

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 1984**

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**WEDNESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 1984**

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

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

Mr SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Auditor-General of his report on the books and accounts of the Brisbane City Council for the year ended 30 June 1984.

Ordered to be printed.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT ON DEPARTMENTAL APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS**

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Since the matter of the Auditor-General's report on the appropriation accounts of all departments was raised, I have been in close contact with officers of the Auditor-General's Department. I understand that the report will be available next week. Following its receipt, I intend to authorise it to be printed as a parliamentary paper and circulated to members so that they can peruse the information contained therein at the earliest opportunity.

**PAPERS**

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

Report of the Department of Forestry for the year ended 30 June 1984.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Orders in Council under the Queensland Law Society Act 1952-1980

Reports—

Public Defender for the year ended 30 June 1984

Queensland Law Reform Commission for the year ended 30 June 1984

Supreme Court Library Committee for the year ended 30 June 1984.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT****Scotwall Pty Ltd**

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.3 a.m.), by leave: I draw the attention of the House to the activities of a company, Scotwall Pty Ltd, which is engaged in providing fund-raising services to charitable and community-purpose organisations.

The activities of this company were revealed following an investigation undertaken by officers of my department into the Marine Heritage Association of Queensland, which came into existence only in March of this year. Its objectives are concerned with the preservation and promotion of Australia's links with the sea.

Following consideration of the findings of this investigation, the association's application for sanctioning of its community purposes under the Collections Act, which would have enabled public appeals to be made, has been refused.

The association's principal fund-raising activity has been the conduct of four major art unions. The services of Scotwall Pty Ltd were engaged to undertake the sale of tickets and associated functions related to the conduct of those art unions.

It is relevant to point out that the directors of Scotwall Pty Ltd, Edward John Baldwyn and Caroline Sue Climo, are also officers of the association.

In providing services to the association in relation to the conduct of those art unions, Scotwall Pty Ltd has been paid significant management and agents fees.

It is of serious concern to me that the information disclosed on applications made and returns submitted to my department in regard to the running of these art unions failed to disclose the total costs involved. In fact, abnormal accounting procedures were employed to create a false impression that the provisions of the Art Unions and Amusements Act relating to expense limits had been complied with. Presumably this was done to deceive officers of my department and possibly the auditor of the art union.

It has now been determined that the total costs involved in running those art unions were far in excess of the percentages authorised under this legislation. The total moneys paid to Scotwall Pty Ltd for its involvement in the first three art unions conducted was more than double the actual net return to the association.

But the return to Mrs Climo did not stop there. Not only did her company Scotwall Pty Ltd receive management and agents fees but also the major prizes in the art unions have been yacht trips in the Whitsunday Passage. The business firm providing those trips was Tropical Sailing Holidays, the proprietor of which is Mrs C. S. Climo, the secretary of the association. Further, I have some reservations as to whether the stated cost of the trips provided to the association by this firm could be used as an accurate indication of the real value of such prizes.

Although costs of an administrative nature had been incurred by the association, no specific funds raised from the conduct of art unions have been applied to fulfilling its objectives during the initial six months of its operation. In fact, certain items of furniture purchased from the funds of the association could not be produced. Upon inquiry, my inspectors were advised that the furniture was located in the office of Scotwall Pty Ltd. In the present circumstances, no further permits to conduct art unions will be issued to the association.

The advice of the Solicitor-General is also being obtained to determine whether the procedures adopted by the association in the conduct of its art unions have contravened any provisions of the law.

I take this opportunity of warning any other charities or associations which may be obtaining, or giving consideration to obtaining the services offered by Scotwall Pty Ltd in relation to the conduct of art unions to carefully consider any proposals put to them by this company.

If it is determined that the information provided to my department regarding expenses incurred in conducting art unions does not disclose the complete and accurate situation, the ability of an association to conduct further art unions will be severely jeopardised.

### QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

Questions submitted on notice were answered as follows—

1. **State Government Computer Centre**

Mr **WARBURTON** asked the Premier and Treasurer—

With reference to the mounting concern about aspects of computer security—

(1) Is information contained in the State Government Computer Centre pertaining to State electors available to persons only by permission of the Principal Electoral Officer?

(2) Have approaches ever been made directly to the computer centre to provide magnetic tapes storing information relevant to State electorates and/or State electors?

(3) If so, when have such magnetic tapes been provided, to whom and for what purpose?

(4) If tapes have been provided, at whose direction and on whose authorisation were they provided?

(5) If magnetic tapes have been provided, what was the cost to the computer centre in each case, and who met such cost?

(6) If magnetic tapes were supplied to members of the Queensland Parliament, what information relating to electors was contained on the tapes?

*Answer—*

(1) The State Government Computer Centre operates only as a service bureau to Government departments and, as such, all data is owned by the relevant departments and simply processed on their behalf by the centre's computers. Data is released to third parties only when authorised in writing by the relevant department.

(2) Yes. The computer centre receives numerous requests for electorate information. As stated above, any such approaches are referred to the department owning the data files, in this case, the Justice Department.

(3 to 6) Yes. However, I am assured that only information as contained in the printed roll and which is available to the general public is made available. Any further details required should be obtained from the Honourable the Minister responsible for the data file.

**2. State Electricity Commission Foreign Currency Exposure**

Mr BURNS asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to the very substantial foreign exchange losses of \$17,071,323 which were incurred by the State Electricity Commission of Queensland in 1982-83—

(1) What were the total foreign currency exposure of the SEC as at 30 June 1984, including the total amount borrowed in each currency, the proportion of each currency to the total borrowings, and Australian dollar equivalents as at 30 June 1984?

(2) Were net exchange losses also incurred in 1983-84 and, if so, what was the net loss?

(3) Does the SEC manage its foreign currency exposure itself and, if not, who does manage it?

(4) Has the SEC appointed any foreign currency liability management consultants and, if so, who are they and what is their defined role?

(5) What action has been taken since the 1982-83 net exchange losses to minimise the foreign currency exposure risk?

(6) What is the current policy of the SEC regarding its overseas borrowings and its approach to minimising the foreign currency exposure risk?

*Answer—*

(1) As at 30 June 1984, the Australian dollar equivalent of the State Electricity Commission foreign currency exposure was \$A507,590,818 and was held in the following proportion:

US dollars	60 per cent
Sterling	40 per cent

(2) In 1983-84, there was not an exchange loss in the State Electricity Commission foreign currency exposure but a gain of \$1,642,500. I might add that the real test of the foreign borrowing exercise is the net cost of the loans, and I can assure the House that the net debt-servicing cost of overseas borrowings has been millions of dollars less than if the same borrowings had been from the Australian domestic markets; that is, of course, if these funds could have been borrowed locally.

(3) The foreign exchange exposure of the State Electricity Commission is managed by the Treasury Department, which has professional staff employed specifically for the purpose.

(4) Neither the SEC nor the Treasury has appointed any foreign currency liability management consultants. At the same time, the Treasury has investigated the foreign currency liability management packages offered by various financial institutions. However, after investigation, none of the available packages has proven to be any better (in terms of results) than the diversification techniques currently adopted by the Treasury. The matter is, however, kept under constant review.

(5) The 1982-83 losses were not caused by any weakness in the Treasury's foreign currency management system but rather were a direct result of the 10 per cent devaluation of the Australian dollar, which the Federal Labor Government announced immediately on taking office in March 1983. As such, there was no need to modify the currency management system to take account of these losses. However, over the years, there has been a process of continual refinement undertaken in regard to the Treasury's currency management techniques.

(6) As has been the case since State authorities first undertook overseas borrowings, the Treasury's currency management philosophy has been based on risk minimisation, as distinct from profit (and thus potential loss) maximisation. In this regard, risk minimisation is considered to be the most appropriate strategy for a governmental authority that does not have a direct involvement in the financial markets, as do the various financial institutions. The actual strategies adopted are based on portfolio management and involve, in essence, the adoption of a diversification strategy to the management of the various risks inherent in overseas borrowings.

### 3. Transcript of "Age" Tapes; Corruption in Racing Industry

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

(1) Did he come into possession of a copy of the transcript of the so-called "Age" tapes only during the week ending 6 October?

(2) Did his department not have a copy of this transcript?

(3) Has he, or his department, obtained any copies of this transcript, other than that supplied by the television program "Today Tonight"?

(4) Are the Victorian police conducting a full inquiry into corruption in racing, including an investigation of the truth, or otherwise, of statements made in "The Age" tapes?

(5) In view of the statements by the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing, admitting that there is some corruption in Queensland racing, does he intend to conduct an inquiry into the level and type of corruption in Queensland racing?

(6) Is he concerned at the possibility of organised crime using corruption in the racing industry in Queensland as an opportunity to launder stolen money?

*Answer—*

(1) No, but I obtained certain material purporting to come from those tapes.

(2) My department did not have a copy.

(3) No.

(4) That is a matter for the Victorian authorities.

(5) The matter is being examined.

(6) All avenues are being monitored to prevent crime in Queensland and, when detected, appropriate action will be taken immediately.

### 4. Instant Casket Tickets

Mr ROW asked the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer—

(1) Will consideration be given to introducing "not for publication" facilities for Instant Casket tickets, such as presently exist for Golden Casket tickets and Gold Lotto?

(2) Will he also investigate claims that the manager of the Golden Casket Art Union Office is giving impracticable advice concerning this matter to inquirers who are potential customers?

*Answer—*

(1) "Not for publication" facilities for Instant Casket would only be relevant for the televised drawing of the \$50,000 Treasure Chest. No other Instant Casket prize-winners are publicly announced.

The honourable member should be aware that the televised drawing of the Instant Casket Treasure Chest is an integral part of the marketing strategy for Instant Caskets. It would be quite meaningless to draw prize-winning tickets and then announce to a television audience that no details would be given on the basis of a "not for publication" request. This would surely give rise to questions in the minds of the public as to whether there was in fact a winner and cast doubt on the integrity of the game. The Government would not agree to any measures that prejudiced the integrity of Instant Casket or any other State-controlled lottery.

The comparison with Golden Casket and Gold Lotto is not valid because the structure and presentation of these games is quite different and is amenable to the "not for publication" facility.

(2) I am assured that the manager of the Golden Casket Art Union Office has not and will not be offering advice concerning this matter that is inconsistent with the best interests of the game and the achievement of maximum operating profits.

## 5. Toxic Shock Syndrome

Ms WARNER asked the Minister for Health—

How many deaths, if any, and hospitalisations have there been in Queensland as a result of toxic shock syndrome and in which years, if any, did these occur?

*Answer—*

I am informed that there was one probable case in Queensland in 1975, and that there have been two confirmed cases in 1982, one of which was fatal.

A National Health and Medical Research Council statement, "Questions and Answers on Toxic Shock Syndrome—Update October 1982", appeared as Appendix XIV of the report of the ninety-fourth session of the council. That statement advises that—

"In the light of present knowledge women who choose to use tampons should observe the following precautions:

Tampons should be used intermittently during the (menstrual) period, that is, preferably not used through the night.

Tampons should be changed at least every eight hours during the day.

The more absorbent tampons should be used sparingly, being reserved for the days of heaviest flow.

Women should continue their daily bath or shower during the period, and should wash their hands before and after inserting a tampon.

The tampon should not be handled unnecessarily after unwrapping and should be inserted carefully and gently.

Should the symptoms of toxic shock develop, women should remove the tampon and contact their doctor immediately.

Remember not all cases of toxic shock syndrome are associated with tampon use."

## 6. Pensioner Rebates on Fire Levies

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

With reference to the financial difficulty many aged pensioners have in respect to the rise in fire levy contributions—

(1) Is he aware that many pensioners now have to pay \$48 instead of a previous figure of approximately \$30?

(2) Will he give consideration to the introduction of a pensioner rebate system similar to the one that the Government has introduced for pensioners in respect of rate remissions through local authorities?

*Answer—*

(1) Although it is true that pensioner home-owners in Brisbane and the major cities now have to pay a \$48 fire levy, the amount is less in other cities and towns. Indeed, in most country towns the figure is as low as \$21.

The figure of \$30 paid previously, as quoted by the honourable member, is presumably a figure he relates only to the value of insurance paid on property. If so, it represents insurance of only \$27,000 for house and contents, which is a very low figure.

That figure also takes no account of the fact that most property owners, including pensioners, had to pay also a proportion of local rates for fire services—usually about \$10 to \$12. That is no longer required, as the Government has removed the requirement for local authorities to contribute.

Any increase in levy payment is therefore minimal and applies only to a small section of pensioners. Many pensioners, such as those owning home units, for example, have in the past had to pay much higher amounts. The previous insurance levy on home units was usually well in excess of \$100, as compared with the \$48 now being charged.

(2) Serious consideration is being given to the question of a pensioner rebate system. Such a rebate would have to be introduced without causing an increased levy to other property-owners. Given the strong growth of Queensland under this Government, I do not see that as a problem.

## 7. Compulsory Superannuation Scheme for Queensland Workers

Mr WHITE asked the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs—

With reference to the current standover tactics and coercion by building unions in an endeavour to force workers and subcontractors not only to join the union but also compulsorily to join the Building Union Superannuation Scheme commonly known as BUS—

(1) Has he had an evaluation done of the Building Union Superannuation Scheme and on the alternative schemes proposed by the Confederation of Industry and the Housing Industry Association?

(2) If so, did the evaluation indicate that the Confederation of Industry scheme (Queensland United Employers Superannuation Trust) and the Housing Industry Association Fund are superior in a number of respects, for example, disability benefits?

(3) Is it legally possible for a separate Queensland agreement to be made round the employer-proposed schemes so that Queensland workers will get a better deal and have an adequate input into the running of these schemes?

(4) If so, what action has the Government taken, or does it propose to take, to assist with the adoption of a separate package agreement for the benefit of Queensland workers?

(5) If the Government has not taken action as outlined above, will it give urgent consideration to these matters?

*Answer—*

(1 to 5) Issues raised by the honourable member are matters of concern, and the Government is fully aware of these. It has been active in investigating the issues, and in an answer to a question in Parliament by the honourable member for Pine Rivers on Thursday, 20 September 1984, I outlined possible ramifications of the Building Unions Superannuation Scheme (BUS).

BUS has many adverse characteristics, the most important of which is that it is coercive, union-dominated and southern-based. It is under the control of union leaders, and it will amass large sums of money, much of which will come from Queensland. It could not be expected that those involved in the scheme will give any thought to putting Queensland money back into Queensland.

Queensland employers have shown initiative in establishing State-based schemes that are comparable with BUS, and it is these Queensland-based schemes that will provide employers with a choice that they can make themselves rather than being forced into a highly unsatisfactory scheme if they do not wish to be part of it.

The Government has announced already that it supports a number of Queensland-based schemes and is prepared to look at a situation for future Queensland contracts in which preference may be given to companies contributing to Queensland-based schemes when superannuation is a requirement.

The honourable member can be assured that the Government is fully aware of the problem and will take whatever action is necessary to provide the best possible deal for Queensland employers and employees.

I understand that the Master Builders Association has this week signed a peace package with the Queensland branch of the Plumbers and Gasfitters union in support of the BUS Scheme. This virtually means that organisations, such as the Master Plumbers association, which oppose the BUS Scheme will be further pressured into joining that scheme.

Despite the attitude of the executive of the Master Builders Association, it has become increasingly evident to me that numerous individual members of the association do not hold the same views as the executive. It seems that those making the decisions are major contractors who will not have to pay out the \$11 a week per employee superannuation; instead, it will be the subcontractors who will pay. All honourable members know that that \$11 a week per person could well be doubled in the future. The Government is extremely disappointed at the stand-over tactics being employed by the building unions and the Master Builders Association in support of the BUS Scheme.

Today I will write to all major building contractors in Queensland outlining the disadvantages of the BUS scheme and urging them to support a Queensland-based superannuation scheme that will benefit all Queenslanders.

#### **8. Maaroom Fisheries Habitat Reserve No. 23**

Mr COMBEN asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to the revocation of part of the Maaroom Fisheries Habitat Reserve No. 23, approved by this House on 7 March 1984, and later dredging work carried out at the mouth of Wanggoolba Creek, Fraser Island—

(1) Is he aware of deviations from the planned work described in the environmental impact study tabled in this House and particularly in schedule II of that document?

(2) Is any dredging work occurring outside the revoked areas of Maaroom Fisheries Habitat Reserve No. 23 and within the area presently defined as Maaroom Fisheries Habitat Reserve No. 23?

(3) What procedures does his department have for monitoring work being carried out pursuant to an environmental impact study?

(4) Have any inspections of work being undertaken at the mouth of Wanggoolba Creek been made by competent officers of his department?

(5) On what date were any such inspections made?

(6) Was the fill from the dredging dumped within Fisheries Habitat Reserve No. 23?

(7) Are any prosecutions being considered for breaches of the Fisheries Act within Maaroom Fisheries Habitat Reserve No. 23 in the vicinity of the mouth of Wanggoolba Creek and, if so, against whom are such prosecutions pending and what is the nature of the prosecutions?

*Answer—*

(1) I am not aware of any deviations from the planned work described in the environmental impact study with respect to dredging to be carried out at the mouth of Wanggoolba Creek, Fraser Island.

(2) I am not aware of dredging work occurring outside the revoked area.

(3) When an area is revoked from a fisheries habitat reserve, it no longer comes within the jurisdiction of my department. The revoked area is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Harbours and Marine.

(4 & 5) No inspections have been carried out by the Fisheries Management Branch of my department.

(6) I do not know.

(7) I am not at this stage aware of any breaches of the Fisheries Act in this matter.

#### **9. Costs in Defamation Case against Premier**

Mr HAMILL asked the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer—

With reference to the defamation action brought against the Premier by Mr John Sinclair of the Fraser Island Defence Organisation, and the subsequent successful appeal by the Premier and the awarding of costs—

(1) Is Mr Sinclair having \$50 deducted from his salary each week?

(2) If so, is this money paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund as the Crown paid the Premier's legal costs in that case?

(3) If not, what is the reason?

*Answer—*

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) See (2).

#### **10. Amendment to Sugar Acquisition Act**

Mr EATON asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Will he name the sugar industry organisations that requested, and their reasons for requesting, the extension of the sunset clause in the amendment to the Sugar Acquisition Act, introduced in September 1982 and due to lapse on 31 October 1984?

(2) When was he or his department first approached to introduce the amendment now before the House?

*Answer—*

(1) Yes. The four sugar industry organisations are the Australian Sugar Producers Association Limited, the Queensland Cane Growers Council, the Proprietary Sugar Millers Association Limited and the Co-operative Sugar Millers Association Limited. All of these associations, in a joint letter dated 8 May 1984 and signed on behalf of the

organisations concerned, requested the extension of the sunset clause in the Sugar Acquisition Act 1915-1982.

The reasons given by the organisations as set out in their letter were—

- (a) That the four organisations arrived at the unanimous decision at a joint meeting on 23 March 1984 to commence forthwith a full-scale study into industry practices and regulations which they expected would take about 18 months to complete.
- (b) That the industry study would encompass the issues proposed to be canvassed by a Government inquiry previously promised by my predecessor and colleague, the Honourable M. J. Ahern, when introducing the 1982 Bill and that it was therefore appropriate that any Government inquiry not be held until the industry study and consultation process has been properly exhausted.
- (c) That, if during the course of the industry study, there remained issues which were unresolved by consensus, the Queensland Government would be asked to establish a formal inquiry to look into those issues and recommend appropriate action.
- (d) That the program should be completed in time for any legislative changes to be enacted in time for the commencement of the 1987 season and that extension of the sunset provision in the Sugar Acquisition Act would be necessary.

(2) As indicated in my answer to (1), the sugar industry, as a whole, first approached me by letter dated 8 May 1984.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber and in the gallery.

#### 11. School Mobile Dental Service, North Queensland

Mr EATON asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the announcement in the Budget that the School Mobile Dental Service will be improved to meet the needs of Queensland—

Does the Government intend to place more units on the Atherton Tableland and/or in the Innisfail and coastal district to enable the schools in these areas to have more frequent visits from units, and thus to catch up on the backlog at many northern schools?

*Answer—*

Four double-surgery mobile dental clinics constructed in the 1983-84 financial year are presently being commissioned. One will be located on the Atherton Tableland as soon as it becomes available.

Staff and facilities in the School Dental Service districts based on Cairns and Innisfail will be adequate to provide a satisfactory service to the schools in those areas.

#### 12. Fire Brigades Boards

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

With reference to the formulation of fire brigade budgets—

(1) What method is used by him and his department for assessing the budgets of fire brigades boards within the State?

(2) Are the budgets that are submitted by these boards investigated and, if so, by whom?

(3) How do the persons assessing the budgets decide whether expenditure is necessary or unnecessary within the budgets?

(4) What fire experience or fire service have the men assessing the budgets had?

(5) Has the replacement of the long-duration (2 hours) oxygen-breathing apparatus sets, listed in the budget submitted by the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, been allowed for in the moneys allocated to that board and, if not, what is the reason?

(6) Has he made any provisions for a State fire service training school, as exist in Victoria and New South Wales and, if not, what is the reason?

(7) If so, when and where will it be constructed?

(8) What research has been done in regard to site facilities, instructors and administrators connected with the training centre?

(9) Since, in the budget, manpower cuts have already been implemented, what boards have had their budgets cut to stop their employing men to replace those who have resigned, retired or transferred to another brigade?

(10) Has he, in considering his recommendation for manpower cuts to various brigades, done so without providing for the application of modern technology to replace the men?

(11) Since fire protection in the rural sector is important, what is the ratio of expenditure of rural fire protection to urban fire protection within this budget?

(12) How much research has been done on rural fire protection and replacement of the fire-fighting equipment pools in relation to fire risk areas?

(13) Who did the research and where did they obtain their data?

(14) What qualifications do the researchers have in this field of research?

(15) Has he formed a committee of fire unions to offer advice on fire-related matters, in the same way as he has established the Joint Fire Boards Committee from fire brigade employer groups, to offer advice on manning levels, equipment safety and other matters affecting fire-fighters?

(16) If so, how much input given by these unions has been acted upon and is the advice given vetted by fire advisers, Mr Paltridge, Mr Ripper and Mr Davies?

(17) If cuts are made to fire service budgets, what happens to the surplus funds as levied from the public, since he has previously stated that the level of the levy was based on providing for fire brigade budgets?

(18) What is the formula for deciding the staff levels of particular fire brigades?

(19) Is this formula applied in Queensland as it is elsewhere or does it have unique variations?

(20) Are his decisions based on any professional advice at all?

(21) Has the strength of fire brigades in Brisbane been cut by 50 men, in spite of its growth in terms of people, investment and technology?

(22) When might we expect this service to stop shrinking and start growing again, along with the rest of the city?

(23) What is the collective contribution paid in application fees by fire brigades boards to the Queensland Country Fire Brigades Boards Union of Employees?

(24) How much is contributed by each board?

*Answer—*

It is pleasing to see that the ALP has finally decided to seek a few facts about Queensland's very capable urban and rural fire services. I commend the honourable member for his interest. It certainly is in stark contrast to that of the honourable member for Port Curtis, who has a reputation for never letting the facts stand in the way of any publicity he can get for his absurd and juvenile allegations against the State's fire services.

(1 to 3) The budgets are assessed by a process of consultation between my officers and the relevant members and officers of boards to arrive at a satisfactory level of expenditure in keeping with the Government's commitment to maintain Queensland's high fire-safety standards.

(4) Many years of fire and emergency service management at local, regional and State level.

(5) The overall total budget approved for the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board allows the board to allocate priorities according to its needs. The final decision on plant and equipment purchases rests with the board.

(6 to 8) The matter of a training school is being considered within the context of an improved training and education plan that is now being developed for the whole fire service.

(9) No manpower cuts have been applied to the total fire service budget. In fact, an additional 25 permanent firemen are to be employed in 1984-85.

(10) No.

(11) It is not valid to compare urban and rural fire-protection budgets. The State's bush fire brigades are run as voluntary self-help organisations.

(12 to 14) Considerable research is being undertaken by the CSIRO, tertiary institutions and other bodies throughout Australia. The results are available to the Rural Fires Board, which has an input into such research. A five-year plan for the replacement, improvement and increase of fire-fighting equipment in rural areas is now under way.

(15 & 16) Yes. However, with the exception of one union, no constructive input has been provided. The input from that one union is being considered, along with other advice.

(17) The claim by the ALP of so-called massive surpluses in the fire budget is false. As levies are calculated on the basis of approved budgets, there will be no surplus funds.

(18 & 19) The criteria for setting staff levels have been derived as a result of detailed research, including consideration of interstate approaches. They are applied equally to all urban fire brigade areas in Queensland.

(20) Yes.

(21 & 22) No. The brigade's high fire-safety record will be maintained.

(23) \$129,086 for 1983-84.

