whole of his stock to Sydney to sell. His horses were trained by one of the best trainers in this State, Mr Kirwan, in whom he said he had great faith. Because no action was taken to have pre-race swabbing introduced in Queensland, he did not want to be part of racing in Queensland. A man who had been very involved and very successful in racing felt so strongly about it that he decided to get rid of his horses.

There are some instances that would show the Minister that racing in Queensland is not as sweet as he would like it to be. Honourable members know that the Bill provides for sweeping changes to be made to the Racing Development Fund, which is controlled by the Minister. I will not join with my colleagues and say how terrible it was that the Minister lent or granted huge sums of money to various clubs throughout the State. I will be looking for some of that money also.

On 7 April 1982 the Minister made a promise. When he tabled some documents this afternoon he said that the Racing Development Fund was very sound and that it had approximately \$2.4m in kitty. That is very good, because a little over two years ago the Minister promised the Gladstone Turf Club \$1.7m. The people of Gladstone are becoming disgruntled. The Minister has had ample time to honour his promise. I should like to think that the Minister will keep his promise. A councillor of the Calliope Shire Council is reported as saying that main roads and horse-racing do not mix and that the Minister for Racing has a preference for the latter. That statement was reported in the press under the heading "Hinze more keen on racing than roads" I hope that the accusation that has been made is true in this one instance so that the Minister may honour the promise to provide \$1.7m to Gladstone Turf Club to upgrade its facilities. On 31 October 1981 the Minister promised to intervene in the dispute about the racing club and the road. However, so far, two and a half years after the Minister promised to rectify the matter, he has not fulfilled his promise.

On 5 April I received the following letter from the Gladstone Turf Club—

"Dear Bill,

I would like you to take up the matter of the clubs promise by the Minister to develop 'Ferguson Park' Racecourse some two years ago this month yet not one thing has been done

The Minister and the Development Board have used the excuse for some time now that the trustee situation has to be passed in Parliament first and I have attached copies of letters and press statements on same."

An opportunity presents itself for the Minister to do something tonight. The Act is now before Parliament. He could move amendments to allow trustees to be appointed to the Gladstone Turf Club and Ferguson Park. The letter continues—

"At numerous committee meetings one member of the committee constantly advises that the Minister said 'They (Gladstone Turf Club) have got to get their act together.' Now at Emerald last Saturday week two Gladstone racing people asked the Minister Mr. Hinze when was Gladstone going to get the finance to develop the Gladstone Racecourse. Would you believe the answer again was, 'They have to get their act together.' What . . . act is he talking about. The chap that makes this statement at meetings also belongs to the National Party and I think there is some private conversations going on that is not authorised by the committee of the club."

If that is so, what does the Minister mean by "get their act together"? The Minister has spoken to them. He met them in April 1982. We spoke with the Minister in 1983. Since that date they have received nothing in writing telling them what is required of them. The letter says—

"Every tin pot racecourse has been receiving grants ahead of Gladstone and have made their requests after us."

Some of the clubs that have been assisted race on only 10 days a year. Gladstone races almost every Saturday and on almost every public holiday. The letter continues—

"We realise the development of \$1.7 million dollars (the original cost) is excessive but was accepted and yet not one part of the project has been commenced.

If they haven't got the money to do the job why don't they just come out and say so instead of the committee and members here belting their heads against a brick wall."

That was signed by the president of the Gladstone Turf Club. I agree with what he said. After that length of time it is not surprising that they feel frustrated and are becoming anxious.

The club wrote a letter to the Minister on 23 September, in reply to which they received a telex in the following form—

“Racing Minister, Mr Russ Hinze, said today that financial assistance to the Gladstone Turf Club depended on a satisfactory solution to the problem of the racecourse reserve trustees.

Mr Hinze said, ‘Gladstone Turf Club has not been forgotten.’

Mr Hinze said, ‘I appreciate the club’s concern and possible frustration but let me say at the outset, that I do not break promises and I do not play politics with applications for financial assistance for capital works at racecourses.’

Mr Hinze said, ‘A proposal I submitted to Cabinet regarding racecourse trustees has been approved. The whole matter of racecourse trustees will now go to Parliament for consideration.’

Mr Hinze said, ‘The problem could have been settled earlier had Parliament been sitting. It has been delayed because of the Liberal Party’s action in breaking the coalition agreement. Mr Terry White can take the blame.’

Mr Hinze said, ‘The matter will be dealt with as quickly as possible when Parliament resumes. I do not break promises.’ ”

That was sent in October 1983. Since then, nothing at all has happened.

On 15 December 1983 I asked the Minister a question in this House in the following terms—

“With reference to his visit to Gladstone in April 1982 and consequently an application being lodged by the Gladstone Turf Club for a redesigned race-track—

What is the present position in relation to this application?”

Mr WHARTON: I rise to a point of order. So that the Hansard staff could finish at approximately half past 9, agreement was reached that honourable members would be reasonable in making their speeches this afternoon and this evening. The honourable member for Port Curtis is saying nothing.

Mr PREST: It might be nothing to the Minister.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! If an understanding has been reached in the House, it will be honoured.

Mr PREST: I do not think anyone makes agreements such as that.

The Minister answered my question in the following terms—

“An application has been made by the Gladstone Turf Club for an advance from the Racing Development Fund under the Racing and Betting Act of \$2m for redesigning the race-track, the provision of stables at the racecourse and the erection of a new administration building at the course.

It will be appreciated that the works proposed are of a substantial nature, and the club’s application is presently under consideration in relation to the funds available for advances of this nature and having regard to other applications.”

If an agreement as to the length of speeches has been made, I do not want to detain the people from Hansard. I am quite willing to reduce the time of my speech, but I want the Minister, who said that he does not break promises, to honour his promise.

The provisions in the Bill do nothing to help the small people. I believe that those with a pecuniary interest in the racing industry—that is the owners of horses—are merely concerned about an increase in prize-money. If a great deal more money is to be injected into the racing industry, it should go towards the development of racing.

Because I am trying to get \$1.7m out of the Minister for the Gladstone Turf Club, I do not want to upset the Minister. I hope that he will take notice of what I have said here tonight in relation to that application.

Debate, on motion of Mr Wharton, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 9.44 p.m.