(24) A sliding scale is applied, depending upon the classification and manpower levels of the various boards. The amount varies from \$224 to \$5,824.

### 13. **Surveying of Portion 7, Parish of Toompine**

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

(1) Has the Department of Mapping and Surveying ever received a complaint from the Main Roads Department regarding the surveying of portion 7, Parish of Toompine, as shown on Plan B.L.O.23?

(2) Did the Department of Mapping and Surveying and the Surveyors Board make any investigations of this particular complaint and, if so, what were the findings of this investigation and what was the nature of the complaint?

(3) Who was the surveyor involved and what is the current position held by the surveyor?

*Answer—*

(1) No formal complaint has ever been received by the department. However, the district engineer for the Main Roads Department advised the department's district surveyor at Roma in 1979 that a discrepancy existed in the lengths of some boundary lines along the reserve for the road from Quilpie to Thargomindah.

(2 & 3) As the discrepancy disadvantaged neither the Main Roads Department nor the property-owner, the expense of sending out a field party to that remote area, exclusively to establish whether a survey error existed, could not be justified. However, earlier this

year, a field party working in the area established that a compensating error of five chains existed in the lengths of some boundary lines.

Mr Kevin Davies, the Surveyor-General, will be advised by the department's Division of Surveys that an error exists and, in keeping with the Department's normal practice, his comments on the matter will be sought.

Because the error is so minor, the Surveyors Board was not advised.

#### 14. Grain Storage

Mr ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to the huge tonnages of carry-over wheat still stored in both permanent and temporary facilities in New South Wales—

What potential exists at both Pinkenba and Fisherman Islands to handle even greater tonnages of both wheat and other grains from northern New South Wales by both rail and road transport?

*Answer—*

A potential does exist for handling increased quantities of wheat and other grains from northern New South Wales through the port of Brisbane. The current combined handling and freight charges in Queensland are very favourable when compared with combined handling and transport charges in New South Wales. It is expected that many individual New South Wales wheat-growers will deliver to Bulk Grains Queensland's depots this year. This is in addition to the normal volumes of barley and grain sorghum that are exported through the port of Brisbane.

Given a favourable shipping program, it is estimated that the two existing grain terminals in Brisbane should be capable of shipping in excess of 2.5 million tonnes of grains during 1984-85. Following the commissioning of the new Fisherman Islands terminal in 1985-86, the shipping capacity at Brisbane terminals of Bulk Grains Queensland should exceed 4 million tonnes per annum.

#### 15. Government Guarantees to Corporations and Businesses

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

(1) How many guarantees were given by his department, or its predecessor, to corporations or businesses in Queensland in the years ended 30 June 1983 and 30 June 1984 and from 1 July 1984 to 10 October 1984 and to what companies with what upper limit on amount?

(2) How many of those guarantees are still in force and in respect of what corporations or businesses?

(3) How many of the guarantees referred to in his answer to (1) have been called upon, in respect of what companies and how much has been paid out by the Government in each case?

*Answer—*

(1) Guarantees issued are as follows—

1.7.82—30.6.83

North Queensland Engineers and Agents Pty Ltd . . . . .	\$3,500,000
David Hartley Computer Australia Pty Ltd . . . . .	\$1,400,000

1.7.83—30.6.84

Tube Estates Pty Ltd . . . . .	\$ 940,000
Suttons Foundry Pty Ltd . . . . .	\$1,350,000
Suttons Foundry Pty Ltd . . . . .	\$ 290,000

1.7.84 to date

Nil

- (2) Two—the guarantees issued in 1982-83.
- (3) Two—Suttons Foundry Pty Ltd ..... \$1,327,239  
           Suttons Foundry Pty Ltd ..... \$ 252,937

**16. Charges Against Police Officers**

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

With reference to his answer to my recent question—

(1) In relation to the convictions enumerated for each of the years ended 30 June 1982, 1983 and 1984 and in respect of each individual who was convicted (and I do not seek names), of what offence was that person convicted, what was the penalty or sentence imposed on each charge and did that person remain in the police force after conviction?

(2) As there appears to be an unusually high number of nolle prosequis compared to the total number of indictable charges detailed in the overall answer, what were the reasons given for not proceeding with those charges?

*Answer—*

(1) For 1982: Drive motor vehicle without due care and attention, fined \$35, remained; conspiracy to cultivate prohibited plant (2) and conspiracy to obstruct justice, 2 years' imprisonment, did not remain; drive motor vehicle under influence of liquor, fined \$350 and licence disqualified for 8 months, remained.

For 1983: Fail to provide specimen of breath, fined \$550 and licence disqualified for 18 months, remained; drive motor vehicle under influence of liquor, fined \$350 and licence disqualified for 15 months, remained; drive motor vehicle under influence of liquor, fined \$400 and licence disqualified for 12 months, remained; failed to provide specimen of breath, fined \$250 and licence disqualified for 6 months, remained; and drive motor vehicle under influence of liquor, fined \$125 and licence disqualified for 1 month, remained.

For 1984: Armed robbery and unlawful assault, 3 years' imprisonment, did not remain.

(2) This is a matter that should be referred to my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General.

Mr Innes: I do so accordingly.

**17. Video Pornography**

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

With reference to my concern about video pornography previously expressed, for example, in parliamentary questions in 1983—

What progress has been made towards control of this unsavoury trade in Queensland?

*Answer—*

I compliment the honourable member for raising this issue. He is one of a number of Government members who have expressed concern and asked me to take action in regard to this problem. I can recall his mentioning problems as early as last year.

It is a well-known fact that video pornography is organised by big crime syndicates in the United States of America, and that the Federal Government has allowed this pernicious material to be imported freely to Australia.

I share the honourable member's concern about pornography and assure him that the Queensland Government will take positive measures to ensure that this State does not sink to the levels of the New South Wales Government under the dubious leadership of the Australian Labor Party president (Neville Wran) and its support of organised crime.

Legislation will be introduced in Queensland in the present session of Parliament to outlaw all forms of video pornography, unlike what is happening in the Labor States and the Federal Labor Government, which propose to ban only extreme violence, child pornography and bestiality. The Labor Party simply is not fair dinkum about protecting the nation's children.

It is interesting that the Labor Party always wants to regulate everything—except drugs, crime and pornography. I challenge members opposite to stand up and support me in demanding that the Federal Labor Government immediately instruct the Customs Department to ban all imports of pornography. I will not hold my breath waiting.

#### 18. **New Sugar Terminal, Port of Brisbane**

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

What is the present position in relation to the construction of a new sugar terminal at the port of Brisbane to cater for the Moreton (based on Nambour), Rocky Point, Beenleigh and New South Wales mills to help reduce cane-growers' costs?

*Answer—*

The construction of the sugar terminal commenced on 1 March 1984 and progress to date is generally to program with only minor delays. Project-programming is continually receiving close attention so that the facilities will be ready to receive raw sugar from the 1985 season crushings. The receival station work is now above ground level, the 60 000 tonne storage shed walls are complete and erection of the steel-framing has commenced. Sections of the wharf are ready for handing over to follow-on contractors and the erection of the conveyor and ship-loader is due to commence within the next few weeks.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### **Pay-roll Tax**

Mr **WARBURTON**: In asking a question of the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to the action, of which he may be well aware, taken by the Western Australian Labor Government in its Budget delivered yesterday to reduce the rate of pay-roll tax to 4.75 per cent, which is well below the Queensland rate of 5 per cent. As the increase in the maximum pay-roll tax exemption level announced in the recent Queensland Budget did not amount to any increased concession in real terms, I now ask: Will the Government make a genuine effort to reduce the impact of this regressive tax on employment by immediately following the initiative of the Western Australian Labor Government and, by reducing the rate of pay-roll tax in Queensland, do something constructive towards encouraging private enterprise to employ more people?

Sir **JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN**: I deplore the fact that the Western Australian Government has had such a high tax for so long when Queensland has had such a low pay-roll tax. Queensland's exemption rate is \$272,000, which is well above that in Western Australia. I am surprised that the leader of the Opposition has drawn attention to this because the Queensland exemption level has always been far higher than that in any other State. That exemption level of \$272,000 cannot be matched in any of the States run by colleagues of the honourable member.

What is more, Queensland does not have the Aboriginal problem that exists in Western Australia, and I suggest to Mr Burke that he wake up to himself and take positive action on that issue, if he can.

#### **State Government Computer Centre**

Mr **WARBURTON**: My second question is to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, who would have heard the Premier's answer this morning to my question in respect of State Government Computer Centre security. The Minister may be aware that, for what I believed to be rather obvious reasons, not one other State Government

or the Commonwealth Government allows the release of such tapes. I ask: Has the Minister ever instructed or authorised magnetic tapes to be made available to Queensland Ministers? If so, which Ministers received the tapes, what was on those tapes, and who paid for the service, which I understand is rather expensive? Most importantly, in any of the cases was the the magnetic tape made available without the knowledge or authorisation of the Principal Electoral Officer in Queensland?

**Mr HARPER:** As the Leader of the Opposition heard from the answer by my leader, the Honourable the Premier and Treasurer, tapes have been made available to members of Parliament. The State Electoral Office forms part of my ministerial responsibility, and I have received a number of requests for that type of information. Those requests have always been declined, with the exception of those made by two members of this Assembly. Information which is available in printed form was made available to them.

The further details requested in the question asked by the honourable member will be provided if he would care to place the question on notice.

**Mr WARBURTON:** I do so accordingly—and that includes the names of the two Ministers.

### Queensland Property Growth Trust

**Mr NEAL:** I ask the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General: In view of the criticism of Queensland Property Growth Trust by members of the Opposition and southern interests who seem determined to denigrate Queensland companies that are bringing investment to Queensland, has the Minister's office carried out any investigations into Queensland Property Growth Trust and, if so, what were the findings?

**Mr HARPER:** Yes, officers of my department have carried out investigations into Queensland Property Growth Trust. It is rather interesting that last night and on the ninth of this month the honourable member for Woodridge raised in this Chamber the question of action to be taken by the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs, who is responsible to me. I made a statement last Friday indicating that investigations were being carried out and that appropriate action would be taken. My commissioner has had discussions with the principals of Queensland Property Growth Trust and their solicitors, and I believe that those principals are in the course of meeting a requirement which I made of them, that is, that no-one will be disadvantaged by the notice that they inserted in the press. I invite all honourable members to inspect the extremely well-presented prospectus of Queensland Property Growth Trust. Those members who take the trouble to look at that prospectus, which was approved by my Commissioner for Corporate Affairs, will find that it is an extremely well-presented document.

I draw attention to a document dated 14 September drawn up by a firm known as Norths, a member of Sydney Stock Exchange Limited, which brought about the criticism of this Queensland enterprise. This member of the Sydney Stock Exchange says—

“Over this past year Peter Bradfield and Ross Shackell have researched the property Trust industry in penetrating depth.”

On page 81 of a document titled “Personal Investment” of September 1984, this appears—

“At Norths, when our Research Team looks at a Property Trust it physically inspects the real estate, interviews the Property managers, and evaluates their skill and competence.”

In August 1984, Norths went on to print a report, obviously one of its well-researched and evaluated reports. That report, at page 201, refers to the properties of Queensland Property Growth Trust. It enumerates six of them, when in fact there were more to be evaluated. The fourth one is said to be situated at the Westpac Bank, Margaret Street, Toowoomba. Bearing in mind the thorough research that is carried out by Norths—it physically inspects the real estate, interviews the property managers and evaluates their skill—I point out that the property owned by Queensland Property Growth Trust is

situated not in Margaret Street, Toowoomba, but at the Westpac Building in Ruthven Street, Toowoomba. Likewise, No. 5 in this list is detailed as being situated at 151 Robertson Street, Fortitude Valley, and in actual fact, it is situated at 161 Robertson Street, Fortitude Valley. So much for the skill of that firm that has denigrated a Queensland company.

I reaffirm that we have investigated Queensland Property Growth Trust and we believe that it will meet the requirements that I have insisted on in remedying any effect that its unfortunate notice may have had.

### **Transport Services to North Queensland**

**Mr STEPHAN:** In directing a question to the Minister for Transport, I refer to the decision of the Federal Government, which has control of the Australian Shipping Commission, to allow the Australian National Line to drop its service to north Queensland. I ask: What guarantee can the Minister give for a stable and reliable transport service as an alternative to that provided by ANL?

**Mr LANE:** The honourable member raises a matter of great interest to this State. To this time, most of the public debate that has ensued regarding the future of the ANL service to north Queensland has highlighted the role of Queensland Railways. I can understand that, because Queensland Railways has the capacity to carry large volumes over long distances. Large volumes are involved in the service that ANL provided to north Queensland.

Honourable members may be interested to know that, in 1983-84, ANL carried 2 041 containers north-bound to Townsville and 2 291 containers north-bound to Cairns. It carried 4 753 containers south-bound from Townsville and 1 214 containers south-bound from Cairns.

The withdrawal of the ANL service to north Queensland is a very serious matter. In 1983-84, ANL showed a loss of only \$6.6m in providing that service to north Queensland. Queensland Railways, of course, will step in and perform a role in north Queensland. I believe also that, because of the flexibility of road transport, it will have a major impact and influence in the north.

If road transport is to be successful in north Queensland, it must be stable and reliable, and that is what I will inform the House about this morning. Because of the decentralised nature of the State and the vast distances between towns, Queensland has a unique industrial situation as regards road transport. In north Queensland and western Queensland, most employees in the road transport industry are members of the Australian Workers Union. However, in the south-east corner of the State, the Transport Workers Union, which is split into factions, represents most of the workers in the road transport industry. This industrial situation is of real concern when one considers road transport as an alternative to the ANL shipping service in north Queensland.

The Transport Workers Union in south-east Queensland is split on political lines as much as it is split on industrial lines. The two factions of the Labor Party that it has split into are the old guard faction—which is represented by the Leader of the Opposition and Len Ward of Trades Hall—and the socialist left faction, which is represented by Hughie Williams and by the honourable members for Wolston and Kurilpa. The factions in the Transport Workers Union are represented, repeated and duplicated by honourable members in this Chamber.

Honourable members who are concerned about transport in north Queensland are entitled to be concerned about the growing strength of the Australian Workers Union in this State. Not only is it growing industrially but also, in the last few days, there have been striking examples of the extent to which it is growing politically. Recently, the third instance of Federal intervention into the Queensland Labor Party, or at least into the political wing of the Labor movement in Queensland, occurred. That will have a very important effect on transport arrangements and the future of transport in north Queensland.

Just 10 days ago, the Federal executive of the Australian Labor Party granted the Australian Workers Union increased representation in the party in Queensland. That means that the faction that is represented by the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—the old guard—will have less influence and less say in the party in Queensland; their influence has diminished. It is evidence of the centralised nature of the Labor movement and the control that exists over the party from Canberra. That is in contrast to the localised control of the National Party Government.

Some years ago the first intervention in the Queensland Labor Party by the Federal Executive brought about the reorganisation of the party. That reorganisation I might say—

**Mr DAVIS:** I rise to a point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr LANE:** The second intervention—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr DAVIS:** I rise to a point of order. I move—

“That the Minister for Transport table the papers from which he is reading.”

That is a formal motion.

**Mr LANE:** Mr Speaker, I will be happy to table this. It is a report that appears in the “Daily Sun” this morning.

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

**Mr DAVIS:** I rise to a second point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Brisbane Central took a point of order.

**An Opposition Member:** He moved a motion.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister for Transport.

**Mr DAVIS:** I rise to a further point of order.

**Mr LANE:** In answer to the honourable member’s—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Brisbane Central has risen to another point of order.

**Mr DAVIS:** I formally moved that the Minister table the papers from which he is reading in answer to this Dorothy Dix question.

**Mr LANE:** Mr Speaker, I am happy to table it. Those people who are wise enough to buy the “Daily Sun” know about it anyway.

*Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the document on the table.*

**Mr Davis:** I accept that.

**Mr LANE:** Thank you very much. You accept that as fact?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Has the honourable member for Brisbane Central withdrawn his motion?

**Mr DAVIS:** As long as the Minister has tabled all the papers from which he was reading.

**Mr LANE:** The Opposition Whip is very firmly a member of the old guard of the Labor Party, and that is the faction that now controls the Labor Party in this State, contrary to what occurs at Federal level.

I wish to speak about the second instance of Federal intervention in the Queensland branch of the Australian Labor Party. I shall speak about the recent occasion when the national executive picked the Senate team for the forthcoming unnecessary Federal election. For a second time, it intervened in this State and took the rights of the Queensland branch—

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr Fouras:** I move an extension of time for the Minister.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for South Brisbane will come to order.

**Mr LANE:** He is not in the right Parliament.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister has made his point.

**Honourable Members interjected.**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Next question.

**Mr LANE:** Mr Speaker, are you indicating that I am not to continue?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! I think that the Minister has made his point.

**Mr LANE:** It is a bit hard to judge, Mr Speaker, if you do not know what else I have to say.

**Mr Fouras:** Give him a go, Mr Speaker! We want an extension of time.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr HINZE:** I move—

“That the Minister for Transport be further heard.”

Motion agreed to.

**Mr LANE:** I thank the House. I now move to the third example of intervention by the national executive of the Australian Labor Party in the Queensland branch, to increase the representation of the AWU in the Queensland branch of the Australian Labor Party.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr PREST:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, the motion that was moved by Mr Hinze is contrary to your ruling. Therefore, I ask you to rule on the matter.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! I have asked the Minister for Transport to confine his remarks to the question.

**Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I rise to a point of order. It was moved and agreed to by the House that the Minister be further heard.

**Honourable Members interjected.**

**Mr DAVIS:** I rise to a point of order. I move—

“That the Minister for Transport table all the documents from which he is reading.”

That includes all the documents that I asked him to table earlier.

## Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 29		NOES, 46	
Campbell	Wilson	Ahern	Lane
Casey	Wright	Alison	Lester
Comben	Yewdale	Austin	Lickiss
D'Arcy		Bailey	Lingard
DeLacy		Bjelke-Petersen	Littleproud
Eaton		Booth	McKechnie
Fouras		Borbidge	McPhie
Gibbs, R. J.		Cahill	Menzel
Goss		Chapman	Muntz
Hamill		Cooper	Newton
Mackenroth		Elliott	Powell
McElligott		FitzGerald	Randell
McLean		Gibbs, I. J.	Row
Milliner		Glasson	Simpson
Palaszczuk		Goleby	Stephan
Price		Gunn	Stoneman
Scott		Harper	Tenni
Shaw		Harvey	Turner
Smith		Henderson	Wharton
Underwood		Hinze	White
Vaughan		Innes	
Veivers	<i>Tellers</i>	Jennings	<i>Tellers</i>
Warburton	Davis	Katter	Kaus
Warner, A. M.	Prest	Knox	Neal

Resolved in the negative.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The time allotted for questions has now expired.

### MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

#### Transport Services to North Queensland; ALP Factions

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (12.3 p.m.): I thank the House for giving me the opportunity to continue giving the people of Queensland information about factions within the Australian Labor Party and the effect they might have on industrial affairs in the future.

A few moments ago, I spoke about the importance of the Transport Workers Union and the Australian Workers Union, and the effect that their relative strengths, one against the other, within the Labor movement will have upon an efficient, reliable and stable transport service to north Queensland. That is my reason for raising the matter, and I welcome the opportunity to continue.

I said that there had been two instances of Federal intervention in the Australian Labor Party (Queensland Branch). The first was the famous reorganisation, which has turned out to be a damp squib and has fallen on its face. The new guard—the centre majority—holds power in neither the organisational structure of the party nor the parliamentary wing. Intervention was a waste of time for all of those gallant people who lauded it as a great miracle and a great reform—the reform on which the Labor Party went to the last elections; the new-style Labor Party; the sort of Labor Party that Peter Beattie has been trying to beat up in his myriad press statements over the last couple of years. That intervention is no more. It no longer exists; it is finished.

We are back to the days of the old guard. We are back to the days of the ETU running the Labor Party in this State, as it has done for so many years. Two of them occupy the two most senior positions in the parliamentary Opposition—the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Warburton) and his deputy (Mr Burns). The member for Nudgee (Mr Vaughan) is another former member of the ETU. That is where the real power now lies in the Australian Labor Party. Once again, it is run by the old bunch.

The second intervention was the picking by Canberra of the Queensland Senate ticket, which made a great farce of Senate elections—a farce, of course, that well suits

the future ambitions of the Australian Labor Party, which has the abolition of the Senate as part of its policy. The Queensland Labor Senate ticket was picked by the centralist organisation of the Australian Labor Party in Canberra.

The third intervention occurred last week. It was designed to impose on the organisational structure of the Labor Party in this State greater representation by the Australian Workers Union. Once again, that intervention ignored the rank and file membership of the Australian Labor Party.

A battle is now taking place between two very powerful and opposing forces in the Labor Party. On the one hand is the national executive of the party, in which Bill Hayden rules the roost; on the other is the Queensland Trades Hall faction—the old guard, or, as they now like to call themselves, Labor unity. Labor unity! There has been no such thing in the Labor Party for many years—certainly not since the split in the 1950s.

**Mr Elliott:** What about the special conference that has been proposed?

**Mr LANE:** I was coming to the special conference that the factions are thinking about organising. The old guard and the socialist Left are thinking of combining to call a special conference, which will waste the time of the rank-and-file members of the Labor Party when they should be out campaigning for the Federal election. Why is that? Because it has become a numbers game to fight for control of the organisation.

The reward at the end of the playing of the numbers game is the plum endorsements in the safe Labor seats. I look across the Chamber at the members who sit opposite and I can trace the various eras through which the party has gone as the numbers game has changed and as one faction has gained the ascendancy in numbers over its rivals. I recall that when I became a member of this Assembly I looked across the Chamber at people such as Marty Hanson, Lou Jensen, Hughie O'Donnell and Pat Hanlon. That was the time when the moderate members of the Labor Party had control and they handed their endorsements to the sons of Ireland. They were the days that I first spent in this place.

Then the party did another turn and the Trades Hall bunch had their day. The Trades Hall bunch, who have recently taken over again, had their members trooping in here with Trades Hall endorsements. The honourable member for Lytton and Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Tom Burns) was one of the Trades Hall endorsees. He was followed by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Warburton), a paid functionary of the Electrical Trades Union, a union which is famous for causing strikes and inconvenience to the people of Queensland. Close on his heels was that other union functionary and party hack the honourable member for Nudgee, who also entered this place with ETU endorsement.

Following that period, the famous first intervention took place. Of course, now intervention can be talked about thrice. The first intervention and reorganisation occurred when Peter Beattie's bunch and Bill Hayden decided that they would have a little say in the plum endorsements. The House has since witnessed a parade of so-called bright young fellows—Identikit people. It is difficult to tell the difference between those members of the Labor Party and members of some other parties. They all look the same. They have about them a great lack of ideology and real belief in good, old, standard Labor Party principles. The honourable member for Salisbury is one of them. He is an example of the bright young lawyers of the Labor Party who have entered this place, the Federal House and the New South Wales Parliament. I might say that most of them came straight from their practices in the profession in which they made their money out of ambulance-chasing.

They made their quid out of workers' compensation claims; most of them, I might say, were handled on a spec basis; they received a percentage of the settlement. They joined the Labor Party because there was a quid in it. They knew that the big fees were paid by insurance companies and the Workers Compensation Board. They used the working man who was injured on the job. They chased ambulances, they ran on the

heels of the working man, and they trooped off to court to get the third-party and compensation settlements.

All Australian branches of the Labor Party are full of those ambulance-chasers—from one end of the country to the other. Neville Wran made his money as an ambulance-chaser, as did Murphy and Evans. All of them got their money on the backs of injured workers. They are the sort of people Peter Beattie brought into the party. But, of course, we know that all of them have now had their day, and that following a period of evolution the old guard has come back again. Why? Because they are the old, tough, experienced union officials who are used to bumping heads and standing over people to get their own way. They do that by any means at their disposal—by any underhand trick, personal attack or denigration of a man's character. That is how they got their way in the trade union movement and that is how they held power at the Trades Hall. That is how they behave, and that is how they perform in this Chamber.

Members have only to look at the conduct of members opposite currying favour with the new Leader of the Opposition; in fact, they are inspired by him in the dirty, personal attacks they make across this Chamber. They are not interested in policy or positive suggestions. Since Mr Warburton occupied that holy seat, when has anyone from the Opposition side of the Chamber discussed policy? We hear nothing but personal attacks orchestrated by Warburton, the leader of the Labor Party, by the old trade union officials, and by the old guard. We hear personal attacks all the time. If anyone wants to stay in power in the Labor Party that is the way to go in 1984 since Warburton took over, since the whole bunch of them banded together to get rid of Wright, which was the first show of unity we have seen for years. Warburton took the stage and the personal attacks started. Why? Because that is the way the game is played at Trades Hall. That is the way union officials play the game. That is how they win their elections. One could ask the member for Brisbane Central about the famous Transport Workers Union ballot in which he was the returning officer—that famous Bribie Island ballot when those mysterious ballot papers, all in the same handwriting, suddenly turned up.

*Time expired.*

#### **Bargara Land Fraud Investigation; Mr F. P. Luton**

Mr MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (12.13 p.m.): That diatribe does not deserve an answer.

Over the past three weeks I have raised serious allegations about a land fraud investigation at Bargara. The fraud investigation was into a company called Incentive Programmes Pty Ltd and its owner, Francis Patrick Luton.

Mr Luton has finally made a statement in which he uses the catchcry of all con men and crooks. He claimed that I made my statements under parliamentary privilege and challenged me to make my statements outside Parliament. I believe I have done that on a number of occasions over the past three weeks.

If Mr Luton is concerned that I have damaged his self-inflated credibility, I challenge him to take the parliamentary avenue open to him of writing to the Speaker and seeking to have my claims investigated by the Privileges Committee. In fact, I would welcome such an investigation.

I would like to deal briefly with some of the inaccuracies in Mr Luton's statement.

1. Mr Luton objected to my claiming that he was one of the defendants discharged from the Russell Island case when it was abandoned. I never made that claim and did not canvass the circumstances surrounding his being discharged.

2. Mr Luton objects to my stating that he stripped \$1m from his company. I stand by that statement and ask Mr Luton to tell us where the money went, if not to him.

3. Mr Luton refers to money set aside in an "Incentive Programs—Development Account." If there is such an account why was it not included in the statement to the Corporate Affairs Office when the company went into liquidation?

4. As to the purchase price of the Bargara land at the liquidation sale being \$890,000, and not \$660,000 as I had claimed—my information on the purchase price came from a newspaper article but, even if Mr Luton paid \$890,000, it is still a lot less than \$7m, as it was claimed the land was worth.

5. Mr Luton claims that the original purchase price of the Bargara land was \$500,000 and not the \$265,000 that I claimed. I table a copy of the contract of sale which sets out the price and the method of payment. Members will note that the purchase price is \$265,000.

*Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.*

I would like to turn now to what appears to be a conspiracy by this National Party Government to assist Mr Luton with his shonky deals and, as the details surrounding my central allegations of political interference in a police investigation unfold, it becomes apparent why the Government will not hold an inquiry. It is now apparent that more than one Government Minister has had dealings with Mr Luton or been involved when Mr Luton's land dealings were being discussed. But, unfortunately, all Ministers appear to be ducking for cover. None of them want to take any responsibility for their actions in this matter.

I believe that the number of contradictions and misleading statements that have been made deserve a full judicial inquiry. If everyone is innocent, as it is continually claimed, an inquiry could only prove it. If this Government has something to hide, naturally an inquiry will not be held.

I will now deal with the contradictions and misleading statements that have been made over the past three weeks. The Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing (Mr Hinze) informed the House on 19 September that he could not recall having any discussions with Mr Luton about his land at Bargara. The Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services (Mr Goleby) informed the House that the only contact he had with Mr Luton was at social functions that he had attended.

The Premier stated on Channel 0 on 27 September, in an answer to a question whether he knew Mr Luton—

“I have probably seen him some time or other, like you have, and no, there is nothing to it.”

One could only assume from that answer that the Premier means he had met Luton only at social functions.

A report in yesterday's Bundaberg “News-Mail” throws all of these claims under a cloud. In that report, the chairman of the Woongarra shire states, in relation to his meeting with Mr Goleby in March last year, which Mr Goleby has admitted took place—

“While the Council delegation waited in the corridor for our appointment to see Mr Goleby, inside an adjoining room Mr Luton was complaining to the Local Government Minister, Mr Hinze, about council's handling of the rezoning application he had submitted.

From my waiting position in the corridor, I was invited into the room where these discussions were taking place and requested to indicate council's attitude towards this particular application.”

Councillor Hollaway of the Woongarra Shire Council said in the same article—

“My recollection of the events are that a deputation went to Brisbane and that the deputation was to meet Mr Goleby. My recollection was that the Chairman was called in alone.

Some of the Cabinet were present including Mr Hinze, the Premier, and I believe, Mr Goleby, and the Chairman was rather surprised to find Mr Luton present.

That was stated to us about March of last year—to all the council by the Chairman. I am stating truth as I recall.”

For that one meeting in March last year we now have five different stories: Mr Goleby's story, Mr Hinze's story—

**Mr HINZE:** I rise to a point of order. Recently, in this House, I think that the member for Lytton (Mr Burns) asked me whether I had attended meetings with Mr Luton. I advised the House that I could not recall that I had any meetings with a Mr Luton.

**Mr Prest:** Mr Mackenroth has just refreshed your memory.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth):** Order! The Minister is taking a point of order.

**Mr HINZE:** If the honourable member implies what I think he does in that interjection, I take exception to it. I will certainly check my records and list of engagements and advise the House whether such a meeting did take place.

**Mr Mackenroth:** Tomorrow?

**Mr HINZE:** As quickly as I can. I will not accept anybody trying to give the impression that I am covering up any discussion with any individual in this State that took place in my department. I make that very clear.

**Mr MACKENROTH:** I accept the statement of the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing.

However, what I am drawing to the attention of the House is that there have been five different versions of events—from Mr Goleby, Mr Hinze, the Premier and Treasurer, Councillor Maughan and Councillor Holloway.

One of the more interesting points in the whole matter is Mr Luton's recollection of his dealings with Mr Goleby in relation to Mr Luton's problem with the council. To put his comments into perspective, I will read from Mr Goleby's press conference of 18 September. At that time, Mr Goleby stated that the only telephone conversation that he had had with Mr Luton concerned an invitation to attend the opening of Mr Luton's church. When answering questions in the Parliament on 19 September, Mr Goleby stated the only contact he had had with Luton was on social occasions.

In the prepared statement that he released, Mr Luton stated that he telephoned Mr Goleby in May 1983 in relation to the problems that he was having with the council. He related the time of that telephone call with a letter that he wrote to the council on 25 May 1983.

So there are further contradictions. Mr Luton claims that he telephoned Mr Goleby in relation to his land. Mr Goleby claims that Luton only ever telephoned him to invite him to a church opening. Mr Luton claims that he made his representations to Mr Goleby in May 1983. Mr Goleby claims that he made representations to the Woongarra Shire Council in March 1983, two months before Mr Luton raised the matter with him. It seems that we are to believe that Mr Goleby is also clairvoyant. In his answer to a question on 19 September Mr Goleby stated further—

“Any other dealings that might have occurred with the Woongarra Shire Council did not involve me or, as far as I know, any other Cabinet Minister.”

If one believes Councillor Maughan's version—Mr Hinze will verify it tomorrow—it appears that Mr Goleby was not aware that Councillor Maughan met with Mr Hinze and Mr Luton in the next room. Surely Councillor Maughan would have informed Mr Goleby of that when Mr Goleby raised the Bargara land development.

Yesterday in the House, Mr Goleby admitted, after three weeks of denying any involvement with the police over Luton, that he had met with two police officers.

However, he claimed that it was in relation to Luton's bogus knighthood. If that is correct, it raises a number of interesting questions.

Why would an Assistant Commissioner of Police and an inspector interview a Minister of the Crown in relation to a bogus knighthood if, as one is led to believe, Mr Goleby had only attended social functions at which Mr Luton had been present? If that is correct, did the police interview the Premier in relation to this matter because he has admitted attending social functions that Mr Luton attended? Is one really expected to believe that the investigation of a person claiming to be a knight would be handled by an assistant commissioner and an inspector?

Today, I have canvassed only a few of the contradictions in this whole sordid story. The Minister stated yesterday that my whole campaign had been built up on innuendo. I suggest that my campaign is being built on the contradictions that are being voiced and the apparent conspiracy that is being perpetrated to cover up the allegations that I have made. In no way do I retract any of the allegations that I have raised in the last three weeks and, in fact, as each day goes past, I am convinced that all of my information is correct.

Mr Luton, in the statement that he made to journalists, confirmed that he did go to Mr Goleby's house for a fund-raising dinner to get Mr Goleby re-elected to the Parliament at the last election. I ask this question: If Mr Luton had met Mr Goleby only at a couple of social occasions, why would he bother to support him in that way?

*Time expired.*

#### Parliamentary Privilege

**Mr BAILEY (Toowong) (12.24 p.m.):** It is appropriate that I should follow the member for Chatsworth in this debate because the matter that I will speak about today is of concern to the general public and to the members of this House of Parliament and other Houses of Parliament in Australia. I refer to the extraordinary increase in the number of exaggerated and distorted allegations and personal attacks being made under the privilege of Parliament on members of Parliaments and individuals outside the Parliament.

There is no doubt in the minds of the community that Houses of Parliament are being abused. The respect for politicians in the community in this country, which has been very low for many years, has reached an all-time low. We should address this problem, not as individuals or as members of political parties, but as a Parliament.

There is no doubt in the minds of the community and, I hope, in the minds of the journalists who are responsible for the mayhem resulting from the statements being made in this Chamber, that parliamentary privilege is being abused. It is trial by smear. Some members are seeking media headlines, and television sensationalism is being created under the guise of revelations made in the public interest under parliamentary privilege.

The general public feel that a great many people are treated unfairly. Many scurrilous attacks are made on the Premier and Treasurer, State Ministers and Federal Ministers as well as on persons who, because those attacks are made either in this House or in other Houses, have absolutely no redress. So the public feel that the system is being abused.

**Mr Randell:** We have a situation in which the system of justice is reversed; people have to prove that they are innocent.

**Mr BAILEY:** That is right. In this House members are trying certain people, and those people are given no chance to reply.

The allegations make the headlines. They are given enormous coverage on the front pages of the newspapers and they are given wide exposure on television and radio.

However, the replies by the persons who are abused, in many instances, by inaccurate and sensationalised charges, appear on page 5 or page 7 of the newspapers—if they appear at all—and may not even be given a mention on television or radio. That system is unfair, yet members of Parliament promote it and make it appear worse in the minds of the public. If we, as members, expect to be respected by the community, we ourselves have to respect this House, which is not used as it should be used.

**Mr McPhie:** It is used with malicious intent.

**Mr BAILEY:** That is so.

A member who weaves a story based on allegations made under parliamentary privilege can distort that story to such a degree that it is far removed from reality. The problem that confronts people who have been maliciously maligned is that it is difficult to answer such a story in a manner that will provide an effective reply to something that has been put into the minds of the people as a reality. There is no doubt that if mud is thrown, some of it sticks.

At present, the Prime Minister has a personal problem, the nature of which is realised by all honourable members. It is as the result of mud-slinging. For years, the Premier and Treasurer has copped more than his fair share. It is extraordinary that mud-slinging is condoned by political parties. It is unacceptable. We as members should address ourselves to the situation.

**Mr Scott** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** It is no good being smart about it, as the honourable member for Cook is. The realities are that the situation exists. It should be discussed on an all-party basis. Everyone in this Parliament should be so concerned about it that we should think seriously about what people outside Parliament believe is happening here.

The cartoonists have a field day. The only matter on which there is consensus within the community is lack of respect for politicians. The public feel that politicians are inadequate and overpaid and just muck about in this Chamber without having the people's concern at heart. Those feelings are engendered by some of the activities in this Parliament.

Take the allegations that are being made against Queensland Property Group Trust. Those allegations are orchestrated in the south by people whose motivations are less than honourable in a business sense. Those allegations have been disproved, yet they still make page 1 headlines.

The people who make the allegations are attacking three great Queenslanders. Greg Chappell is a friend of most honourable members, and we admire him as a great cricketer and a successful businessman.

**Mr D'Arcy** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** I would not expect anything else from the honourable member for Woodridge, because he does exactly what I have been saying—abuse the privilege of this House. He does that in an effort to bring down a Queensland company. Some time ago, Opposition members brought about a run on building societies. I question the honourable member's motivation. His allegations are scurrilous.

The honourable member for Woodridge attacks Sir Llewellyn Edwards in a similar manner. The honourable member utilises this place as a political forum in an endeavour to destroy the reputations of three good and very well-established Queenslanders.

Attacks have been made on Barry Maranta, who has worked successfully in real estate in Queensland for years. He enjoys a very high reputation.

Queensland Property Group Trust has raised approximately \$16m for this State. The bulk of the investment has come from the south, and, for some reason, that seems

to disturb Opposition members. I suppose they are so intent on supporting the Canberra Government and the centralist philosophy that Labor members espouse that they lose sight of realities. Government members in this State seem to be spending all their time apologising to the Canberra Government for asking for Canberra money to come to Queensland to be used. Good heavens! Why should we be apologetic about getting a fair return from Canberra?

Queensland Property Group Trust has brought millions of dollars to Queensland. Even the document put out by Norths has been proved to be an inaccurate document. Yet Opposition members rely on it to attack the reputation of three Queenslanders.

**Mr D'Arcy:** They did not give you much of a brief.

**Mr BAILEY:** A fair amount of material is available. I hope that the honourable member reads it before he enters into such matters. A company can be made very shaky by a member utilising this forum to make attacks. That is what the honourable member is doing.

**Mr D'Arcy:** How much money have you got in the trust?

**Mr BAILEY:** I do not have any money in the trust. That is exactly the scurrilous allegation to which I have referred—"How much money have you got in the trust?"

The interjection by the honourable member for Port Curtis (Mr Prest), "Have you been drinking?", is an example of a top remark. What great repartee! What a great way in which to cause an enormous amount of respect for the institution of Parliament! Does the Opposition not care or understand? Most Opposition members have been here a great deal longer than I have. Do they not care about the whole institution of Parliament? That is what I am speaking about. The Opposition is for ever arguing the concept of parliamentary public accounts committees, and so on. However, Opposition members do not attempt to improve the standards of behaviour in this Chamber.

**Mr De Lacy:** Are you doing this with honourable motives?

**Mr BAILEY:** Of course I am doing it with honourable motives.

I question the motives behind some of the questions and some of the activities in this Parliament. If those motives were investigated, they would be found to be suspect.

I am speaking about how this Parliament is perceived by the community that members are elected to represent.

**Mr R. J. Gibbs:** What about when you reduced poor old Vilma Ward to tears on television, referring to her weight problem?

**Mr BAILEY:** That really is a relevant question! The member for Wolston wants to trivialise something that most members of this Assembly would consider to be important. Trivialising the matter will not help the honourable member's case. It shows the contempt in which he holds this Assembly.

**Mr R. J. Gibbs** interjected.

**Mr Prest** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** I do not know why I am waiting to listen to this tripe. It is extraordinary that Opposition members would even bother to bring it up.

There is no doubt in my mind that members of the community are losing respect for this House. We, as members, should think much more seriously about the image that we project outside, our conduct in this Chamber, the abuse of individuals inside and outside the Parliament, and the abuse of parliamentary privilege. Opposition members seem to think that that it is very amusing. I do not know why they should.

The member for Port Curtis is probably one of the best exponents of smear tactics, innuendo and asides from under the hand. If somebody was sitting in the gallery, he would probably think that that was amusing. It seems that he regards the Chamber as a place of entertainment. That is not the reality.

**Mr Prest:** Do you know that, if they were sitting up there, they would think that you're a fairy, too?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth):** Order! Under Standing Orders Nos. 119 and 120, personal reflections are not allowed in this Chamber. I ask the honourable member to withdraw his comment.

**Mr Prest:** I wish that you would apply that same rule——

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will make the decisions. I demand that the honourable member withdraw the remark.

**Mr PREST:** I withdraw the remark. I would hate to offend the honourable member.

**Mr BAILEY:** The member for Port Curtis deserves the contempt with which the members of the community treat him. It has been proved that such interjections do nothing for the standard of debate in this Chamber. They do nothing for the image of Parliament outside this Chamber. The honourable member stands condemned by his rabbit-like mouth.

#### **Penalty Rates in Tourist Industry**

**Mr McLEAN (Bulimba) (12.34 p.m.):** I am pleased that the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs is present in the Chamber. I wish to refer to the one-sided debate that is presently being led by the Minister on penalty rates in the tourist industry. It is well past the time when the true story should be told in this Chamber on behalf of the workers in the tourist industry. It is possible that the effects of the debate could flow on into other industries.

Personally, I am sick and tired of the rantings and ravings of the Minister. Obviously, he has no concern for the workers in this State. He has made statement after statement that penalty rates are costing the jobs of Queenslanders and killing the tourist industry. He has constantly urged employers to go to the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission to have award provisions changed. He continually attacks workers' conditions in many other areas. He is continuing the debate with wild, unwarranted, unsubstantiated and simplistic assertions. There is no sense of responsibility or attempt to find solutions.

**Mr Lester** interjected.

**Mr McLEAN:** If the Minister listens to me, I will point that out.

Not once has the Minister put a fair and responsible point of view. His latest gem, of course, was to organise a meeting between employers, unions and department heads to discuss the formation of a mutually satisfactory solution to the problem. In his words, it is "Queensland's first summit on penalty rates". Vince, I am afraid, is no Bob Hawke; in fact, he is quite the opposite. After the statements he has made attacking them, how can he expect the unions and workers to trust him, believe him and not treat him with the contempt he deserves?

Since Mr Lester has assumed responsibility as Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs, honourable members have witnessed continual disputes. There has been confrontation, conflict, deceit and misrepresentation, and attack after attack on long-standing conditions of workers. The honourable gentleman portrays the principles and attitudes of the National Party towards industrial relations. He is hypocritical in his approach, hypocritical in his ideas and hypocritical in his policy.

The present debate on penalty rates is understood by neither the Minister nor the National Party. I assure them that not even the complete abolition of penalty rates in

the tourist industry would bring with it the wonderful solution that the Government is seeking to the problems that now exist.

I ask the Government exactly what it has done to assist the tourist industry in this State. What constructive plans has it for the future co-ordinated development of such a vital industry? Both questions may be answered by saying, "Very little, if anything." I suggest that the Minister and the Government take their heads out of the sand and tackle the very many problems in a positive and productive manner. As the responsible Minister, Mr Lester should forget his hare-brained publicity stunts such as the ill-planned, ill-advised, so-called summit on penalty rates and arrive at a long-term plan for the programmed growth of Queensland's tourist industry.

Mrs Chapman interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! I draw to the attention of the honourable member for Pine Rivers that the member for Bulimba is not accepting interjections. He ought to be allowed to proceed.

Mr McLEAN: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. As I have very little time, I am unable to answer interjections.

Workers have fought hard over many years, in many instances against unscrupulous employers and Governments, to gain working conditions that are something like acceptable. Penalty rates for working long hours, nights, week-ends and holidays are part of the historic struggle.

Consideration must be given to that historical background if a true and just opinion is to be formed on the debate. The points to be considered are—

1. The attitude of the arbitration authorities for many years;
2. The true position in the relationship between employment and penalty rates;
3. The true financial benefit derived by the consumer, the employer and the worker; and
4. The penalty-rate provisions in other countries.

First, let me deal with the history of penalty rates in Australia. They have existed in awards in conciliation and arbitration commissions from their inception, as far back as 1909, when the Broken Hill miners were given a decision in their favour. In 1910, the Stewards Union received a similar decision from the courts. In 1912, the Rural Workers Union and the United Labourers Union were granted penalty rates. In 1932, a decision was given granting penalty rates to Commonwealth railway workers. The first national test case in the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission was in 1947. Many other cases over the long period since then have established penalty rates in all awards.

The history is long; the attacks on that basic working condition have been many. The Minister is not the first to attack it, and he will not be the last; neither will he be successful. In a number of its conventions, the International Labor Organisation recognises the need for penalty rates. Every country overseas comparable with Australia has penalty-rate overtime provisions ranging from 25 per cent to 50 per cent from Monday to Friday and 50 per cent to 100 per cent at week-ends and on public holidays. Any move to erode those basic conditions for workers would be contrary to comparable world trends.

The monotonous claims by the Minister and, of course, the rest of the National Party, that the costs associated with penalty rates reduce employment opportunities and stifle development in the tourist industry can be judged only on the evidence. An analysis of current employment data clearly indicates that those industries that employ more people outside normal working hours have not had a relatively lower rate of employment growth. There is no correlation between increases in penalty rates and unemployment. Penalty rates have not increased significantly as a percentage of wage increases. Not one piece of evidence has been produced that would make me believe that more jobs, more

tourists or more returns to consumers would, or could, result from a reduction in penalty rates.

Spokesmen from the Queensland Hotels Association have openly stated that, even if penalty rates were cut drastically, the reduction to consumers in hotels or motels would be no more than 50c per night. That leads me to a study of hotel charges. A recent, quick survey of hotel and motel charges in Brisbane revealed the following. For a hotel room only, at the Crest International Hotel, one of the city's leading hotels, from Monday to Thursday the prices range from \$65 through \$70 to \$93 and at week-ends they drop to \$50. At the Gateway Hotel, from Monday to Thursday the cost of a room is \$78 and at week-ends it is \$48. At the Gazebo Terrace Hotel the cost from Monday to Thursday is \$75 and on Friday, Saturday and Sundays it is \$50. At Lennons Brisbane Hotel, the weekday charge is \$77 and the week-end charge is \$52.50. The rates at the Parkroyal Hotel are \$104 and \$62 and those at the Sheraton-Brisbane Hotel are \$107 and \$55.

In view of those figures, I ask the Minister and all his urgers to justify his claims that a reduction in penalty rates will attract more tourists. I also ask the Minister, Jim Kennedy and the many other spokesmen for the tourist industry, who have spoken in the public debate on behalf of employers, to explain why mid-week tourists are penalised and pay double the rate paid by week-end tourists. Why are the differences so large? Why can the Sheraton-Brisbane Hotel drop its prices from \$107 mid-week to \$55 at week-ends, which is a reduction of \$52, and why is the penalty applied to mid-week tourists? Whichever way those figures are looked at, it becomes blatantly obvious that the cutting of wages and conditions, which would result in a 50 cent per night per room reduction, would not create one extra job or attract one extra tourist.

A look at the international scene clearly demonstrates that lower wage costs and lower penalty rates do not produce lower tariffs and services. That any reduction in workers' conditions and wages will mean a gain to the consumer has yet to be proved. In fact, quite the opposite is the case.

I call on the Minister to explain to the people of Queensland what exactly the Government has done to promote tourism in the State. Has it initiated cheaper air, rail or road costs? After all, the Government has control over travel in the State. It can control the price of petrol and, for that matter, any other commodity. Except for the Iwasaki resort, the Government has not assisted in any major long-term assistance by means of co-ordinated planning. What it has done, and done quite regularly, is conduct inquiry after inquiry into labour costs which, incidentally, are in the main decided by the Government's own tribunal.

I put it to the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs (Mr Lester) and all the other vultures waiting to feast on the blood and sweat of workers that reducing the cost of a hotel room by 50c is not the answer. The reduction of living and working standards of workers in the tourist industry will not provide one extra job, nor will it cure the ills of an industry which is top heavy with human vultures and parasites.

#### **Duaringa-Apis Creek Road; Proposed Dams, Mackenzie River**

Mr COOPER (Roma) (12.44 p.m.): With reference to the attacks made by the member for Mackay upon the Premier and Treasurer and his family that pertain to the Duaringa-Apis Creek road and two proposed dams on the Mackenzie River, at Tarrus and Leura, part of which happens to be in my electorate—the road in question does not lead nowhere, as the member for Mackay claimed, but in fact joins with the old Bruce Highway, extends north to Sarina and then to Mackay. It is the most direct road north from Duaringa. The users of the road are the local residents and a number of local industries, including a sawmill in Mackay that draws its timber from the Duaringa area and carts it over that road to Mackay.

Speaking generally, road development is of major importance throughout Queensland, and although the development referred to is not now taking place in the shire of Duaringa,

which is in my electorate, I sincerely hope that it soon will be. I will be pressing for funding for that road, and many others in my electorate, as I always do, without fear or favour.

I turn now to the proposed dams at Tartrus and Leura. I am mindful of the feelings of the land-owners who would be affected by their construction. I have received an assurance from the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services that officers of the Water Resources Commission will continue to consult them. Those land-holders have lived in the area for many years, and adequate consultation and consideration are fully justified.

It is difficult for many people, including me, to comprehend a rejection of an offer for dams in any district. Water conservation is probably second only to soil conservation in the order of priority in rural areas. Districts throughout Queensland are crying out for water storage facilities of the type envisaged. This Government has had to fill an enormous gap with regard to water conservation that has been caused by the Federal Government's abdication of its proper role and responsibility. The State Budget's allocation of a Special Major Capital Works Program of \$100m for water conservation over the next two years has been widely acclaimed, and there will be no problem in allocating those funds. I would welcome such expenditure on water conservation in my area. The creek that runs through my property would be ideal for development, and I may even make an application although I know I would have to be quick or be knocked down in the rush.

The member for Mackay—or should I say the member for nothing, going nowhere—has also attacked the proposed construction of a bridge over the Mackenzie River on the Duaringa-Apis Creek main road. What is the point of developing a road if it is impassable for many weeks of the year because it is cut by floodwaters? If a job is to be done, surely it is worth doing properly. The Duaringa Shire Council is extremely concerned that the attacks by the member for Mackay will have a detrimental effect on the funding of future developments in their area of responsibility; attacks made simply because the Premier's son happens to live in the region. I wonder whether the people of Kingaroy should suffer because the Premier happens to live there. Those people, as much as people anywhere else in Queensland, are entitled to improved facilities in the public interest.

The people of Duaringa need not apologise for the construction of roads, race-track facilities and a new police station. Members should have seen the old police station; it was a disaster. Many districts similar to Duaringa are receiving similar benefits, and I hope that they will receive many more as time goes by. If the Premier's son happens to live nearby, then so be it. The people should not be penalised, and surely the Premier's son is entitled to live somewhere. At least the Premier does not go round engaging in howling episodes because something has gone wrong with little Johnny. The moment he did that, of course, he would be crucified, not lauded as someone else has been. This Government must not allow the attacks by the member for Mackay to cause detriment to the area and the people who live there. I have already said that their opinions should be sought and seriously considered.

This is not the first time that the member for Mackay has made personal attacks on the Premier and his family. Perhaps if the member for Mackay was himself successful, he would find something constructive to do. It would be an understatement to describe him as being somewhat unsuccessful, not only in his performance in this place but also in his own dubious business ventures. His attacks reek of failure and sour grapes. He cannot bear to witness success, so he seeks to denigrate by rumour, muck-racking and scurrilous personal attacks designed to pull others down to his own seedy level. He is regarded throughout Queensland as a pathetic joke and, as I said earlier, is referred to as the member for nothing, going nowhere. By comparison, the Premier, who is widely

recognised throughout Australia, has a proven record of success and development that has been to the benefit—

**Mr DAVIS:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the statement by the member for Roma about another member. I am sure that you would give a ruling that he cannot refer to another member in a derogatory fashion.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth):** Order! I ask the honourable member to repeat the words he complains about.

**Mr DAVIS:** He called the member for Mackay the member for nothing.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I believe that the honourable member for Roma should withdraw that remark. I ask him to do so.

**Mr COOPER:** He is known by that term, Mr Deputy Speaker, but in deference to you only, I withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Roma will continue with his speech.

**Mr COOPER:** By comparison, the Premier has a proven record of success and development that is widely recognised throughout the nation. The success and progress that he has achieved has been to the benefit of all Queenslanders, in particular. It is a record of achievement that will continue to bear testament long after the member for Mackay has disappeared dismally into the past.

As the member for Roma, which includes the Duinga shire, I will continue to fight hard for such improvements as better roads, better Government facilities, water-conservation facilities and schools. I will continue to make representations on behalf of the Duinga shire and to listen and to respond to its requests, and I expect to continue to enjoy a good measure of success.

I am fully aware that other roads are in need of funds for construction and reconstruction. One in particular is the Fitzroy Developmental Road that runs north from Dingo to the Peak Downs Highway. It is known locally as the Dingo-Mount Flora Road. I have made representations for the provision of funds to upgrade this road, and I will continue to push its importance to that area in the scheme of things.

**Mr Randell:** The member for Mackay did not tell anyone that on my side of the bridge we are getting \$3m worth of work on the Dingo-Mount Flora Road and that we are going to have a high-level bridge there in two years' time.

**Mr COOPER:** I thank the member for Mirani for that interjection. I did know that. It is excellent news. In conjunction with the member for Mirani, I will continue to push the importance of that road. It runs south of Duinga to Bauhinia and on to just north-west of Taroom, where it joins the Leichhardt Highway. That is a vital artery running directly to the New South Wales border, and the traffic on it is heavy. Traffic comes from Taroom, Wandoan, Miles, Moonie and Goondiwindi. In New South Wales it becomes the Newell Highway, taking traffic to and from Sydney and Melbourne.

Of course, roads are not the only problem in the Duinga shire. Only recently, after months of battling, we were successful in securing an ambulance residence for Duinga. With co-operation from the Health Minister, months of frustration and much red tape were overcome, and success was finally ours.

The same comment applies to the Duinga school. Repairs and painting have been needed for a long time. With patience and perseverance, and with the assistance of the Minister for Works and Housing, those repairs are being carried out.

The Duaringa area is like any other area in Queensland—nothing will ever be perfect, but progress will continue in line with the Government's policies on decentralisation and giving encouragement to development across the State. I repeat that this is being done in close co-operation and consultation with the people involved.

I take this opportunity of expressing my support for the chairman of the Duaringa shire, Mr Kerry Park, Councillor Sandy Bredhauer, and Mr Derm Stower, the shire clerk. All three are well known to me, and I deplore the derogatory remarks made about them by the member for Mackay. They will continue to have my support, and I will continue to defend them against such scurrilous attacks, particularly as they are unable to defend themselves.

### Queensland Racing Industry

Mr SHAW (Wynnum) (12.53 p.m.) It is with some regret that I have a very limited time in which to deal with a very important subject. I refer to the charges of corruption that are being levied against the racing industry in this State, not only by the members of the racing fraternity but also by thinking people throughout Queensland.

It is notable that other States have shown an interest in taking some sort of action to sort out the truth or otherwise of rumours circulating in their States and to ask why a similar desire to take action does not exist in Queensland. It has been suggested that this corruption exists in very high places, and that that is the answer to why there does not exist the same desire to take some sort of action to expose and to eliminate this corruption.

As more evidence of what is going on is revealed day by day, the rumours about what is happening in the racing industry will continue to grow. Only a full inquiry or the taking of some sort of action to answer those questions will overcome the problems that presently exist in the racing industry.

It must be remembered that racing is a billion dollar business. It is probably one of the biggest industries in Queensland. It is also one of the most corrupt. It is a matter of concern to all Queenslanders that one of our biggest industries has the reputation of being a corrupt industry.

This morning, the member for Lytton received an answer from the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police to a question about projected action by the police on the so-called "Age" tapes that have recently come into the possession of the Queensland Police Department.

Considering the answers given by the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police, it becomes obvious that the Queensland Police Department and the Government of this State are interested only in a cover-up and are not interested in doing anything about the issue. The Government intends to tough it out and hopes that eventually it will go away. Alternatively, the Government is thinking small; that is, that only the small fish will be prosecuted. Given the answers by the Minister for Police this morning, it would be fair to assume that such prosecutions will only be sought if the evidence jumps out and hits the police fair in the face. The Minister gave no indication that the Police Department intends to seek out evidence to eliminate corruption, which the Minister for Racing has publicly admitted exists. For the Minister to say that corruption in racing in this State exists is a tremendous confession. One must ask how much corruption this Government is prepared to tolerate. It is obvious that it exists, and the only question that remains to be asked is at what level it exists. There has been no indication that the much-needed overhaul of the administration of racing in Queensland will be carried out.

It has been suggested that I, or some other person, should mention the person who is named in the "Age" tapes. At present, I do not intend to do so because I believe that that would be irresponsible. Too much irresponsible action has already taken place. Before I do mention any names, I want to see more evidence that the tapes are authentic and that what I may say stands up or can be supported by sufficient evidence.

It is worth noting that a Minister of this Government did not have any qualms about naming Mr Justice Murphy on less evidence than is in my possession and in the possession of the Minister for Police at this time. Apparently that Minister was satisfied that it was all right to name somebody associated with the Labor Party but he was not satisfied that action should be taken to eliminate the corruption in the Queensland racing scene as is evidenced in the documents. The Minister for Police has admitted that, at the time the Minister for Transport named Mr Justice Murphy, he did not have a copy of the documents that were referred to. The Minister for Police has also said that he made no effort to get a copy and has not received one. No interest has been shown in any action since that time.

One must say that the transcripts of the tapes probably are true, if for no other reason than that the poor typing and bad spelling indicate that they were typed by a policeman. It appears that the people speaking on the tapes did suspect that they were being taped. It is possible that names were dropped quite deliberately. However, some of the conversations that are documented do sound authentic. There is reason to believe that at least some of the conversations were true.

The tapes make mention of a jockey, whom I will refer to as M, who was 007's head. That jockey had the job of organising and controlling the jockeys in this State and of organising which horses were to be drugged or pulled. He also had to arrange that those horses that were owned by people who were not involved in illegal activities would be pushed into the rails or held out of the race. It is indicated that this criminal organisation set out to make money from racing in Queensland and, more importantly, to launder money—to take stolen money, put it through the racing scene, and to state that it was received legitimately through bets.

Unfortunately, I do not have time to expand on the points that I wanted to raise. Rumours abound and many people are freely stating the names that I am refusing to state today. Those rumours will continue. Innocent people, along with guilty people, will be convicted by rumours in hotels and on race-tracks until positive action is taken. I repeat: Why is no action being taken?

It is not only people from the race-tracks who are involved; bank officials are also involved. It is notable that account numbers and the names of accounts in banks are included in the documents involved with the "Age" tapes. It seems to be ridiculously easy for someone to check out the account numbers to establish whether or not there was any involvement by those people.

**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.*

## SENATE ELECTIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 2 October (see p. 894) on Mr Gunn's motion—

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

**Mr WARBURTON** (Sandgate—Leader of the Opposition) (2.15 p.m.): The Opposition supports the Bill. The provision of a 6 p.m. closure of the rolls on Federal polling day makes common sense and will certainly assist to remove confusion from the minds of voters regarding voting hours. As most honourable members realise, for many years, voting in State elections has closed at 6 p.m. This Federal initiative, which is supported by complementary legislation in all States, is certainly a step in the right direction.

The Opposition also supports the provision that relates to the insertion of a date in the writ for the close of the rolls. Opposition members are aware of complaints from

various sections of the voting public who have expressed concern at their inability to vote in general elections and/or by-elections because the rolls closed prematurely. The Minister, in his second-reading speech, said that the Bill is designed to remove confusion among voters. The Government could do that by reaching agreement with the Commonwealth Government on either a joint electoral roll or a joint enrolment card. I understand that a joint enrolment card is under consideration at the present time. It would permit each Government to maintain a separate roll if desired and, more importantly, it would ensure that as many people as practicable would be eligible to vote in elections for the Legislative Assembly, the House of Representatives and the Senate.

I noted that in "Hansard" of 20 August 1980, a former member of this Parliament, Mr Bourke, asked the then Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

"What is the estimated annual cost of maintaining a separate roll?"

In answer, the Minister said specifically—

"\$700,000."

Taking inflation into account, I feel justified in stating that the figure could now well be over \$1m.

I draw the Minister's attention to the latest figures of comparative enrolments in the State. As at 31 August, the total number of Queenslanders enrolled on the Queensland State roll was 1 463 781, whereas the total number of Queenslanders enrolled on the Commonwealth roll was 1 513 575. It is not good enough that 49 794 more people are on the Commonwealth roll than on the State roll and are therefore eligible to vote at Federal elections.

This Government has spent tens of thousands of dollars on television, radio and newspaper advertisements and on its recent door-knock campaign. That could be regarded as a waste of public money because it involved a duplication of services. Such a waste could be eliminated if common sense prevailed.

In this day and age of computer technology—honourable members heard something about that this morning—there must be ways and means by which any reservations that the Government might have on the subject of joint rolls could be dispelled. I understand that it is well documented that approximately four years ago a good deal of work was put into an investigation into the possibility of having a joint roll between the Commonwealth and the State. So it is quite surprising to the Opposition that this Government has not made a more determined effort to bring such a roll to fruition.

I understand that at that time a special formal report went to the then Minister for Justice and Attorney-General (Hon. W. D. Lickiss), who is currently the Liberal member for Mount Coot-tha. The Minister for Justice and Attorney-General (Mr Harper) should release that report for public scrutiny so that those persons interested in this matter could make some constructive comments. It is serious when there is a discrepancy of 49 794 voters between the State and Commonwealth rolls. That matter should be addressed by the Government as soon as possible. I encourage the Queensland Government to pursue the matter of arriving at an acceptable arrangement with the Commonwealth Government on the subject of improving the right to vote of those who want to vote.

It deserves repeating that a discrepancy of almost 50 000 voters in favour of Federal election enrolment figures in Queensland indicates that the system requires a drastic change. As each member in this Chamber well knows, those 50 000 voters could determine the outcome of an election. That is why it is important to come to grips with the problem.

Finally, I reiterate that the Opposition has no problem in supporting the Bill.

Mr HAMILL (Ipswich) (2.21 p.m.): The legislation before the House was requested by the Commonwealth Government. I understand that all States were requested to bring their Senate Elections Acts into some harmony with a view to bringing them into line

with the provisions of the new Commonwealth Elections Act. The Commonwealth legislation is a very important piece of legislation. I do not say that simply because we are at the edge of a Commonwealth election for the House of Representatives and half the Senate. Although the Bill is very short, it is very important. Unlike so much other State legislation in relation to Senate elections, the Queensland Act contains no temporal provisions—provisions that delineate quite clearly the timing of the issue of writs, the closing of nominations and so on. I understand that South Australia is the only State that is in a similar position in that it has an absence of temporal provisions in its Senate Elections Act or its equivalent legislation.

The States ought to get together to harmonise their respective State legislation. The powers that provide for the issuing of Senate writs is a constitutional power that is vested in the States. As the House is considering legislation that affects a Senate election, there are very good grounds for all the States to harmonise their legislation by the incorporation of the temporal provisions to which I have referred. A very important feature of the new Federal legislation is that such temporal provisions are included in it. In the past, the rights of the people of Australia have been abused by Governments wishing to run to early elections and in so doing not facilitating an opportunity for the people of Australia to ensure that their enrolment, particularly, is in order. That occurred in 1983 when the then Prime Minister and leader of the coalition Federal Government called an election. The following day the rolls closed. The Australian public was confused enormously. Some people were not sure whether their enrolment was in order. As a result of what was a very cynical move by that gentleman, many Australians were effectively disfranchised at that election which was brought on very quickly.

The Bill provides that the Governor in Council may fix the date for the closure of the rolls. Although I hope that the date of closure of the rolls would follow the pattern that is set out in the new Commonwealth Electoral Act, it is something that could be subjected to a certain harmony of legislation among the States. They could incorporate in their legislation the provisions for Senate elections that are contained in the Commonwealth Electoral Act.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr HAMILL: The member for Brisbane Central expressed a very widely held fear and concern that skulduggery could well come to the fore in relation to these matters. I hope that that would not be the case. The temporal provisions introduced by the Government have very significant safeguards to protect the rights of the people of Australia. It is important to spell them out for the information of the House.

As the Minister outlined in his second-reading speech, the new Commonwealth Act provides that the rolls will close seven days after the issue of the writ. Although that was mentioned in the Minister's speech, it does not actually appear in the Bill.

The closing date for the nomination of candidates will be not less than 11 days and not more than 28 days after the issue of the writ. Again, it places a rein upon a Government that seeks to cut and run, to take advantage of what may be very transitory public support as measured by the opinion polls.

The polling date is not allowed to be set less than 22 days or more than 30 days after the closing date for nominations. That again places a safeguard in the system to allow an election to be fairly run, giving an opportunity for those nominating to express their views and to stand upon a public platform and be judged by the electorate.

The other temporal provision that appears in the Commonwealth Act is that which refers to the return of the writ after the election. That date is to be not more than 90 days after the issue of the writ.

The State Government ought to bring its mind to bear on the absence of the temporal provision from its legislation. I call upon the South Australian Government also to review its attitude to the temporal provisions and bring its Act into line with the legislation prevailing in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania.

That the legislation is before the Chamber reinforces in the minds of honourable members and the public at large that significant changes to the conduct of elections in Australia have been made by the Federal Labor Government. The changes effected for the elections of both the Senate and the House of Representatives have been very much in the public interest. They provide a much fairer system under which the country selects its Federal representatives.

One reform relating to the election of senators that I believe the people of Australia will welcome with open arms is that which relates to the very complicated Senate ballot-papers. In 1974 in New South Wales, the Senate ballot-paper required electors to number from 1 to more than 70 if they were to cast a valid vote. The simple reform introduced by the Federal Government allows electors to choose whether to vote for the individuals of their choice or to vote for the party team of their choice. That reform will go a very long way indeed to ensuring that the maximum number of Australians cast a valid vote at the forthcoming election. There were those in the community who were disadvantaged by an inability either to grasp the language or to cope with the complicated voting procedures. Under the new procedures, they will benefit. The result will be that more and more people will cast a formal vote and give a true expression of the views of the electorate on the performance of this country's government.

Another important change in the conduct of Federal elections for both the Senate and the House of Representatives is that a candidate's party affiliations will now appear on the ballot-paper. As an aside, I refer to the habit of some political parties of selecting candidates whose surnames are blessed with letters that fall in the early part of the alphabet. When candidates were placed in alphabetical order on ballot-papers, those people received an unfair advantage. That will now disappear, because candidates for the House of Representatives will draw for positions on the ballot-paper.

I refer to the amendment relating to the hours of polling. For a very long time, Queensland has had polling hours from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. They have worked quite effectively, not only in this State but also in others. This reform has been long overdue. I compliment the Federal Government on taking the step to make the polling hours for the Federal election 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and the State Government on following that up in the legislation now before the House.

The Bill sits well with the important electoral reforms that the Federal Government has made in relation to the conduct of and procedure for elections in the country. I would add, however, that I believe the system could be improved by all the States having uniform legislation governing the election of senators. Although the constitutional power for the issue and return of writs for Senate elections is vested in the States, the elections are conducted in each State for what is the second Chamber of the national Parliament. It ought not to make any difference whether a person lives in Queensland or in Western Australia. The conditions under which a person nominates, contests, or votes in an election should be the same irrespective of the State of the Commonwealth of Australia in which he resides.

**Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah) (2.31 p.m.):** The legislation is interesting because it demonstrates very clearly that the Parliament of Queensland has control over the conduct of Senate elections. That is not new to the people in this Chamber, but it sometimes is not understood generally in the community that State Parliaments have an influence over the manner in which Senate elections are conducted.

An interesting point is that the polling times will be altered. For many years, the State Government has known that it is not an inconvenience to the public for polls to close at 6 p.m. In the southern States, which have a long twilight, 8 p.m. closing has never caused problems. In this State, 8 o'clock closing times have been a great inconvenience to the public. I realise that certain religious groups do not allow their members to vote in daylight hours. However, over a long period, the Government of Queensland has comfortably accommodated those people by providing opportunities for voting prior to the election and by other means.

The honourable member who has just resumed his seat is incorrect when he says that the Government is making this change at the request of the Federal Parliament. For many years, people in Queensland have been asking for a change in polling hours. So the fact is that it is not a request at all; it comes about because eventually the Federal authorities have agreed with the request of States, particularly this State, to alter polling times for election days.

The legislation highlights the special relationship that exists between this Parliament and the Senate and the power that this Parliament and the voters have in relation to the Senate, which is still traditionally the States' House. It was created in the Constitution as part of the Parliament of Australia. The Parliament of Australia, as the Constitution says, is the Queen, the Senate and the House of Representatives.

**Mr. Comben:** The Parliament of the Commonwealth.

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** I am glad that the honourable member used the word "Commonwealth", because his party has been trying to drop that word. Thank goodness the word "Commonwealth" cannot be dropped from the Constitution. Fortunately, the Governor-General of Australia is the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. Those nomenclatures have been kept alive and well. I am pleased that the honourable member highlighted that point.

The Senate has a special role to play in the parliamentary system of this country. The House of Representatives is not the Parliament of Australia. It has associated with it the Senate, which is equal in status and is possibly more representative of the people of Australia than the House of Representatives.

**Mr Davis:** What a load of twaddle.

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** I know how much the honourable member admired his friend Mr Whitlam, who used to regard the Senate as some sort of Upper House which had no relationship to the universal franchise.

In a Senate election in this State there are no electoral boundaries. Everybody's vote is of equal value, no matter where he lives and, under the system of proportional representation, minorities have a chance to be represented in the Senate. They do not have such a chance in the House of Representatives.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** I know that the ALP socialists do not want to hear minority opinions. They would like to crush minorities of all sorts, including respectable Leaders of the Opposition. They would like a one-party Parliament. That is their ambition, and they will support anything that can be done to achieve a unicameral and one-party Parliament in the Federal sphere.

**Mr Davis:** You tell me the last time they voted as members of a States' House.

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** The Senate has frequently voted as such, particularly on sugar issues, which affect New South Wales and Queensland.

**Mr Comben interjected.**

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** The honourable member should look at the records because, on that issue, which is very precious to New South Wales and Queensland, senators have certainly crossed political boundaries. The sugar industry, which is particularly important to New South Wales and Queensland, had transcended political boundaries.

**Mr Comben:** You say when.

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** It has happened frequently, and I suggest that it will happen again soon if the Federal Government does not do something to help the sugar industry. That could be a very critical issue in the forthcoming election.

The Senate provides the opportunity, through proportional representation, for minority political opinion to be represented. But it also favours minority geographical opinion, because the smallest State of the Commonwealth, Tasmania, has representation equal to that of the larger and more powerful States of Victoria and New South Wales.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** And don't Opposition members hate it! To know that the lesser populated areas of the nation have equal rights in the Senate——

**Mr Innes:** Ask them whether they know the name Harradine.

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** They are haunted by that name. No doubt in the forthcoming election he will pick up a running mate and really make life miserable for the ALP.

**Mr Lickiss:** There would never have been federation if the States hadn't agreed to the Senate.

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** That is true. The great fear in Australia at the time of federation was that the country would be run by people who lived round Sydney and Melbourne. It was the creation of the Senate that offset that fear. Although the referendum on joining the federation was carried by only 7 000 votes in Queensland, it was the promise of the creation of the Senate which swung the vote. The same factor affected the other lesser populated areas of Australia. In fact, Western Australia had to go twice to a referendum for it to join the federation. So it is very important to the survival of the federation that we have the Senate in the way it is constructed.

Today we have another illustration of the very intimate link that exists between the State legislature and the Senate, which is part of the Parliament of Australia. If the Queensland Government had not agreed to these changes that are proposed today, then, as far as Queensland is concerned, those changes would not be made and Queensland would be quite different from other parts of Australia. This move does not have to be made, as the honourable member for Ipswich said, to harmonise with the Commonwealth Government; Queensland can make its own laws on this issue, because it is sensible.

The Liberal Party supports the Bill because it has been asking for it for a long time. It is pleased that the proposal has been agreed to. That raises the question of simultaneous elections.

**Mr Davis:** I agree.

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** Of course the Labor Party wants simultaneous elections. It wants to see the Senate made sterile and devoid of its influence and power. The Labor Party wants a unicameral system. It wants a hung Senate, which would be useless. Eventually, people would support the Labor Party's policy that the Senate should be abolished. That has been its policy for 70 years.

The Labor Party believes in centralised and authoritarian government. It does not care about minority opinion or about the people who live in the remote areas of this country. That is why the Labor Party wants provision for simultaneous elections for the Senate and the House of Representatives built into the Constitution of Australia. For evermore, the Senate would become an ineffectual part of the Parliament of Australia.

**Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (2.41 p.m.):** I am always amused when I hear the honourable member for Nundah (Sir William Knox) talk about the Senate as the great States' rights House. I ask him: How many times has the Senate voted as a States' House? I cannot recall one occasion. The so-called constitutional experts in the Liberal Party at the rear of the Chamber like to get up and say that they are not in favour of simultaneous elections for the Senate and the House of Representatives and that the Senate is the custodian for the States. Ever since political parties came into being—that happened just after the Constitution recognised political parties as such—the Senate has

voted purely and simply along party lines. I am amazed when the member for Nundah and Sir James Killen in his column in the press talk about the Senate as the great States' rights House. Mr Acting Speaker——

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row):** Order! As Opposition Whip, the honourable member should be aware of my proper title. It is Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DAVIS:** That is fair enough, Mr Deputy Speaker.

The simple fact of life is that the Senate is not a States' rights House. When legislation similar to this is debated on another occasion, I ask the member for Nundah to tell us the number of occasions on which the Senate has voted as a States' House. I put it on record that it has never voted as a States' House.

The member for Nundah referred to an occasion on which Queensland and New South Wales came together on a question concerning sugar. The cold fact of life is that the Labor Party and the Opposition parties in the Senate vote along strict party lines. That is an indication of the extent to which the Senate is a States' House.

**Mr SIMPSON (Cooroora) (2.44 p.m.):** I support the legislation. We need to note where the Labor Party stands in relation to Upper Houses. History shows that the Labor Party got rid of the Upper House in Queensland. How did the Labor Party do that? It went to the people with a referendum. A referendum is to be held in conjunction with the forthcoming Federal elections.

**Mr Vaughan:** And rightly so, too.

**Mr SIMPSON:** The honourable member says, "And rightly so" The States should have the option of putting forward referendums to alter the Constitution of Australia.

Where does the Labor Party stand when it comes to accepting the directions of the people? The Labor Party is asking for a direction from the people of Australia by way of referendum. Members of the Labor Party should hang their heads in shame because the people of Queensland, by way of referendum, wanted the Upper House in Queensland retained, but the Labor Party abolished it. That is an example of the disgusting performance of that party. Its members should hang their heads in shame.

At the coming Federal election, questions will be asked by way of referendum about reciprocal rights and simultaneous elections.

**Opposition Members:** Put it back!

**Mr SIMPSON:** I do favour putting the Upper House back in Queensland. It should be done by way of referendum. Perhaps at the next State election, the people could be asked whether they want to have an Upper House in Queensland.

One of the referendum questions at the forthcoming Federal election is whether or not Australia should have simultaneous elections for the House of Representatives and the Senate. The origins of the Parliament must be considered. The need to safeguard the rights of the people was paramount in the development of the parliamentary system that Australia adopted. The Government of the day introduces legislation into the Lower House and the Opposition vets it and scrutinises it. In order that that process works successfully, the election of members to the Senate and to the House of Representatives has been held at different times so that the whim of the people at one election does not necessarily result in the dominance of one party in both Houses. The legislation that is introduced into the Lower House goes before another franchised House so that it can be checked again.

That process is followed in the House of Commons and the House of Lords and is part of the tradition written into the Constitution by Australia's founding fathers. In Queensland, a Legislative Assembly and a Legislative Council were set up but the Labor Party did away with the Upper House. I notice that Labor Party members are hanging their heads in shame.

The two-House system is still in place in the Federal sphere. However, Mr Hawke, in the Boyer Lectures that he gave some time ago, said that he would sever connection with the Crown and that he wanted only one House of Parliament. He is on record as saying that.

Our wise forbears considered that when power is likely to be corrupted, it will draw itself into a central place. As a result, the safeguards were put in place in the Australian Federal system. The Constitution cannot be changed except by a majority of the people and by a majority of the States. The Senate was formed in such a way that each of the States has equal representation, irrespective of the number of people who live in each State. At the time of federation, that was very important to the fledgling States. If democracy is to work, the numbers of people and where they live in the nation are important. However, at the Federal level, Labor Party members pour scorn on that attitude. They have no regard for the need of the Australian people to have equal representation.

The Prime Minister has called an early election even though, when the Liberal/National Party Government was in office in Canberra, he criticised it for calling early elections. The Prime Minister is a hypocrite. He claims that he has called the election so that it can be held simultaneously with the Senate election. The point of the Federal system is, however, that the mood of the people at any one time may be reflected differently in the two Houses.

**Mr Davis** interjected.

**Mr SIMPSON:** The member for Brisbane Central does not know very much about the Parliament in which he sits because he still holds with the attitude of his Labor Party colleagues who got rid of the Upper House in Queensland.

**Mr Powell:** Even after a referendum against it.

**Mr SIMPSON:** The Labor Government did it, even though it was against the wishes of the people of Queensland.

The move to restrict voting throughout Australia to the hours from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. is a wise one. Queensland, of course, led the field, and it is pleasing that that has been acknowledged. This provision will help remove confusion from the minds of the people.

A previous Opposition speaker referred to political parties and the adoption of party lines in the Senate. The Australian Labor Party makes a great thing out of introducing references to political parties into the Constitution. The Queensland Constitution contains no reference at all to political parties. However, the Labor Party included such a reference in the Australian Constitution and it is pushing that angle. That is a shame.

**Mr Comben:** The Liberals put it in.

**Mr SIMPSON:** I know that Opposition members are controlled by their party.

To revert to this Parliament—history is repeating itself. Again the Australian Labor Party fails to take notice of the wishes of the people as expressed in referendums. The Labor Party in Queensland does that at the direction of the Federal ALP. Once again we hear the old familiar story; the Federal ALP is intervening again today. It is sending a boy to Queensland to try to straighten out the Queensland branch of the ALP. The Federal ALP is still interfering in Queensland politics and it is trying to interfere with good government in this State. No wonder members of the ALP hang their heads in shame.

Only time will tell whether the provision concerning how to vote cards is a good one. In the past, some confusion has arisen over how to vote cards as well as over ballot-papers and so on. However, it is interesting to note that, as the number of names

on the ballot-paper increases, the number of informal votes becomes lower. People take greater care marking their ballot-papers.

**Mr Davis:** What rot!

**Mr SIMPSON:** That is a statistical fact, and it is easy to ascertain.

As I have said, I support the Bill, The Labor Party should be honest and admit to the people of Queensland that it would do away with the States, as Mr Hawke proposes. He has already outlined very clearly that he believes in having only one Government in Australia and one House of Parliament, which are not tied to the Crown. He would do away with the States and the local authorities. Anyone who believes that the Labor Party cannot do that only has to remember that it perverted the Constitution by entering into international agreements that react to the detriment of this State. The people of Australia should see the ALP as a fraud; they should see it as a party that does not believe in the little bloke or democracy. They should see it as a party that believes in dictatorial governments which is what Mr Hawke is all about. The people of Australia should rise up and get rid of the Federal Labor Government.

**Mr COMBEN (Windsor) (2.54 p.m.):** I had not intended to participate in this debate but, as it has now become a fairly wide-ranging one, I feel that I must enter it because of the references made by the honourable members for Cooroora and Nundah and because I want to correct the distortions, smoke-screens and historical inaccuracies of the honourable member for Cooroora.

The honourable member for Cooroora claimed that the Labor Party got rid of the Upper House and seems to think that because the matter was put to the people of Queensland on two occasions by way of a referendum there is something wrong. If that contention were extrapolated to its farthest point, that would mean that, once the people vote for a certain Government, that Government should be kept in office for ever and ever, amen. People change their minds, and opinions change. Considerations, too, change. That is why referendums on certain matters are held more than once.

The honourable member for Cooroora also raised the matter of early elections. He forgets about the fact that Mr Fraser called an early election.

Comments were made to references in the Constitution to political parties, and the honourable member for Cooroora said that the Labor Party introduced them. It was not the Labor Party that did that; the Liberal Party did it in 1977, as a direct result of the Pat Field fiasco in this State.

It was a total abuse of State power in an area that is of national concern. How could anyone in this State possibly forget that? That was a total abuse of power. The historical record of the Senate and how it relates to the State is set out in the second paragraph of section 7 of Part II of the Commonwealth Constitution, which states—

“But until the Parliament of the Commonwealth otherwise provides, the Parliament of the State of Queensland, if that State be an Original State, may make laws dividing the State into divisions and determining the number of senators to be chosen for each division, and in the absence of such provision the State shall be one electorate.”

The member for Nundah said that the Senate was a good place in which to have minorities represented, because there was one large electorate in Queensland. Yet, when the founding fathers spoke to the Governors of Queensland in 1896, when our Constitution was finally drafted and, in 1899, when the final gloss was put on it, those Governors of Queensland—that historical group to which so many references are made—decided that there could well be electoral divisions within the State. They were not interested in an en masse electorate with minority groups being represented. They were interested in making sure that the majority received a majority say. That is what should be happening in the Senate today.

The founding fathers and the Constitution do not support what the member for Nundah said. The member for Nundah said that the Queensland Parliament has large powers in relation to the setting of elections and the style of elections for the Senate. Section 9 of Part II of the Constitution under the heading "Times and Places" states—

"The Parliament of a State may make laws determining the times and places of elections of senators for the State."

That is all that the Parliament in this State can do. All other matters are dealt with under section 10, which relates to the application of State laws that will be overridden in the election of senators once the Commonwealth makes provision in that direction. The Queensland Parliament has very narrow powers, and it should be taking its cue in this matter from the Federal Government. The Federal Labor Government has taken good initiatives, as has been explained by the member for Ipswich. Those initiatives will be welcomed by every Australian.

Finally, I read two paragraphs written by a great author and great leader of this nation, E. G. Whitlam. His book "On Australia's Constitution" deals specifically with the topics that are being debated in this Chamber this afternoon. The book states—

"The Senate is not a popularly elected, representative Chamber at all. It is not, and has never been, a democratic House in the sense that the House of Representatives is democratic and has always been democratic. It is an altogether novel principle that a Chamber which elects as many members from Tasmania as it does from New South Wales, whose members can be chosen years before the members of the House of Representatives are elected, and whose members can be replaced by State Governments without regard for the will of the people, is a democratic Chamber in any way comparable to the elected Lower House.

Members of the Convention may recall that it is possible under section 13 of the Constitution for senators to be elected up to a year before they take office. It is common for them to be elected in November or December before they take office on 1st July."

That is what is happening at present. In essence, it says that the Senate is not democratic because there are differences in representations. Queensland is used to a malapportionment and gerrymander of electorates under which 8 000 votes in the west are equal to 22 000 votes in the city. It is obvious that the people of Queensland do not accept that, although it is accepted in this House. That is precisely what happens in the Senate. The tiny State of Tasmania has the same representation in the Senate as a State the size of New South Wales, with five or six times the population of Tasmania. That is undemocratic. Any democratic Parliament should have all of its members elected at one time so that it truly reflects the will of the people at the time of the election. The truth of the matter in the Senate is that it is possible to have senators who were elected three or six years before a House of Representatives election. The result is that consensus is not reflected. One of the strongest arguments for simultaneous elections is that the Senate representation is always lagging behind the times. At least with simultaneous elections, the Senate would be no more than three years behind. Until elections are held simultaneously so that there is a total reflection of the views of the Australian people, the system will not be democratic.

Much has been said about the Labor Party's desire to abolish the Senate. I see no sign of such a move. What I do see is an attempt to make the Senate a democratic institution, one that will be representative and worthy of the Parliament of the people of Australia.

Mr INNES (Sherwood) (3.1 p.m.): A great deal of twaddle has been spoken this afternoon, particularly by that expert in twaddle the honourable member for Windsor. The reality is that the last person one would refer to when talking about democracy and the support of the Constitution is Mr E. G. Whitlam. It is no wonder he was concerned about longevity. He must have been particularly concerned about political longevity. He

roared in like a comet. In the end, his fiery tail burnt across the horizon after he had demonstrated a greater interest in Pakistani fiscal machinations than he had in Australia.

The reality is that the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia is democratic. Both of its Houses are elected by full adult suffrage. They have always been so. That Parliament represents the wisdom of the founding fathers. There is no shame in talking about them.

**Mr Davis:** Sir Samuel Griffith again?

**Mr INNES:** No. I will leave Griffith for the moment. In the same way as members of the Labor Party go back to Marx and Lenin, via Whitlam and through Hawke, so I will refer to the founding fathers. They had wisdom. It was not an aberration of the Australian founding fathers. The founding fathers of dozens of other democracies in the world found wisdom in balancing power; in having two Houses of Parliament. Australia has a diversity based upon the sheer size of the country. People recognised 100 years ago, as they do today, that that size brings special problems in government. Centralised government in very large countries can bring oppression to those in the remote or least-populated areas.

**Mr Davis:** Don't forget Edmund Burke.

**Mr INNES:** I am not worried about Edmund Burke. I will leave that to Sir James Killen.

Look round the world. Bicameral systems have been adopted either because of geography or because of a country's special problems. Fiji, for example, has two Houses of Parliament. A special balance was to be achieved there between a new race and an old race. That was achieved through adopting the two-House system. What about other nations? France, I imagine members of the Labor Party would say, was the first of the great republican democracies. It had two Houses and still has two Houses. The United States of America has a Federal system with two Houses—the House of Representatives and the Senate. Canada has two Houses.

**Mr Warburton:** Do you support two Houses in Queensland?

**Mr INNES:** My attitude in Queensland, now that the Labor Party has destroyed the Upper House, is that I would like to see the Lower House work better before the Upper House is brought back. I am still working on the problem of the Lower House.

The reality is—and I have used it as an example on other occasions—that a law imposing a tax on heating fuel has enormous impact in Tasmania but no impact in Queensland. We are a great, enormous and diverse country. It is better that the people in the remote parts of that country have a voice. Members of the Labor Party talk about democracy and representation. Although parties are not recognised by the Constitution, it does recognise the reality of the tyranny of numbers in Victoria and New South Wales in comparison with the population in other parts of the Commonwealth.

To date it is just as true, through the development of the party system, that the balance achieved by Senate representation still works. Because members of the Labor Party are still directed and guided by caucus and outside institutions, they well know that the extent of numbers in a party room is of great importance. The fact that there are 10—and will be 12—senators each from Tasmania, Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland, making a total of 40—it will be 48—helps to balance out the numbers that are created in the House of Representatives by the greater populations in Victoria and New South Wales.

Because Opposition members are members of the Queensland Parliament they, like most other Queenslanders, know darned well that the Labor and Liberal Federal campaigns will be concentrated on the outer suburbs of Sydney. If the Australian Parliament is reduced to a single House and has equality in the number of people in

electorates, where the decisions will be made is obvious. They will all be in favour of the outer suburbs of Melbourne and Sydney and little will come north to Queensland, south to Tasmania or west to Western Australia.

**Mr Simpson:** Our forbears knew that at federation.

**Mr INNES:** With foresight and with wisdom, they knew it then and it is still true today.

The mechanics are different but the balance in the party room, that balance in the parties by the extra numbers created by the Senate in favour of the remoter parts of Australia, is still of very great importance. Members of the Labor Party would do well to remember that. If they advocate, push or assist anybody who seeks to destroy the power of the Senate in this country and seeks to centralise power in the House of Representatives in Canberra, they are advocating and encouraging their own demise.

Very interestingly, one of their number—an active and senior member of their organisation in South Australia, Mr Dean Jaensch, who is a political academic frequently sought by radio—said yesterday on “AM” that he believed this measure would result in a diminution of power of the Senate and that an active and vigorous Senate was necessary to a healthy governmental process in Australia. He is opposed to this proposal. He is prepared to support other proposals, or hope that other proposals might result, but he is against this single proposal because it will diminish the power of the Senate and because it is a threat to weaken the power of the Senate.

**Mr Fouras** interjected.

**Mr INNES:** The rhetoric from the Labor Party is, “We can predict what the Liberal Party will say. We can predict what the National Party will say. It is always the same from that side.”

What I am saying is that there is academic opinion in the Labor Party—commentators and others that the party itself usually relies on—that the proposal that will first be used during the amended electoral hours in December this year—

**Mr Fouras:** The same elements support fixed terms.

**Mr INNES:** Yes, he did.

**Mr Fouras:** You would not support fixed terms.

**Mr INNES:** I will put my position straight. I believe in extending the term to four years. I have said before—I said it at the convention—that there are great mechanical problems in bringing precision to the date. I would let the Government choose a date during the last six months of its term. Governments should go their full term and it is to the credit of the Premier of Queensland that that is his traditional attitude. That is a welcome attitude, which I support. Fixed terms are not needed for a Government to go its full term. It is a matter of choice, judgment, strength and determination. Elections should be held far closer to the full term than is the case at present. That does not alter in any way the fact that the nation needs a vigorous Senate to protect and pursue the interest of the people in the smaller States.

**Mr R. J. GIBBS (Wolston) (3.10 p.m.):** Firstly, I say how absolutely unpredictable it is that in any debate concerning the Senate or Upper Houses throughout Australia, honourable members again see the amalgamation of the conservative forces in Queensland comprised in part of the left-over remnants of the Liberal Party who are only too eager to fall back into bed with the people from the conservative forces such as the honourable member for Coorora.

The real reason for the paranoia displayed this afternoon is on the front page of the “Telegraph” today—the popularity rating of the Federal leader of the Liberal Party (Mr Peacock) has dropped to 22 per cent. The conservative forces also know that in

approximately six weeks' time the same thing will happen to the Liberal Party nationally as happened to it in this State at the last State election—it will be politically decimated.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row):** Order! I remind the honourable member for Wolston that the subject of this debate is not a prognosis on the political future of Australia; it concerns the amendment of certain provisions of the Elections Act concerning the Senate. The honourable member will restrict his remarks to those provisions. The debate has been allowed to roam too far, and it is about time it was brought back into line.

**Mr R. J. GIBBS:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for choosing me as an example. I stand constantly in awe of the impartiality of occupants of the chair.

The point I really want to make is that the Opposition supports unequivocally the holding of simultaneous elections for the Senate and the House of Representatives. To return to one of the very salient points of this debate, as I was saying before, the reason why there is so much opposition from Government members to simultaneous elections is that they know full well that under those circumstances the ultimate result of the election will be that the Senate result will reflect the mood of the Australian public. I hope it does. The 22 per cent that I mentioned makes very obvious what will be the mood of the Australian electorate on election day. It absolutely galls Government members, and those people who stand for the sort of politics they espouse, not only that the Labor can hold power in the House of Representatives—the people's House—but also that it could control the numbers in the Upper House, which is what will happen after 1 December. With Mr Peacock having a popularity rating of 22 per cent——

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member has already made that point; he will return to the Bill.

**Mr R. J. GIBBS:** "Peacock slumps while Labor soars", reads the headline, and the Labor Party will soar on 1 December. The additional two senators to be elected from each State will, I am heartedly glad to be able to say, ensure that Labor's representation in this State will be increased even further.

**Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (3.13 p.m.):** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his contribution. He referred in particular to a common enrolment card. He knows, because he acknowledged the fact, that I have been working towards a common enrolment card for the Commonwealth and the State in the 12 months or so that I have held this portfolio. We are working towards that goal, and are very close to achieving it. In fact, I was to have had a meeting with the Commonwealth Minister responsible for electoral matters, Mr Young——

**Mr De Lacy:** Joh will never let you.

**Mr HARPER:** No, it was not the Premier who disrupted the planned meeting; I think it had something to do with Paddington Bear.

I appreciate the Opposition's support, and I suggest the Leader of the Opposition have a talk with Mr Young and indicate to him that he supports what I am trying to achieve with the Commonwealth in having a common enrolment form.

**Mr Yewdale:** Mr Doumany wasted a million dollars on it.

**Mr HARPER:** If the honourable member wishes, I will talk about the cost.

The State rolls are accurate, and we go out of our way to ensure that they remain so. The honourable member referred to discrepancies. He suggested that there were 50 000 more voters on the Commonwealth roll than on the State roll. Of course, there are a number of reasons why that discrepancy will always exist. To start with, there are different qualifications.

Recently, the Government completed a canvass of voters in Queensland and, as a result, not 50 000, but 150 000-odd enrolment forms have already been received by the State Electoral Office. I believe that between 50 000 and 100 000 forms are still outstanding, and I hope that they will come in. Towards that end, I have made public statements, and we are advertising, calling on people to complete the enrolment forms that were left with them during the course of that canvass. The Government and my officers in the State Electoral Office are doing all that they can to ensure that every Queenslanders who is entitled to vote is enrolled. Certainly we are going out of our way and are spending a considerable amount of the State's money in trying to encourage people to enrol. What utter nonsense it is to have to go to those lengths to ensure that people take advantage of their democratic rights.

The honourable member for Nundah quite correctly indicated that at long last the Federal Government has conceded the wisdom of closing the polls at 6 o'clock. A uniform closing time of 6 o'clock on polling days will be appreciated by the total voting population.

Also, the honourable member for Nundah referred to the fact that the Governor-General certainly is the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, and nothing that the Hawke Labor Government or any other Labor Government does will change the Constitution in that direction unless it can convince the Australian people by way of referendum to do so. The Labor Party is misjudging the Australian people if it thinks that they do not want the armed services to be headed by the representative of the Queen. Here again, fortunately, that is enshrined in our Constitution. If the Labor Party really wants to take away the responsibility of the Crown in that area, it will have a fight on its hands that will surprise even the most ardent supporter of socialism.

The present Government in Canberra is undoubtedly hell-bent on going down the road to republicanism with all the speed that it can muster, and no-one in the Labor Party is prepared to put a brake on that course. It seems to me that the entire Labor Party wants to take Australia into a republican situation.

The honourable member for Cooroora, with his customary wisdom, referred to the value of the Senate. That was in sharp contrast to the speech of the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who has left the Chamber. The honourable member for Brisbane Central said in this Chamber—certainly by way of interjection, but it was clearly audible and no doubt recorded—that the traditions of Parliament are a lot of nonsense. What sort of Whip is that?

**Mr COMBEN:** I rise to a point of order. I object——

**A Government Member interjected.**

**Mr COMBEN:** You said that the honourable member for Windsor——

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row):** Order! I ask the honourable member to address the Chair.

**Mr COMBEN:** I am sorry. I understood that the Minister was referring to me. He said that I had interjected and said that the traditions of Parliament were something or other. I made no such statement, and "Hansard" will show that.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member has given his explanation. There is no further question of there being a point of order.

**Mr HARPER:** I did not know that the honourable member represented Brisbane Central. I apologise if he has changed his seat. Because he will not get back in the seat that he presently holds, maybe he had better have a go at Brisbane Central next time. He might well be thinking of standing for Brisbane Central.

The Hawke-led Labor Government is hell-bent on having not only one Parliament in Australia, but also a totalitarian Government. It wants one court; it wants to abolish

the Supreme Courts. It wants to do away with States' rights. The Labor Party wants one police force and is making moves that it thinks will lead in that direction. In other words, it wants a totalitarian situation.

**Mr Campbell:** We've got one here.

**Mr HARPER:** The honourable member for Bundaberg undoubtedly supports his comrades in the Federal Parliament in wanting a totalitarian State in Australia.

It is interesting to read the definition of "totalitarianism" in the Oxford dictionary. It is defined as a policy that permits no rival loyalties or parties. That defines to a T what the Australian Labor Party stands for in this House and in the Federal Parliament. The same philosophy was espoused by the honourable member for Windsor cum Brisbane Central; next time that may be so.

I was interested to hear the opinion expressed by the honourable member for Sherwood, who is a leader in the Liberal Party. He gave his support for electoral weighting to achieve fair representation and to achieve equality of representative opportunity.

Motion (Mr Gunn) agreed to.

#### Committee

Mr Booth (Warwick) in the chair; Hon. N. J. Harper (Auburn—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—Principal Act and citation as amended—

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX (3.23 p.m.):** This clause refers to the title of the principal Act and its reference in this Bill. The honourable member for Windsor raised the question of the effectiveness of this legislation because it is State legislation, and I have something to draw to the attention of honourable members.

Opposition members labour under the belief that Senate legislation is Federal legislation. In fact it never was Federal legislation and is never likely to be Federal legislation. The Senate was the creation of the States, and its construction still lies with State legislatures.

As to the Senate's role as the States' House—I will quote from a far more respected authority than Mr Whitlam. Mr Whitlam referred to the House of Representatives as the people's House and tried to pretend that the Senate was elected by people who were different from the people who elected members to the House of Representatives. He continually said that the Senate was a superior House that was elected by some other people.

**Mr Simpson:** The people of Australia had the last say with Mr Whitlam.

**Sir WILLIAM KNOX:** Yes. It was the deferral by the Senate of a money Bill that led to Mr Whitlam's being forced to face the people. The people, not the Governor-General of Australia, made the decision to toss him out of office.

For the benefit of the honourable member for Windsor, I will quote from the fifth edition of Odgers "Australian Senate Practice", which is the Erskine May of Senate practice. At the bottom of page two, this appears—

"With that introduction, the functions of the Senate may now be stated. They are:

- (1) To provide the checks and balances of the federal system of government and to safeguard the interests of the States. To give authority to the Senate's States House role, it is embedded in the Constitution that equal representation of the Original States in the Senate shall be maintained.

While the Senate's role has become increasingly national, its responsibility to protect the States is still very important, particularly because of the changing balance of federation. There are the implications of the *Grants Commission Act 1973*, designed to place local government firmly within the framework of the federal system; and there is the use of section 96 of the Constitution to make tied payments to the States which, if taken to excess, could reduce the States to agents of a Government centred in Canberra. Such matters change the balance of federation without Constitutional amendment and the Senate, with its veto and amendment powers, has the means and the constitutional duty to protect the federal system and the interests of the States."

Later, at page 4, this appears—

"In general, the Senate is the watchdog and the safety valve of the Australian federal system and of the nation. The Senate will always keep its important identity as a States House. However, with increased Commonwealth power, the economic integration of the country, and with rapid transport and modern communications making the nation more homogeneous, the Senate's responsibilities have become as much national as State. Another factor is Australia's considerable migrant population, whose impact on the electorate is likely to reflect concern with national rather than State affairs. The national role of the Upper House was demonstrated in the 1974 and 1975 double dissolutions, the issues of which were national."

I have been challenged to cite occasions on which the Senate has behaved as a States' House. Let me cite some occasions for the benefit of honourable members generally.

In 1939, the House of Representatives attempted to introduce gold tax legislation. However, the Western Australian senators, to a man and regardless of their political party, opposed that legislation. As a result, it was amended considerably. All Western Australian senators, regardless of their political party, voted against that measure.

In June 1952, the Liberal and ALP senators of Tasmania voted for an amendment that was moved by Senator Wright of that State to the Land Tax Assessment Bill. They were successful in having that legislation changed radically. Across the board, the Tasmanian senators took a stand because that legislation adversely affected their State.

In 1958, the South Australian senators of all political parties put up a fight and had the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Power Bill amended so that South Australia's interests in relation to the Murray River could be protected. As a result of their effort, the legislation was changed to accommodate South Australia's views, even though it was alleged that the legislation would be of benefit to the people of Victoria and New South Wales.

In 1968, the Queensland and Tasmanian senators ganged up across the board against the Federal Government's moves to introduce an Aerodrome (Passenger Charges) Bill. As a result, that legislation was thrown out.

In 1970, the States receipts duties legislation was opposed by senators across the board, regardless of their political party, and that legislation, too, was thrown out.

In 1973, the passage of the seas and submerged lands legislation was delayed by all senators of all political parties, who demanded that the legislation be delayed until a decision of the Privy Council was handed down.

Again in 1973, the four constitutional alteration Bills were amended because certain senators of all parties agreed that they should be amended before they went to the people.

In 1974, the Roads Grants Bill and the National Roads Bill were amended by senators who indicated that they would vote against it across the board unless certain

amendments were made to that legislation so that the interests of the less-populated States could be looked after.

I could cite many other examples. Because of the existence of that power, not because it is exercised—although it has been exercised on a number of occasions—those who wish to remain in power have had to take cognisance of the power of the senators, regardless of political parties, because of the geographic areas that they represent.

**Mr COMBEN:** Clause 2 of the Bill takes in the whole of the original Act. I wish to refer to the comments made by the member for Nundah. He began by saying that, under the Constitution, the Senate was still in some magical way controlled by the States so that the powers of the Senate were coming back to the States. He said that there is in some way a control by this State over most things done by the Senate.

The framework and power of the Senate is taken from the Commonwealth Constitution. Sections 7 to 23 of the Constitution deal with qualifications, election of presidents, rotation of senators, etc. Throughout that host of sections, I can find only three references to States, one of which relates to the time and place of elections, which, I happily concede, is totally a State matter. Apart from that, reference is made only to procedural matters.

The Governor of the State may issue the writ. Very little power is still maintained by the States over the Senate, the composition of the Senate or the style of the Senate. The provisions of the Constitution allowed the Commonwealth to make laws concerning the Senate.

The member for Nundah referred to the Senate as being a States' House. After citing eight examples, he said that he could provide other examples. I suspect that what he read out was a definitive list. I thank him for providing that list. I certainly was not aware that the Senate had in fact voted on State lines on that number of occasions. It is still only once in every 10 years. It is not a tremendously high number of occasions.

The first instance related to the year 1939. In that year, Western Australia voted for the third time to secede from the Commonwealth. I suspect that on other occasions there were totally local issues involving fights with the Commonwealth, rather than a pure State's rights issue or a State matter of interest, on which all parties came together.

The Opposition still supports the legislation, including this clause.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of s.3; Power to fix dates for election and place of nomination—

**Mr HARPER (3.33 p.m.):** The honourable member for Rockhampton North, by way of interjection, referred to the rolls and the cost associated with having both a State roll and a Commonwealth roll. I take this opportunity to seek the support of the Opposition, with its comrades in Canberra, towards achieving a single enrolment form. One of the stumbling-blocks appears to be that if a single enrolment form was processed through the State Electoral Office, the Commonwealth would be allowed to reduce the number of its employees throughout Queensland. In other words, a considerable number of Commonwealth employees in the Commonwealth Electoral Office would become redundant. That seems to be a stumbling-block.

The honourable member raised the question of the cost associated with two rolls. I put it to him that considerable saving could be achieved by the Commonwealth Government if it was prepared to co-operate with the State Government in achieving a single electoral enrolment form.

Clause 3, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 4 and 5, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

**Third Reading**

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

**WHEAT MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading—Resumption of Debate**

Debate resumed from 3 October (see p. 989) on Mr Turner's motion—

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

**Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (3.36 p.m.):** The Opposition does not oppose the Bill, embodying, as it does, an agreement that is in its infancy. The Federal Government, the State Governments and the Australian Wheat Board have agreed on a scheme; but, because of the time required, it has been decided to introduce this legislation as a guideline. In his second-reading speech, the Minister said that a further Bill containing more detail will be introduced later.

As we see it, the Bill will benefit people in the wheat industry. In many spheres of primary industry, the Commonwealth and the States work in conjunction. Problems in some States differ from those in other States. Many wheat-farmers in South Australia had to be content with the secondary wheat market, which supplies wheat for poultry farmers and wheat for use as stock feed. The areas of land appeared to be suitable for wheat-growing, but the product was not of good quality.

There is one matter of particular concern. I have a copy of a statement issued by the Federal Minister for Primary Industry (Mr Kerin). When announcing that an agreement had been reached, he said that the price had had to be reduced by approximately \$20 a tonne. Wheat-growers have come through a prolonged period of drought—in some areas, a couple of years—and now they have been hit by wet weather. I read recently that they are still facing hardships.

There are many problems in the industry, and the Opposition hopes that the Bill will live up to expectations and benefit wheat-growers.

**Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (3.38 p.m.):** As has been indicated, the Bill is a simple measure. However, a few points ought to be canvassed. This is only a temporary measure. Permanent legislation will be introduced when the Commonwealth and the States agree on its final form. However, I wish to refer to the process that has preceded the implementation of complementary legislation. The attitude taken by the Federal Government to the wheat industry concerns me.

**Mr Davis:** You are a straight-out knocker of the Federal Government.

**Mr ELLIOTT:** I have not said anything yet. That is typical of the attitude of the Opposition Whip, who continually makes rude comments instead of doing his job properly

The stand-over tactics employed by the Federal Government towards wheat-growers are quite abhorrent. The Federal Government has said, “These people don't support us. We'll give them a good, hard kick.” Over a long period, a formula has been worked out to determine the home-consumption price. Naturally enough, input is based on the costs to the farm gate and costs within the community generally.

The suggestion that the price is getting out of kilter with the world export price has no relevance to what the wheat-growers of this country see as the problems at home. For a Government to take that attitude and at the same time continue to implement policies that impose further charges on growers, which make them uneconomic, is not good enough.

**Mr Simpson** interjected.

**Mr ELLIOTT:** That is right. It is no good talking about cheap food if the Government is not prepared——

**An Opposition Member:** You want a subsidy.

**Mr ELLIOTT:** I am not talking about a subsidy. That shows the mentality of members of the Labor Party.

The tariffs on headers are costing wheat-growers approximately \$15,000 per header. The growers have been asked to absorb that cost.

**Mr Cambell:** Who last increased it?

**Mr ELLIOTT:** I condemned the former Federal Government in the same way as I condemn the present Federal Government. The Federal Government's attitude to the production of food has been quite unrealistic.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr ELLIOTT:** I do not have time to listen to inane interjections from members of the Opposition.

The costs involved in the production of wheat in this country must be realistically assessed. The cost of diesel fuel in North America is approximately 22c per litre compared with an Australian average of 44c per litre. Growers on the Darling Downs are not paying quite that amount, but that would be the Australian average.

**Mr Davis:** You are paying 36c.

**Mr ELLIOTT:** Growers on the Darling Downs are not paying 36c per litre. The honourable member for Brisbane Central does not know what he is talking about.

The figure of 44c a litre is a fair assessment of the average across the nation. That is double the American figure. Machinery costs in North America are much lower than those in Australia. Fertiliser costs in Australia are also higher. I am sick and tired of hearing successive Federal Governments telling the wheat industry that it should become more efficient. For the last decade that is the only answer that Federal Governments have had to the problem.

I am sure that, just as I have, other members from wheat-growing areas have watched growers desperately trying to trim their costs. They have just about got to the point of no return. I am very concerned about the small farmers at the southern end of my electorate on the Darling Downs, round the Clifton and Allora areas, and also some areas in the electorates of Warwick and Condamine. At the moment a tremendous number of growers who are growing only small areas of wheat are basically existing on their depreciation schedules. That depreciation should be set aside to replace machinery when it wears out. Those farmers are trying to exist with second-hand machinery.

I put it to the House that many farmers can be classed as nothing other than the rural poor. If the current trend continues, they will become subsistence farmers. Regardless of politics, that is not good enough. If a grower sold his farm and all his equipment, he would get \$300,000 or \$400,000, but that asset would not return the average weekly earnings in the community today. Is that acceptable in society today? I put it to the House that it is not. It certainly is not acceptable to me and I will leave no stone unturned to make sure that it is brought to the attention of the Federal Government, which is responsible for the majority of the problems.

The State Government has to admit that if rail freights are higher than those in other countries, something should be done. Thankfully the Queensland Government has tried to negotiate a realistic freight assessment. A 6 per cent increase has been negotiated as a contract rate. The problems cannot be ignored; they cannot be swept under the carpet.

The Government has to look at the cost of food production in this country. If people want to continue to live in a fool's paradise by increasing wages and maintaining a high standard of living, someone has to pay for it. They might want cheap food, but it is not good enough to pass on increased costs to the farmer and expect him to be the only one to tighten his belt.

I am pleased to support the Bill. It is obvious that the first payment has to be made or farmers will go broke. This Government has been stood over by the Federal Government. That is typical of the stand-over tactics adopted by the likes of people opposite. The Federal Government has adopted the same sort of tactics in relation to the home consumption price.

**Mr Simpson:** Do you realise that Mr Bowen, the Federal Labor Minister, said that we could do without the sugar, pineapple and wheat industries?

**Mr ELLIOTT:** That is typical; that is always the answer. Whenever anyone raises the subject of the cost of food, the Labor Government says, "We can import it cheaper." But the minute that occurs and Australia becomes dependent on overseas production, the price will be increased.

**Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (3.47 p.m.):** This is an interim Bill to coincide with and supplement the new Commonwealth/State five-year wheat agreement. Because Queensland is entering a new five-year agreement with the Commonwealth on wheat-marketing, this is an important Bill. I therefore believe that we in this House should have an overview of the Commonwealth Wheat Marketing Bill so that we know what is entailed in this Bill and in the new five-year plan that has been accepted by this Government.

The Wheat Marketing Bill implements the Government's decision on the elements of wheat-marketing arrangements that will apply in the five years commencing on 1 October 1984. Wheat-marketing arrangements automatically expire at the end of each five-year period, and a complete review takes place. The review has been completed. The Industries Assistance Commission has submitted a report to the Government, and consultations have been held with the States and the Australian Wheat Growers Federation.

The scheme is a co-operative arrangement between the Commonwealth and State Governments because certain essential elements are constitutionally the responsibility of the States. Complementary legislation will therefore be required in each of the States to implement the national scheme. That is what we are doing here today. The legislation has to be passed first in Queensland because the Queensland harvest commences before the harvests in other States.

The Commonwealth Wheat Marketing Bill continues in operation the basic elements of the current wheat-marketing arrangements. The net returns of growers will be underwritten at 95 per cent, and growers will receive a high first advance from the Australian Wheat Board when they deliver their wheat. Changes made in the basis of calculating the underwritten price will reduce the risk, to the Government, of the guarantee.

Export marketing will continue to be the prerogative of the Australian Wheat Board. Changes in domestic marketing will bring the administered domestic prices more into line with export parity pricing, and will enable stock-feed wheat to be traded outside the normal pooling arrangements under a permit issued by the Australian Wheat Board.

The home consumption price of wheat will fall under the new plan, but the Tasmanian freight subsidy will continue, with certain changes.

Through the guaranteed minimum price for Australian standard wheat, a change in the method of calculating the guaranteed minimum price is that the high price year has been removed from the averaging formula. The basis will now be the estimated returns from the subject season and the lowest two of the previous three seasons. That avoids a triggering of the Government guarantee commitment because of short-term rises in

prices rather than falls. A further change is that only the costs of the subject seasons will be underwritten rather than the current three-year moving average. Instead of receiving the full advance payment on delivery, growers will receive a split first advance. The interim guaranteed minimum price will be determined by 1 October each year. Growers will be paid, on delivery, 90 per cent of the then estimated guaranteed minimum price and the guaranteed differential.

Early in the season the guaranteed minimum price will be determined, at which time the remainder of the first advance will be paid to growers. The final GMP will be determined no later than 1 March, and the final advance payment is intended to be made to growers during February.

The definition of the wheat season has been changed to the period from 1 July to 30 June to take into account the early harvesting of wheat in Queensland. The financing of wheat receivals and their marketing require that the Australian Wheat Board operates on the futures market and increases its commercial flexibility to enable it to operate on the corn futures market in the United States of America and to operate a cash-out option for equities and pools.

The board's capital expenditure limit without ministerial approval has been increased to \$500,000. It will also be empowered to operate combination cargoes of wheat and other grains, but it must deal with the State marketing boards and not directly with farmers. Those changes are primarily the Commonwealth Government's responsibility and have the general agreement of the Australian Wheat Growers Federation.

The Federal Government has agreed to increase the marketing and financial expertise in the Australian Wheat Board. In recent years, the functions of the board have changed dramatically and involve much more sophisticated and complex financial arrangements. These include enormous commercial borrowings, both in Australia and overseas, the use of futures markets and matching credit sale receipts with borrowing payments.

There are other important aspects of the scheme that are the constitutional responsibility of the States, about which we are talking here today. Provision is made for those matters in the Commonwealth legislation but, in order for them to be effective in the States, the same provisions must be included in the State complementary legislation.

One such matter is domestic pricing. There will be a new method for determining the domestic price of human consumption wheat. This involves a quarterly determination based on the averaging of the Australian Wheat Board's export prices for the forward quarter and the past quarter. In addition, the price will include a margin per tonne that relates to the cost to the board of servicing the domestic market.

Another significant change that is the responsibility of the States is the proposal to enable domestic stock-feed wheat to be traded directly between growers and buyers under permits issued by the Australian Wheat Board but outside the normal pooling arrangements. The Industries Assistance Commission recommended that private traders operate more freely in domestic marketing. The system will operate subject to guide-lines issued by State Ministers.

I now turn to the Bill. As I have said, this interim legislation is needed because Queensland is harvesting wheat earlier than other States.

Also, Queensland wheat-growers will be able to sell stock-feed wheat outside the pool system, with a permit. In other words, it will be of advantage to those growers who want to sell their stock-feed wheat outside the Australian Wheat Board. That is an important aspect of the Bill, and it is also important for Queensland growers. Stock-feed wheat sales have a very important role to play in all stock-feed sales. That is important for Queensland because it has more summer grains that are marketed as stock-feeds. Therefore, if a mistake is to be made with stock-feed sales, it will also affect Queensland's other summer grain crops.

Mr Elliott interjected.

**Mr CAMPBELL:** It is important that Government members ensure that they protect the interests of Queensland farmers and that these stock-feed sales will not harm other summer grain crops.

**Mr Stephan:** What sort of grains are you talking about?

**Mr CAMPBELL:** I am talking about summer grains, etc.

It is important that the Queensland Government appreciate the important role that it has to play in allowing permits to be issued.

I believe that Queensland wheat-growers are already selling wheat under this permit system. It seems as though they are willing to accept a considerable cut in price, with Queensland permit sales being quoted at about \$100 to \$120 per tonne on farm compared with a price of \$130 to \$140 per tonne for stock-feed quality wheat delivered to the Australian Wheat Board. It seems that Queensland farmers are prepared to accept these changes.

I will quote from "The Australian Financial Review" of 29 September 1984, which reported that a stock-feed miller in Sydney said—

**Mr Elliott:** Do you think we are going to get \$120 a tonne?

**Mr CAMPBELL:** The member for Cunningham condemns the Federal Government all the time but he has said very little about what the Whitlam Government did to reduce tariffs to help farmers at that time. He has said very little about how the National Party introduced export parity pricing for fuel, which has led to the large increase in fuel costs for farmers. He should not blame everything on the Labor Government. He should look at his own party and what it has done to the farmers of Queensland and Australia.

**Mr Goss:** It is a very negative approach that they have, don't you think?

**Mr CAMPBELL:** Yes. If anything goes wrong, Government members blame everyone else except themselves for the very poor aspects of their legislation.

**Mr Stephan:** Do you think that feed-growers are going to get \$170 a tonne?

**Mr CAMPBELL:** I have not mentioned \$170 a tonne. If the honourable member for Gympie had been listening, he would know that I said that farmers at present, under permit sales, were prepared to accept between \$100 and \$110 a tonne on farm.

The irony of the situation is that it was the Queensland Government, under pressure from members of the Queensland Graingrowers Association, that initially opposed the introduction of the permit system on the ground that more freely traded stock-feed wheat would depress the price of alternative feed grains, particularly sorghum.

The article in "The Australian Financial Review" continues—

"A spokesman for the Queensland Wheat Board, separate from the AWB, said yesterday that the early start of permit trading in that State was to allow central Queensland growers who are already harvesting to take advantage of future developments."

I warn Government members to ensure that selling stock-feed under the permit system does not upset other markets, such as the sorghum market. Government members have such a poor input into legislation that they cannot talk about it and can only interject. If they had more knowledge and did more work, better legislation would be introduced in the House. I suggest that they analyse the Bills and consider how they affect farmers instead of sitting on their backsides and interjecting when other members are trying to discuss the full ramifications of legislation.

The article continues—

“But early results from Queensland indicate that some growers with suitable wheat are willing to take a considerable discount to sell wheat quickly and obtain quick cash.”

It is important that these warnings are voiced not only by myself but also by other people.

I refer now to an article in “The Queensland Graingrower”.

**Mr Stephan:** Where did you get it from?

**Mr CAMPBELL:** I took it out of the library.

The article reports on comments by Gil Schmidt, who is the Queensland Graingrowers Association Dawson-Callide district council president. The article reads—

“Big problems could arise in Central Queensland under the new exemption scheme for stockfeed wheat.

Mr Schmidt said the scheme could see large quantities of wheat traded illegally, judging by the experience of sorghum permit sales in Central Queensland.

Mr Schmidt said he felt the scheme had not been thought through properly. He believed all grades of wheat would be involved, not just stockfeed wheat, because the wheat would not be inspected.

He pointed out that C.Q. wheat was taken off before wheat in other areas, and usually before barley. There was no reason why this wheat could not be traded interstate, as there were end users all over Australia.

‘No-one is going to inspect the wheat at all. All there will be is certified weights and they won’t necessarily have to be at State Wheat Board depots,’ said Mr Schmidt.

Experience with sorghum permit sales had shown that once there were legal permit sales, illegal sales followed.”

**Mr Elliott:** What you are saying basically is that you are against any free trading. You want to see the whole lot socialised and controlled.

**Mr CAMPBELL:** That has been happening for many years in Queensland. Perhaps the member for Cunningham is condemning the actions of the Queensland Wheat Board, which has serviced the needs of grain-growers over many years. The board has done that job very well. If the member for Cunningham is not happy with the board’s performance, he can say so.

The report goes on to state—

“Q.G.G.A. general president Rod McLeod, who is a member of the State Wheat Board, commented that the Wheat Pools Act already contained provision for the policing of grower-to-buyer sales.

The board already employed an inspector who was on the road to detect illicit trading.

He understood Mr Schmidt’s concern, but he believed the board had powers to control the situation.”

Isn’t it marvellous that no Government members have expressed such concern? The Queensland Wheat Board and the Australian Wheat Board should be supported, because certain groups of growers are going out of their way to smash the orderly marketing of wheat and other grains in Queensland and in Australia.

An article in “The Sunday Mail” of 9 September 1984, headed “New Grain Body ready to crush Wheat Board”, states—

“The newly-formed Graingrowers of Australia Ltd is moving into top gear towards its ultimate objective of dismantling the domestic powers of the monopolistic Australian Wheat Board.

Next week the fortnight old organisation, which will be known as GOAL, will employ its first executive director.

Mr Keith Livingstone, a former Queensland state director of the Liberal Party, completes a consultancy assignment with the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation this week and will then move full time to the new association."

Here we have the Liberals getting in supposedly to push for the dismantling of the Queensland Wheat Board and the Australian Wheat Board. The article continues—

"GOAL is the first such organisation whose objectives it is to smash the monopoly of the Australian Wheat Board and the state grain-handling authorities."

It is time that the Government decided what it wanted to do. It must stand up and say either that it is prepared to support orderly marketing through the Queensland Wheat Board and the Australian Wheat Board or that it will smash those boards. The Government must make up its mind. At least it should stand up and say what it believes in instead of not saying anything at all.

The article goes on to say—

"He (Mr Livingstone) said a key objective would be to open up the handling and marketing of grain to private enterprise, and Australian wheat farmers would have earned \$227 million more last year if the open US system were adopted."

The free enterprise system in America works so well that last year America spent \$4 billion by way of subsidy payments to wheat-growers. That shows how well the free enterprise system works! Yet organisations such as GOAL support that system and cite America as a great example. America spent \$4 billion to keep that system going.

**Mr Elliott:** Do you know the real reason? The EEC is subsidising its products.

**Mr CAMPBELL:** That is right.

These orderly marketing bodies should be fully supported because of the way in which they protect the interests of growers. Government members have levelled criticism at the proposed Australian Wheat Board. They have also criticised the structure of that board. I believe that the Commonwealth Government has listened to, and has been prepared to negotiate with, the Australian Wheat Growers Federation. At present, the board comprises 10 elected members, a chairman, three special members and one Government representative.

The Commonwealth Government is concerned with the accountability of these boards and wants to ensure that they are fully accountable to the people of Australia. It is interesting to note that, in contrast, the Queensland Government is not prepared to make boards fully accountable to this House.

Let me deal with all of the allegations that have been made regarding the lack of accountability of boards in this State. Instead of bringing them out into the open, the Government has covered them up. I refer particularly to the Peanut Marketing Board and the Queensland Graingrowers Association.

**Government Members interjected.**

**Mr CAMPBELL:** That is very important, because the Government had the temerity not to tell the Queensland Graingrowers Association that it should be founded and operating under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act. The Government allowed that association to continue on its way. That association could easily have been brought under the control of the Queensland Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act.

**Mr Elliott interjected.**

**Mr CAMPBELL:** Is the honourable member saying that the Government did not have the power to organise the marketing of all the summer grains? If the Queensland

Graingrowers Association had been brought under the control of the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act, that failure would not have occurred.

The State Government supports fully, as does the Opposition, the quarterly fixation of the home consumption price. The Government should apply the same principle to wage fixation and have quarterly variations in wages as it now has in the price of wheat.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister stated—

“The Bill also has full industry support and is merely designed as an interim measure to cover the home consumption price pending completion of legislation for the complete scheme.”

Organisations such as GOAL do not fully support the Bill. At present, they are working against the Queensland Wheat Board and the Australian Wheat Board and the orderly marketing of the Australian wheat crop. Queensland must co-operate with the other States and the Commonwealth to ensure that it has the continued and effective operation of the Australian Wheat Board to protect the interests of all farmers, especially the wheat-growers of Queensland.

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Condamine) (4.8 p.m.): It was interesting to note that the Opposition spokesman (Mr Eaton) supported the Bill. I think that somewhere along the line the member for Bundaberg also indicated his support for the Bill.

I wish to refer to the complexion of the wheat industry. The wheat industry is part of the overall grain industry. However, wheat has a paramount position in the overall industry because it determines the market value of most other coarse grains and feed grains.

In recent years, the wheat belt has changed. In south-west Queensland, it has moved west into the Maranoa, and it has also moved north into central Queensland and into the Mackay hinterland. On the inner downs, which once was the traditional grain-growing area, wheat and winter grains are being replaced by more profitable crops such as sunflower, sorghum, soya beans, corn and irrigated cotton. That has occurred because the farmers cannot make enough margin per tonne of grain. Some growers have taken the option to sell out and move further west, where they can grow more tonnes of grain and, hence, receive a larger income. Simultaneously, people who are traditionally graziers in that part of Queensland have turned land suitable for grazing into farming land.

As a consequence, the wheat belt of Queensland has moved into an area in which the climate is much more variable and in which great fluctuations in production take place from year to year. Storage problems have resulted. Grain-growers must decide whether it is worth while building permanent storages.

Problems are experienced also with shifting the grain. Not long ago Bulk Grains Queensland was constituted. That body has the responsibility for receipt, storage, transportation by rail and export of grain. It is capable of rationalising all the things that must happen to the wheat industry to keep it as viable as possible, despite the imposts put upon it by the Federal Government.

The Bill deals with the marketing of wheat, and honourable members have already had a description of its contents. It is an interim measure until new legislation is enacted in 1985. The Bill is necessary, since it is complementary to measures enacted by the other States and the Commonwealth enabling a new formula to be arranged for the home consumption price.

The member for Bundaberg said that, whereas at one time the home consumption price was set annually, it will now be determined quarterly. That accords with the thinking of the Australian Wheat Board and the industry at the grass-roots level.

In closing, I comment on the make-up of the Australian Wheat Board. The Federal Minister for Primary Industry (Mr Kerin) has been at loggerheads with the Australian grain industry recently about the composition of the board. As the member for Bundaberg

mentioned, it has traditionally been made up, in part, of 10 grower members. Mr Kerin wanted to reduce it to five. There has been some to-ing and fro-ing with Mr Kerin making all sorts of noises. However, my guess is that he is playing for time. I will be very concerned about the constitution of the board should the Federal ALP win the next election.

**Mr De Lacy:** Do you think it will?

**Mr LITTLEPROUD:** I certainly hope not.

I note that the Opposition spokesman supports the Bill. I have every confidence that it will proceed without difficulty through all the remaining stages.

**Mr De LACY (Cairns) (4.12 p.m.):** I enter the debate, briefly, principally because I enjoy agricultural debates. There is something about running one's fingers through the soil and the whiff of cow dung in the morning air. My main reason for wishing to comment, however, is to reply to the remarks made by the member for Cunningham, who, unfortunately, has left the Chamber.

**Mr Elliott:** He has not.

**Mr De LACY:** Apparently he had temporarily left his correct seat.

He used the opportunity—surprise, surprise!—to launch another attack on the Federal Labor Government. He blamed it for all of the problems faced by the wheat industry. Australia has had a Federal Labor Government for not quite five years in the last 35 years; Queensland has had a State conservative Government for the last 27 years. That being so, it never ceases to amaze me that honourable members opposite hold the Labor Party responsible for all of the ills of society, and in particular for the ills of primary industries.

The member for Cunningham mentioned fuel prices specifically. He said that fuel prices in North America are much lower than they are in Australia. I concede that. However, how he can blame the Federal Labor Government—

**Mr Elliott:** I blamed them all.

**Mr De LACY:** The member did not. He began by saying that it was the Federal Labor Government. When I interjected, he corrected himself, saying "all Federal Governments". I am very pleased that he did that. The fact is that the Federal Liberal-National Party Government introduced world-parity pricing, which led to the rapid escalation in Australian fuel prices. I concede that it has created large problems for Australia's primary producers.

He spoke about tariffs, implying that the Federal Labor Government was responsible for high tariffs. The last tariff increases were implemented by the Liberal-National Party Government. I suspect that members of the National Party were deafening in their silence when the Whitlam Labor Government cut tariffs across the board by 25 per cent.

The main costs borne by wheat-growers and other primary producers are those imposed by the State Government. I refer to vehicle registration, electricity tariffs and mortgage and stamp duties. If there is a problem about costs for primary producers, the State Government has the wherewithal to address itself to the problem. The Federal Labor Government is not responsible for those costs.

**Mr Simpson:** What about the assets test?

**Mr De LACY:** Is the member for Cooroora involving the assets test in the matter now?

**Mr Neal** interjected.

**Mr De LACY:** The honourable member for Balonne claims that the Federal Government takes more than the State Government from wheat-farmers. If one accepts the point of view of the member for Cunningham that wheat-farmers are in a desperate plight, one would suggest that they would be paying very little by way of income tax. Because of the fixed nature of State taxation, it may be that they are paying more in State taxes.

I will tell the House what the Federal Government has done for wheat-farmers and other primary producers. It has reduced the inflation rate from approximately 10 per cent to 3.9 per cent. I challenge anybody to deny that that is of great benefit to people on the land. It has significantly reduced interest rates, which are one of the biggest costs that confront primary producers. It has brought in a new era of economic stability and, with the prices and incomes accord, has introduced wage restraint. In conclusion, I might add that the Federal Labor Government was also responsible for breaking the drought.

**Hon. N. J. TURNER** (Warrego—Minister for Primary Industries) (4.17 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate. I do not believe that any honourable member from either side of the House opposed the Bill, which simply changes the home consumption price formula. That change has the support of the Government and of industry and will apply retrospectively—this is not retrospective legislation—from the start of the current wheat season, which is 1 October. The price will be adjusted on a quarterly basis instead of annually.

I thank the honourable member for Mourilyan for his support of the legislation.

The member for Condamine mentioned the cost problems confronting the wheat industry. I concur with him that that is a fairly significant problem. As a wheat-grower who comes from the Darling Downs, he is well aware of the problems.

The honourable member for Bundaberg raised the question of the contents of the forthcoming legislation to set up the new five-year agreement. He should be aware that the details of the scheme have been the subject of much public debate. I understand that the Commonwealth legislation will be before the Senate in the next day or so. I do not propose to go into details now, as honourable members will have the opportunity to fully debate the matter when I introduce the State legislation.

I have taken action to protect Queensland growers by allowing them to sell grain under an exemption arrangement. Queensland will operate its own system.

The honourable member for Bundaberg mentioned his desire for wages to be tied in to the quarterly formula. As Mr Kerin has just announced that the price of wheat will be \$24.16 per tonne less than the 1983 price, I do not imagine that he would still want to support his argument to tie wages to the price of wheat. The member for Condamine displayed an intimate knowledge of the industry. Of course, he represents a wheat-growing electorate. I thank him for his contribution. He and the honourable member for Cunningham mentioned the composition of the Australian Wheat Board and opposition from the industry. At Agricultural Council meetings, I have expressed my opposition to any cut-back in grower representation on the Australian Wheat Board.

The honourable member for Cairns mentioned that he likes to get his hands into the soil and smell cow dung. I do not quite get the connection with the Bill, which has the overall support of members on both sides of the House. It is only a simple amendment to allow the home consumption price formula to be changed for this season. I thank honourable members for their contribution to the debate.

Motion (Mr Turner) agreed to.

#### Committee

Clauses 1 to 5, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

**Third Reading**

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

**MEAT INDUSTRY ACT AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading—Resumption of Debate**

Debate resumed from 3 October (see p. 992) on Mr Turner's motion—

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

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (4.21 p.m.): The Opposition has perused this legislation. We can see the advantages in having only one set of meat inspectors instead of the present duplication.

Most members, particularly Government members, would be aware that over the years there have been complaints about levies and other costs that have had to be borne by the meat industry. The graziers have complained bitterly about the number of charges with which they have been hit. That has been a sore point with a number of people in the industry for a long time, and executive organisations of the beef industry have requested all Governments to institute a single system of meat inspection relating to the quality of meat for both the domestic and export markets.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister said that the Government was not entirely satisfied with giving control to Federal inspectors, but no doubt the same concern could have been expressed by members of the Federal Government if the position had been reversed. It should be remembered that not so long ago there was a scandal in the beef industry, and meat inspectors would have to take some of the blame for the crisis caused by that scandal. It certainly had a detrimental effect on the marketing of Australian beef overseas. Although many songs were written and humorous jokes were told about the scandal, it created serious problems for people in the industry, and is still having an effect.

Because of the difficulty being experienced by producers in gaining overseas markets, the State and Federal Governments will have to put a little more effort into the export marketing of Australian primary products. Because he has had to cut corners just to survive, today's beef-producer operates fairly economically but, with increased competition, he is looking to the State and Federal Governments for salvation.

Certain provisions of the Bill will help to bring a little stability to the industry, not only to producers but also to the banks and other financial institutions which lend to producers. That stability will allow those institutions to plan for the future and estimate the amounts that they can lend customers. At the moment the industry is greatly concerned about the fact that the banks have become a little hesitant in their lending policies. Because of the instability in many other industries today, the banks are adopting the same attitude towards them.

I sincerely hope that the Bill as presented can work in the best interests of the community as well as those of producers.

Mr COOPER (Roma) (4.25 p.m.): As the Opposition spokesman mentioned, this is complementary legislation, but there is one important area in which the Queensland legislation is different from that of the other States. Queensland will retain control of its meat inspection service. It is accepted that rationalisation is required. Until now, Queensland producers have been paying both the export levy and the domestic inspection fee for animals slaughtered in an export abattoir for domestic consumption.

The Commonwealth Government's policy is that it should provide the sole inspection service, but producers in Queensland are adamant that the Queensland Government should maintain its own control. As a result, and following agreement with the Commonwealth Government and after negotiations with officers from both services, under this legislation the Queensland Government will withdraw State inspectors from export

abattoirs. Queensland will continue with its own inspection service in domestic abattoirs and maintain control, through the Livestock and Meat Authority, over domestic meat supplies, marketing and quality.

As a result of the withdrawal from export abattoirs, State inspection fees will be removed from those abattoirs. Certain State functions, such as monitoring carcass classification measurements, standard carcass regulations, identification of meat for the benefit of consumers, scale accuracy and the issuing of certificates for product sent onto the domestic market from export abattoirs, will be performed by Commonwealth meat inspectors. Therefore, they will need certain powers under the Queensland Meat Industry Act. Also required will be State observance of Commonwealth performance. The Livestock and Meat Authority will be charged with that responsibility. To ensure ongoing consultation between the State and the Commonwealth, an administrative mechanism will be put into place.

Research and disease control within export abattoirs presently controlled by the State will not be affected. Already some State staff have been listed for eventual transfer to the Commonwealth Export Inspection Service. Similarly, the Commonwealth service has agreed to accept State inspectors whose positions will become redundant under rationalisation. That will involve about 20 State officers, although a considerably higher number will volunteer to transfer.

For the record, I wish to list some of the present meat inspection charges. They are not to be confused with the research and disease eradication fees. These fees charged on all cattle slaughtered in export-registered abattoirs. On 1 October 1983, the fee was increased from \$1.80 to \$5.40 in an endeavour, apparently, to recover 50 per cent of costs. That was an astronomical rise and caused a tremendous amount of concern among producers. On 1 July 1984, the fee was reduced to \$4.35. That was an interim measure. It is proposed to change the fee again on 1 November this year into a two-tier structure. The fee at slaughter will be \$2.55, if the meat is exported, and an additional charge of 2.4c per kilogram will be imposed if the meat is boneless. Again that proposal met with tremendous opposition. The legislation is before the Federal Parliament and the Opposition in the Senate intends to oppose it. It looks as though the present charges will remain.

I shall give an indication of the costs involved. The overall inspection cost to the industry chain—the producer, processor, exporter and importer—could be very high. In reality, it will vary considerably according to the weight and type of animal, but it could range from \$5 to \$10 a beast.

The proposed charges are the result of recommendations of a committee known as the Meynink committee. The report of that committee contained certain qualifications, but they were not accepted by the Federal Government. Although the Federal and State Governments have reached agreement on some matters, there is still some doubt about those proposed charges. The slaughter levy charges are not included as they apply across the board regardless of the destination of the meat.

The State fees were due to be increased at this time but, in recognition of the combined Commonwealth and State inspection levies being a disincentive to slaughtering in export abattoirs, the State has decided not to increase the fees in export abattoirs.

An article from the "National Farmer" of September/October this year in relation to this new two-tier system states—

"The controversial meat inspection charges row looks set to become a fiery election issue as the Senate prepares to block Government legislation introducing the flat \$2.55/head cattle rate and the additional 2.4c/kg levy on export meat.

Until the matter is finally settled—which now won't be until the 1985 autumn session—livestock producers will continue to pay the \$4.35/head charge introduced by Minister Kerin as a distinctly short-term measure in June.

This interim inspection fee reaps the Government the same revenue as would the two-tier levy but heavily penalises producers who are only supplying the domestic market.

But the dual system—with its 2.4c/kg inspection charge on all meat being sold for export—has been called a direct tax on exporters.”

That is exactly what it is. The article goes on—

“Minister Kerin has himself publically admitted that this export levy would act as a disincentive to export. He is known to be unhappy about Treasury and the Department of Finance’s decision to introduce the two-tiered charges, but would be unlikely to get Cabinet support for any other system of payment.”

The Opposition in the Senate has decided to block the legislation on the basis that it does not carry out the recommendations of the Meynink report closely enough. The Meynink committee recommended that the 2.4c export levy not be imposed for two years, in order to give the sector time to get back on its feet and also to allow time for the Government-run export inspection service to prove its value. The Australian Democrats and the Liberal and National Parties support this two-year pause and are expected to block the legislation when it passes through the Senate.

The Bill before the House gives the chief inspector in Queensland the authority to appoint a Commonwealth inspector to inspect a Queensland export works and contains the necessary safeguards to ensure Queensland control. The Bill has my support.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (4.32 p.m.): I am pleased that this Bill is before the House, because it demonstrates a change in the Government’s attitude to the rationalisation of meat inspection. Although this is not the first time that amendments to rationalise the industry have been introduced, it is pleasing to see that the legislation now goes all the way with export meat inspection rationalisation. Other States have used Commonwealth meat inspectors for many years. In South Australia, Commonwealth meat inspectors have been used since 1972, and in New South Wales since 1983. Victoria introduced them this year.

The Meat Industry Act Amendment Act of 1983 was the first all-encompassing piece of legislation for Australia. The amendments to the principal Act related to the control of production and distribution of pet food. The Act was introduced as a result of the meat substitution scandals of 1980 and 1981.

In February 1982, the Australian Agricultural Council recommended that uniform requirements regarding pet food be adopted by all States. To achieve this, it was necessary to make provision for control over the introduction of this product into Queensland. The amending legislation provided that, before pet food could be introduced into Queensland, the chief inspector had to be notified to enable arrangements to be made for inspection of a consignment on arrival.

The desirability of uniform legislation in Australia as regards meat substitution is obvious particularly in the light of the substantial interstate trade in pet food. It is also desirable that there be one inspection system for export meat.

In 1981, when the meat substitution scandal first appeared, attempts were made to distance the Queensland beef market from the Australian beef market. The Premier and Treasurer said that Queensland would not be involved because it was a totally different industry. In “The Courier-Mail” of 1 September 1981, the Premier was quoted as saying—

“We should not be punished because of what has happened in other States.”

The point is that it was happening in Queensland as much as in the other States. Reports were made concerning the activities of a company called DPF Boning of Logan Road, Buranda. It was suggested that substantial amounts of pet meat that was not dyed had been sent to the southern States.

On top of that, death threats were made against the executive director of the Cattlemen's Union, Mr Rick Farley. He was told, "Lay off the meat inspection, or you might get hurt."

The wife of murdered "Kangaroo King" Andrew Komarnicki was reported as saying that police should investigate claims that her husband's disappearance was linked with the beef export fraud. She said—

"He never talked of any scandal in the kangaroo meat industry but in the couple of weeks before he disappeared I knew something was wrong. I could see it on him. He was scared of something."

Further, Mr Farley said that he believed a link could exist between Mr Komarnicki's disappearance on 12 January last year and the adulterated meat row.

Queensland is part of the Australian industry, and it should accept that these provisions are needed. Substantial savings in meat inspection charges will be effected by having the Commonwealth undertake inspections instead of having the Commonwealth and the State play dual roles.

On 4 October 1983, Mr McVeigh asked the Federal Minister for Primary Industry a question concerning the National Meat Inspection Service. In his answer, the Minister said—

"However I note that the Queensland Minister for Primary Industries is reported to have recently said that the Queensland Government still does not support the single national inspection service concept. I understand that approximately one quarter of Queensland's State meat inspectors are located at export registered works and in general are taking their place on the meat chain beside Commonwealth inspectors and doing the same level of inspection. This work could be undertaken solely by Commonwealth inspectors, and industry consequently saved the double fee. The Queensland government must therefore shoulder the full responsibility for the extra cost being incurred by industry."

I believe that this measure has the full support of both sides of the House. It is good to know that charges for meat inspection are expected to be lower. Therefore, with other Opposition members, I support the Bill.

**Hon. N. J. TURNER** (Warrego—Minister for Primary Industries) (4.38 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contribution to the debate and for their support of the Bill. It also has the support of all sections of the industry—the meat-workers, meat-processors, graziers, the United Graziers Association and the Cattlemen's Union. State services will be retained in all domestic works in Queensland. Some States have opted to give their total meat inspection service to the Commonwealth. The honourable member for Bundaberg said that Victoria had handed over its service. That is not totally correct; the matter is still being negotiated.

The moves that Queensland is making will allow Commonwealth meat inspectors to inspect meat only at export works. The dual inspection charges will be cut out, and the ultimate saving in costs will be passed on to the consumer or to certain sections of the industry. State inspectors will be withdrawn from the abattoirs and, in return, the Commonwealth's National Meat Inspection Service will perform meat inspection duties on behalf of the States in those establishments under the State Act.

The honourable member for Roma spoke at some length on the reasoning behind the introduction of the Bill. He also mentioned the problems that arise under the Federal inspection levies. The problems that the Federal Government will have in that area are not directly related to the Bill.

The Bill is a good one and it is supported totally by the whole of the meat industry. I thank honourable members for their support.

Motion (Mr Turner) agreed to.

**Committee**

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

**Third Reading**

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

**SUGAR ACQUISITION ACT AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading—Resumption of Debate**

Debate resumed from 3 October (see p. 990) on Mr Turner's motion—

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

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (4:41 p.m.): It is with great concern that I take part in this debate. Most honourable members would recall the turmoil caused by the amendment to the Sugar Acquisition Act. Although the amendment has been law for two years, there is still no confidence in north Queensland. To demonstrate my concern and to demonstrate the feeling of the people of north Queensland, I shall quote two telexes that were sent by the cane-growers to the Premier. The following telex was sent on 5 October 1984—

“The Innisfail District Canegrowers' Executive, on behalf of canegrowers in the Goondi, Mourilyan and South Johnstone Mill areas, request that you use your best endeavours to prevent the extension of the sunset provision of the amended Sugar Acquisition Act until the 30th June, 1987, as proposed by Minister Turner, at the second reading of the Sugar Acquisition Act Amendment Bill in Parliament.

The Executive is vehemently opposed to the action of the Minister to extend the sunset clause before giving sugar industry units the opportunity to consult on the matter and to express their views.

We refer to page 1868 parliamentary debates (Hansard) when ex-Minister Ahern gave the following assurance: ‘Under the sunset provision the new powers of the Minister and the Sugar Board will cease two years from now (31st October, 1982). In consultation with the industry, a committee of inquiry will be held. It will report to the Parliament. There will be an opportunity to settle the matter and to introduce new legislation before the expiry of the sunset clause.’

The Executive is disappointed and dissatisfied that the Minister has not adequately investigated and obtained the full views of the canegrowing side of the industry on whether the sunset clause should be extended. It is obvious that he is not aware that this very important issue was not discussed by industry units nor the Queensland Canegrowers' Council. There has been no consultation within the growing side of the industry or any decision reached by the Queensland Canegrowers' Council to extend the sunset clause to the 30th June, 1987 as proposed.

The Executive requests that the Minister refrain from taking any further action to extend the sunset clause and seeks your support to have the proposal deferred until a thorough inquiry into the full ramifications of the Sugar Acquisition Act is carried out in accordance with Ex-Minister Ahern's assurance.

Innisfail District Canegrowers' Executive on behalf of:

Goondi Mill Suppliers' Committee  
Mourilyan Mill Suppliers' Committee  
South Johnstone Mill Suppliers' Committee.”

A further telex sent to the Premier states—

“We advise that the Queensland Canegrowers' Council had proposed for consideration by the Government the terms of reference of the proposed committee of inquiry, which have not to date been acted upon.”

That telex was signed by the same persons who signed the first telex.

This morning, in answer to a question that I directed to the Minister for Primary Industries, I received the following reply—

“All of these associations, in a joint letter dated 8 May 1984 and signed on behalf of the organisations concerned, requested the extension of the sunset clause in the Sugar Acquisition Act 1915-1982.”

According to the Minister, discussions took place five months ago. Many, though not all, of the problems in the sugar industry have been caused by a break-down in communications between the growers, their executives and the Government. There will be turmoil in north Queensland when reports of this debate get back to the cane-growers. At no stage has there been mention by the Australian Sugar Producers Association, the Co-operative Sugar Millers Association, the Proprietary Sugar Millers Association or the Queensland Cane Growers Council of the ramifications of the legislation. However, in his letter, the Minister says that he received his first representations and requests in May, five months ago. Somebody has failed to communicate that to the growers.

A large number of farmers will be upset. I spoke with some of them on Monday. They are concerned. They assured me that they knew about the legislation only the day before the Minister introduced it. That is a matter of grave concern, not only for the producers but also for the Government. It shows that the Government is dealing with people who are not trustworthy. I could use stronger language, as I am very upset about the Minister's answer today. It shows that somebody has been telling lies or using underhand tactics.

The grower organisations are becoming secret societies, meeting in a club atmosphere. They regard themselves as the elite. They are not prepared to report back to the people involved and make them aware of what is going on. In spite of that, Government members have the hide to complain about a Federal Labor Government that says, “Get your act together before you come to us. Come to us with one voice.” If there is no co-ordination between the Government and industry representatives, the sugar industry in Queensland will go down the tube.

Over the years, the Labor Party has said continually that those in executive positions on industry organisations ought to be elected by the industry. Too many are Government appointees. That is what has led to the organisations becoming secret societies and private clubs, keeping all the information to themselves. I warrant that there will be no report of today's debate in any of the industry journals. However, the Opposition will ensure that producers receive copies of what has been said in the debate today. Although there will be only three speakers from the Opposition side, we will oppose the Bill as strongly as we can. We will request that the Minister report progress until further consultation has taken place.

Over 12 months ago, the cane-growers went to the trouble of submitting the guidelines that they wished to be adopted for the inquiry promised by the former Minister in 1982. I will not take it out on the present Minister. The Government must have a system of breaking in its Primary Industries Ministers through amendments to the Sugar Acquisition Act. At least the former Minister had a couple of years' experience before he was confronted with it. However, the present Minister had this thrust upon him within a very short time. He had to travel to north Queensland and meet angry sugar-producers. I accompanied him when he met farmers from the Mourilyan area. He certainly was aware of the feeling of those farmers. He understood the problem and promised to do as much as he could for them. He achieved a little by having the first-price payment increased.

**Mr Turner:** And \$5m.

**Mr EATON:** Yes. He might have had the \$5m before he came. In any event, the growers accept all the help that the Government is prepared to offer.

I respect that there has been a break-down in communications. The Government must accept some of the blame for that, because it has nominated people to executive

positions. I refer to Sir Joseph McAvoy's reply to Sir Robert Sparkes over two years ago. In short, it shows that once an organisation becomes political, it is not in the best interests of the producers. Sir Joseph's reply reads—

“Although Sir Robert maintains there is no sugar industry employer group influence in National Party affairs or its policy regarding the sugar industry, he can hardly claim to be unaware of the following circumstances:

(a) The last three appointments to positions on the Sugar Board were received by National Party members. Mr Harry Bonanno was appointed as a member of the Sugar Board in defiance of a list of suitable prospective appointees submitted to the Government by the council. Mr Bonanno had previously stood as a candidate for the party.

Mr Ron Camm, a former National Party Minister, was appointed as chairman of the Sugar Board. Mr Eric White previously a secretary to Mr Vic Sullivan, a National Party Minister, was appointed as deputy chairman of the Sugar Board.

(b) The managing director of Bundaberg Sugar Company (of which Sir Robert Proctor is chairman of directors) is the president of the Proprietary Sugar Millers Association, a vice president of the Australian Sugar Producers Association and chairman of the board of directors of the Sugar Research Institute, all of which have over recent years combined in policy objectives which are undermining the viability of the majority of canegrowers in Queensland.

(c) CSR Limited, one of the largest companies in Australia, is a member of both the Proprietary Sugar Millers Association and the Australian Sugar Producers Association, while at the same time it is the Queensland Government's agent, appointed on terms never disclosed to the growers' organisation, for the sale of all sugar acquired by the Government, which is the whole of Queensland's sugar production.

(d) The industry consultative processes of the Sugar Board are unsatisfactory for Queensland canegrowers involving, as they do, the following representation.

(i) The four Sugar Board members and the secretary, none of who have been appointed upon the recommendation of the council.

(ii) Four CSR Limited advisers (number vary).

(iii) Two representatives from the Proprietary Sugar Millers Association.

(iv) Two representatives from the Australian Sugar Producers Association.

(v) Two representatives from the Co-operative Sugar Millers Association.

(vi) Four representatives from the New South Wales Sugar Milling Co-operative and Growers.

(vii) Two representatives of the Queensland Cane Growers Council.

(e) Amongst the matters upon which policy is discussed and views put forward at these consultative meetings are included:

(i) Bulk handling installation at ports.

(ii) Sugar pooling arrangements.

(iii) The International Sugar Agreement.

(iv) Marketing of sugar.

(v) The Commonwealth Sugar Agreement and the domestic price of sugar.

(vi) Expansion of the sugar industry.

(vii) Research add sugar quality matters.

(viii) Amendment of the Sugar Acquisition Act.”

All of those matters were discussed in club. Once again, after two years, exactly the same circumstances have arisen. The Minister, without consultation——

**Mr Ahern:** Oh, come on!

**Mr EATON:** Without consultation among the rank and file.

**Mr Ahern:** Oh, come on! You were with me at a meeting with 250 growers.

**Mr EATON:** No-one knew about the matter until the Minister introduced it in this place. There was no discussion in the industry until the Bill was introduced. I was with the Minister when he came to face the growers. I said before that the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology, who was then the Minister for Primary Industries, knew the feelings of the people concerned.

**Mr Ahern:** At the time it was supported by all the industry associations.

**Mr Menzel:** That is not quite true.

**Mr EATON:** I do not believe that is true——

**Mr Ahern:** The support was in writing.

**Mr EATON:** One thing is being put in writing and out in the paddock another story is being given. I was with the former Minister for Primary Industries when he found out that those 250 growers were not happy.

**Mr Ahern:** We stood there with 250 growers.

**Mr EATON:** After the Bill was introduced.

**Mr Ahern:** Before it was passed.

**Mr EATON:** Yes, but after it was introduced. I am not blaming the Minister entirely, because there is a break-down in communications between the Government and the executive members of the four cane-growing organisations that were mentioned by the Minister for Primary Industries this morning.

If more than one person knows about anything, it is not a secret. In politics, members of the Government know what is going on in the Labor Party and Opposition members know what is going on in the National Party, even though matters are supposed to be kept within the caucus or the party meetings. The Minister has tried to suggest that the executive members of the four industry associations can go out and talk to the farmers, the millers and the mill-suppliers, but not one person will leak that information.

I urge the Minister to have the debate adjourned so much more information can be gathered. The Opposition, as a political party, is criticised with claims that the Federal Government is not doing enough, yet those are the things that are going on in the sugar industry organisations. All honourable members know how big and important the industry is to Queensland. Why can these things not be made public? The Federal Government tells producers that they have to get their act together. I know what is going on, and sometimes the Minister does. There are four arms in the industry working against each other.

I have made submissions to John Kerin, the Federal Minister for Primary Industry, on behalf of different sections of the industry such as the super wet-belt, and on behalf of the industry as a whole. It faces many problems, especially concerning rural finance and the existing adjustment schemes. The Minister has told me to tell the different organisations to get their act together, but then one organisation dabs in another. For instance, if the Minister requests submissions from the sugar-producers or the proprietary millers, who have been asking for help, the first thing they tell him to do is not to heed the other organisations. Mr Kerin is in the position of having to make submissions to Cabinet—I am sure the State Minister is in a similar position and is receiving similar information—when one organisation is telling him not to take notice of other organisations.

**Mr Menzel:** Why not give all the industry a bit and we will all be happy then?

**Mr EATON:** It is just not feasible to do that because of the shortage of money.

I now want to quote from an article in the 4 October issue of the magazine "Register", which refers to the leader of the National Party in Canberra, Mr Sinclair. The article is headed, "Underwriting no panacea for sugar industry", and reads—

"I think underwriting is one alternative available to the sugar industry, but in Government I would want to enter into discussions with the sugar industry to devise the best ways by which we can both effectively market their product, and ensure that the industry is able to revive its production levels when the market comes good again.

I have no doubt that with the cyclic pattern of sugar as such it will come good again. It's just a question of when.

We must also make sure that the anti-sugar health rhetoric is put in perspective.' "

I agree with that statement.

**Mr Randell:** Would you say that that is an honest statement?

**Mr EATON:** I would say it is, yes.

**Mr Randell:** Would you say that Mr Kerin made an honest statement when he promised an underwriting scheme?

**Mr EATON:** He did not make a straight-out promise; he said he was sympathetic.

To get back to the problem, everyone is politicking. The Minister's reply to my question this morning revealed the enormous amount of politicking that has been going on for the past five months. I have already posted the Minister's reply to north Queensland, and when it arrives there will be turmoil. The members of many organisations will be getting stuck into their executive members. It is very convenient that some executive members are out of the country. One is in South Africa, and last night I spoke to another before he left for America. The fight will be between the members of the executive and the producers, but when this information reaches the north, it will not be a very happy place.

**Mr Menzel:** That's why they left town.

**Mr EATON:** It could be. I do not know.

Opposition members are often asked to make representations on behalf of the sugar industry. The Minister well knows, as do you, Mr Deputy Speaker, because you are involved in the sugar industry, that Opposition members attend many functions associated with the industry. Producers who attend those functions have a golden opportunity to present the facts to Opposition members, but we are kept in the dark. On one hand producers do not want to play politics, but on the other they are playing politics for all they are worth. In the end, it is the producer who gets hurt. A number of the Government appointees to the executive boards are glory-hunters. A few want to say, "I am on 29 boards this year. How many are you on?"

**Mr Randell:** Why are you trying to stop them from proceeding?

**Mr EATON:** Because we do not want the Sugar Acquisition Act to be extended.

**Mr Randell:** Why?

**Mr EATON:** At the request of the farmers. We are elected to represent people, and we are doing so.

**Mr Randell interjected.**

**Mr EATON:** I have just proved that people in positions of trust in the industry cannot be trusted. They are not relaying information to the growers, and the growers need some protection.

**Mr Borbidge:** Are you saying you cannot trust people in the industry?

**Mr EATON:** I am referring to people in executive positions in the industry, and I will continue to say that.

I will now quote from a submission that was received when the Sugar Acquisition Act Amendment Act was first introduced. The names of the solicitor and the company have been deleted. It indicates what might happen in the future. I shall give a copy of this document to the Minister. If any member asks me to incorporate it in "Hansard", I shall be happy to do so. I have sent other documents, from which I shall quote later, to both the Federal Minister for Primary Industry and the State Minister for Primary Industries. The document states—

"In the first place, the existing Act does not authorize the expenditure of raw sugar proceeds for all of the proposed purposes. Such expenditure as may be presently lawful can be made pursuant only to a proclamation made under the Act. Such a proclamation is necessarily a public document and interested parties are in a position to read what expenditure may be authorized and to take action to protect their interests if expenditure is misdirected or exceeds that which is prescribed. 'Research' expenditure is presently confined to matters relating to the quality of sugar produced for payment purposes but the proposed amendments will extend such research to mill and field practices. The quanta and purposes of research expenditure under the new provisions need not necessarily be made known to sugar industry parties, nor need they be advised of the names of the persons or organisations who will carry out the proposed research. The expenditure for research, and the details surrounding such research, will be within the Minister's sole discretion as will be disclosure of research projects and expenditure. There is inherent in the proposal the possibility that the research facilities of CSR Limited or SRI will be utilized in investigating field practices and that such work will have approximately two-thirds of its funding paid from monies otherwise destined to be paid to cane growers."

It should be remembered that that is the present law. I have pointed out how the executive of the cane-growers organisation has kept sugar-producers in the dark, yet Government members wonder why they are upset.

**Mr De Lacy:** Do you think that they are feeding them mushrooms?

**Mr EATON:** I think so.

**Mr Randell:** Do you say that the 30 men on the council are incompetent?

**Mr EATON:** They are.

**Mr Turner:** Are you doubting the answer that I gave you today?

**Mr EATON:** No, I am not. If the local cane-growers know about it, they are hypocrites for sending a telex to the Premier. There will be turmoil in north Queensland. The local council of the cane-growers organisation and many cane-growers up there approached me to ask me what I could do to stop this legislation going through. I am doing the job for which I was elected. I have had a big involvement with the cane-growers up there.

**Mr Randell** interjected.

**Mr EATON:** I have no confidence in the appointments made by the Government. The information has not come back to the people in the paddock.

The document also states—

"Sub-section 3 of proposed section 4 also enables the perpetration of the presently illegal practice of funding millowners' production 'interest free' in that the cost of interest borne or foregone relative to the payment of 'in-store advances' is carried to the extent of two-thirds thereof by cane growers. The proposed legitimization of

this situation results, in effect, in the Sugar Board acting as central banker for one section, the milling section, of the sugar industry but with the growing section paying two-thirds of the interest on monies gratuitously advanced to the mill owners. There is no suggestion in the proposed legislation that growers should be placed on an equal footing with millowners so far as the availability of cheap Sugar Board finance is concerned."

The State Government is racing to the Federal Government to ask it to pour more money into the sugar industry. The Federal Government is receiving representations from different bodies that are tipping buckets on one another. If those bodies are doing that to the Federal Minister, I am sure that they are doing the same thing to the State Minister. I cannot see why they would treat him differently. These people claim that they are trying to help the sugar industry, but they are only driving a divisive wedge into the industry, which is down on its knees and in need of assistance.

**Mr Randell** interjected.

**Mr EATON:** I am talking about the people who publicly ask for Federal Government help. It is State legislation, and it is a State responsibility.

I remember when the famous Mr Whitlam—the man Government members like to knock—offered to take over Queensland Railways. This House is told about how the railways cost the State millions of dollars. Mr Whitlam offered to take the railways off the State Government's hands, but it would not let them go.

**Mr Randell:** Have you read today's "Courier-Mail"?

**Mr EATON:** Yes.

**Mr Randell:** Mr Kerin is saying that he is going to help them.

**Mr EATON:** He is not rushing into it. He has to weigh up all the facts.

The legal advice concludes in these terms—

"If all of the mill owners were pleased with this state of affairs, and only the growers felt that they were suffering adverse treatment as the result thereof, there would appear to be no basis upon which growers could take action to have the matter rectified notwithstanding that retrospective ministerial approval was not forthcoming."

I inform the Minister that members representing northern electorates rang round last night. To be fair to the Government, I must say that some members of industry organisations said that they were not well up with the legislation and that they had left the decision to their executive. That is the point that I want to make; the executive is not playing the game. It is not coming back to the people in the paddock. Despite the fact that Government members criticise the Labor Party, they know what is going on.

I know that I am not the only member of Parliament with three sugar mills in his electorate. Other members have just as many mills and cane-growers to represent. However, on many occasions, cane-growers have come to me and asked me to take up their cause with the Rural Reconstruction Board and to present their case in a better way. Usually they are looking for extra finance. However, before a member can approach Government bodies, he must approach the local banker. One of the first questions asked by the Rural Reconstruction Board of a cane-farmer is whether he has tried his local bank for further finance. Cane-growers must have a statement in writing from a commercial bank declaring that it will not advance the cane-grower any more money. Only then will the Rural Reconstruction Board step in. I will not try to estimate the number of people who have come to me to take up their cause in Brisbane.

Because of my dealings with local banks, I have become quite friendly with some managers. Many bankers are hard, cold businessmen who do not care whether the farmer goes down the drain or not. Managers are in business to get paid and to borrow money

at a cheap interest rate so that they can buy flats in the tourist resort areas. However, I have been very impressed with one banker because, unlike some bankers, he was concerned about the welfare of his customers. Some bankers cause many problems in the sugar industry by advising farmers to buy other farms because they do not have room for expansion on their current farms. Some farmers can even be talked into buying blocks of flats and beach houses. If banks were not putting economic pressure on farmers, many of them would not be the worried men that they are today.

I will read from a letter written to me by the concerned banker to whom I have referred.

It reads—

“Dear Bill,

A few comments relevant to the graph and statistics which I have already given to you.

It would appear that the sugar industry is now in the worst recession in the memory of the industry, and for some growers in the Innisfail, Babinda and Tully districts there is little hope that they will be able to save themselves from financial disaster.

Cost of production and living costs on the attached schedule range from \$13.10/tonne of \$20.83/t of peak against a range of incomes from \$16.00/t to \$20.00/t of peak.

Interest and redemption figures range from \$4.21/t to \$10.14/t of peak, the average being \$7.03t of peak.

In short, for the range of farmers surveyed, Mr Average needs \$23.42/t of peak, however he will only get about \$17.60; thus incurring a short fall of \$5.82/t of peak.”

**Mr Randell:** Those figures are not peculiar to that area.

**Mr EATON:** I know that. I just wanted to point them out.

That banker gave me a list of figures relating to cane-growers in the area. He took the names off the list. I will give copies to the Minister for Primary Industries and to any other honourable members who may want a copy. This banker was one of the few who were fair dinkum. Because he was in a position to obtain confidential information of this nature, he could back up his argument with these figures. He was dealing with his customers. He could not divulge the information but, without mentioning any names, he gave me the figures. He drew up an average figure. He also drew a graph to show the situation in the industry. He wrote his letter over 12 months ago, on 14 March 1983. Since that time, the industry has continued to go down.

Farmers telephone me at night-time asking what is happening. They wonder where they will go. They are very disappointed at the extension of the sunset provision in the Sugar Acquisition Act, because that Act has been their salvation over the past 69 years. It has stabilised the sugar industry, which has come through two world wars, depressions and the ups and downs of the markets. At present it is in a serious position and a combination of State and Federal aid is required to help it.

I do not blame one Government alone; each Government must play its part. The sugar industry is governed by State Acts, so the State must come to the party. It screams out for aid from the Commonwealth Government. The Federal Government has already played a very important role. In the past, it was not consulted.

When times were good, sugar sold itself. CSR Limited must accept a good deal of the blame, because it sat back and criticised the EEC, as I did and, I am sure, you did, Mr Deputy Speaker. Australia did nothing but criticise the EEC and its tactics.

The EEC went out and found markets, it subsidised its industry and it supplied those markets. Today, instead of being a net importer of sugar, the EEC is a net exporter.

In those years in which Australia sat back and said that the EEC could not carry on much longer and would go broke, and that it was terrible that the EEC was subsidising its industry, the EEC looked after its industry. In contrast, this Government did nothing. As I said, because of the efficiency of the sugar industry, sugar sold itself. It was good-quality sugar. Australia merely sat back and let the orders come in. Probably America bought 3 000 tonnes and probably some other country sent a telegram in placing an order. Australia did not have to go out and sell its sugar.

**Mr Randell:** Who do you blame for that?

**Mr EATON:** I blame CSR, which was the marketing agent. CSR's balance sheets show that in 1977 it made a profit of \$9m from the sale of sugar. All CSR personnel were doing was sitting in their offices and directing where the sugar should go.

Another matter for concern is research. The Sugar Acquisition Act is to be broken down by a sunset clause. The Government could go on for ever and a day doing that. No mention is made of who will carry out the research, where it will be undertaken or how much research will be carried out. It is like giving an open cheque to the Sugar Board. After what has happened today, I cannot trust people on the Sugar Board or those who control the industry. I hope that the matter blows up. I only wish that some of the sugar journals would have the courage to publish comments that have been made in the House today. I am prepared to back up my comments, because I have the facts that show that a break-down has occurred somewhere. The Government has appointed to the board fellows who will not go back and tell the people who elected them to their respective positions. Next, the Government appointed them to higher positions. A break-down has occurred between the elected representatives of the executives and the man in the paddock who is doing all the work and copping all the blame.

**Mr McElligott:** The Minister should do something about it.

**Mr EATON:** Indeed he should. The industry must get away from Government appointments. The Queensland Cane Growers Council provided the Government with a list of names. What happened? The Government overrode it and would not accept its recommendations. That was an insult to the persons who were nominated. I am not saying that all persons who are appointed by the Government are inefficient. However, a very grey area exists in the sugar industry. If every grower was to go broke today, some of those top executives in the sugar industry would be unaffected. I refer to millers and other persons who advise the Government. They have shares in the sugar industry and they have diversified their interests by acquiring shares in other industries, too. If every cane-grower in Queensland was to go broke today, those executives would still be obtaining an income, because they have themselves appointed to as many boards as possible. They are not interested in the plight of the farmers. All they want to do is keep away from the farmer and go on a glory hunt all round the countryside. All they do is make a few public statements criticising the Federal Government for not putting in millions of dollars to help solve the problems confronting the sugar industry in Queensland.

**Mr MENZEL (Mulgrave) (5.15 p.m.):** Once again, it is unfortunate that I rise to oppose an extension to the amendments that were introduced a couple of years ago. At the time, an assurance was given that the sunset clause that would expire in two years' time would not go any further unless there was an inquiry. We were told that there was to be an inquiry and that possible amendments would be made one way or another after that inquiry. It is unfortunate that once again the growers will be forced to contribute for another couple of years to money being taken out of the Sugar Board pool moneys and lowering the No. 1 Pool price, for the research of sugar quality problems. That is the greatest fraud that has ever occurred in any industry, especially the sugar industry. As far as I am concerned, it is a damned fraud. It is an absolute disgrace. Many secret things are happening within the sugar industry, and that is one of them. There is too

much secrecy within the industry. There is not enough feedback to the rank and file grower.

I do not go along with the comments made by the member for Mourilyan (Mr Eaton) about Government appointees. I do not think that he realises that the elected representatives are hoodwinking the ordinary grower. They are the persons who are running the industry organisations, which are the Queensland Cane Growers Council, the Proprietary Sugar Millers Association and the Australian Sugar Producers Association.

I have received telegrams, including one from the Innisfail cane-growers district executive and one from the South Johnstone mill suppliers committee. Those telegrams were similar to the telegrams that were sent to the Premier and Mr Eaton. They asked that the legislation not be proceeded with. It is obvious from the consultation that I have had with the Queensland Cane Growers Council that the matter was never discussed by it. The 30 councillors have not had the opportunity of discussing it. I understand that a joint letter was sent to the Minister. I think that the Minister for Primary Industries is clean. He cannot be condemned. After all, who is he to go by?

The previous speaker said that the Federal Government is having the same problem. It is very hard to determine whose advice should be heeded. If a letter is signed by representatives of the four elected bodies within the sugar industry, which I have mentioned, the Minister must take note of it. There is no doubt about that.

If one inquires a little further, one finds that the person who signed on behalf of the Queensland Cane Growers Council was none other than Ron Belcher. As far as I am concerned, the next time that the Queensland Cane Growers Council meets, if it does not tar and feather Ron Belcher I would be very disappointed with it. I would say that to Ron Belcher's face. I believe that he signed the letter without the knowledge of the Queensland Cane Growers Council. I also understand that members of the Queensland Cane Growers Council from the top down are very upset with Ron Belcher signing on their behalf when they knew nothing about it. Somewhere along the line somebody has to come clean and take the blame for what has gone wrong.

In the meantime, the ordinary cane-grower will suffer. Who will help the people in the area referred to by the member for Mourilyan and the people in my electorate? I refer particularly to the cane-growers in low c.c.s. areas and, for that matter, any part of Queensland. The people and the employees in the field will lose their jobs. Who will help them?

Because the No. 1 Pool price is being lowered—it is already too low—jobs are in jeopardy and farming businesses are in jeopardy. It is a disgrace and a crime that millions of dollars can be taken out of the No. 1 Pool, and continue to be taken out. In my opinion, that should stop. Honourable members were given an assurance that it would not continue for longer than two years, yet we now see that happening. That is wrong.

I am not opposed to sugar research. I have been involved in the industry and know how it works. The Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations imposes a levy equally on millers and growers to investigate milling technology and field technology. The mills contribute to the Sugar Research Institute in Mackay. If a mill has a quality problem, it should have to pay. That has happened. In my own area—and I include in my comments areas from Tully north that you represent, Mr Deputy Speaker—about 10 years ago there was a problem with low filterability that affected sugar quality. Although filterability problems exist throughout the State—indeed, throughout the world—at that time they were particularly harmful because of the extremely wet weather. When Lloyd Harris was chairman of the Sugar Board, he told the industry that it must do something about it. I was chairman of directors of the Babinda Mill at the time, in 1974. He told all the mills with filterability problems, "If you don't do something about it, we will give you \$1 a tonne for your sugar. We will not accept it. People overseas want good quality sugar." Each mill had to spend in the vicinity of \$1m to correct the problem.

On the other hand, when the big milling interests—CSR and Bundaberg Sugar—have problems relating to sugar quality, they want the growers to pay for them. I am opposed to that. That should be stopped here and now. The Government should not be proceeding with this legislation, which, I repeat, I cannot support.

**Mr Davis** interjected.

**Mr MENZEL:** I will not be voting for it.

**Mr Prest:** Will you be voting against it?

**Mr MENZEL:** I will be abstaining from voting. That is more than Opposition members do.

Which organisations signed the letter? The Australian Sugar Producers Association signed it. What is the credibility of that organisation? Very poor. Recently it granted the unions a 38-hour week, which I understand the unions had not requested, in what is probably the worst depression ever seen in the sugar industry. Unit costs will be increased by 5 per cent as a result.

I can fully understand the Proprietary Sugar Millers Association signing the document. Its members have much to gain from it. Did the Co-operative Sugar Millers Association meet and agree to sign the letter to the Minister? I wonder. I challenge its members to point out in the minutes where that happened. I question the credibility of that organisation's general secretary. I have knowledge of the contents of a report of his. I wonder whether he handles the truth as carefully as he might. I might deal with that at a later date. My understanding is that the Queensland Cane Growers Council did not meet to discuss the request to the Minister that he extend the sunset clause. The general secretary signed a letter authorising that. That makes one wonder what is going on.

I refute the claim by the member for Mourilyan that the message is not getting down from Government appointees. Perhaps the Government appointees to whom he is referring are members of the Sugar Board. They did not request the extension of the operation of the sunset clause. That request was made by the elected representatives, who are not Government appointees. I point out that the elected representatives are the ones who have let the growers down.

**Mr Eaton:** I feel that they have all worked in collusion.

**Mr MENZEL:** It is difficult to know whether that is the case, but that is no excuse for allowing the wrong thing to happen.

The fact is that the elected representatives have a responsibility to do the right thing. They are responsible to the growers in the field, and it is up to those elected representatives to get on with the job and not to let professionals walk over them and sign things on their behalf. If I was on the Queensland Cane Growers Council, I would be asking many questions and demanding to know what is going on. I would certainly be registering my vote against what happened recently.

Some members have mentioned Federal Government assistance to the industry. Today's "Courier-Mail" contains an article under the heading "ALP plans to woo the sugar industry" The article reads—

"The Australian Labor Party may be about to sweeten its electoral chances in Queensland by announcing pre-election short-term aid for the troubled sugar industry."

It goes on to mention the seats of Leichhardt, Herbert and a few others. All honourable members know of the promises that the Labor Party made in the last Federal election campaign. John Kerin came to Cairns at that time and promised almost everything. An article in "The Cairns Post" stated—

"Labor will sympathetically consider any request for an industry loan and/or an underwriting scheme, to include the 1982 crop."

The 1984 crop has nearly been harvested. Mr Kerin also said—

“Labor is committed to renegotiating the domestic price formula.”

The Federal Government has not shown the sugar industry any sympathy. The Labor Party has totally ignored the promises that it made prior to the last Federal election, but it has the hide to promise even more during the current election campaign. People will not take the Labor Party seriously.

Before the last election, the member for Leichhardt (Mr John Gayler) promised all sorts of things. Of course, he has let the sugar industry down. If anybody wants to contact Mr Gayler while he is in Cairns, he can generally be found in one of the bars at the Great Northern Hotel. Perhaps he should take his telephone and desk in there and get some work done. A Federal member of Parliament should not operate like that.

To his credit, on 15 September 1984, the president of the Australian Sugar Producers Association was reported in “The Cairns Post” in the following terms—

“Removal by the Federal Government of subsidies on phosphatic and nitrogenous fertilisers from June 1985 would cost some cane farmers up to \$1 800 per year, the president of the Australian Sugar Producers Association, Mr Don Watson, said yesterday.

‘The Cairns Post’ has asked the Federal Government for comment on Mr Watson’s statement but none had been forthcoming up to late yesterday.”

I guess that the Federal Government is running for cover. John Kerin is too busy answering Dorothy Dix questions from John Gayler and making comments about me to do anything else. Among other things, Mr Gayler said about me: “He has writs for damages for defamation against five people”, and, “He has 43 voting proxies.” Here is another beauty: “Some of the farmers were hiding in the cane and drains to avoid giving him their proxies.” That is absolute garbage. It is laughable. When I first mentioned those statements by Mr Gayler and refuted them, even some Opposition members laughed because the allegations were so ridiculous. That is how seriously the Federal member for Leichhardt and the Federal Minister for Primary Industry take the sugar industry.

Mr De Lacy: Do you deny that about the writs?

Mr MENZEL: I deny that I have issued five writs. That was the point I was trying to make.

Mr De Lacy: I can name the five people.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! This is a debate on a Bill to amend the Sugar Acquisition Act. The honourable member will return to the Bill.

Mr MENZEL: I was just about to do that, Mr Deputy Speaker.

The Bill is anti grower and, as I have said, is not in the best interests of the sugar industry. It will lower the No. 1 Pool price and therefore lower returns to cane-growers who are suffering probably the greatest disaster in terms of real income that they have known for many, many years. This Bill will mean only one thing, lower returns to growers, and therefore I oppose it.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (5.33 p.m.): I thank the honourable member for Mulgrave for giving me information that I did not have concerning the joint letter. It is incomprehensible that all the industry organisations and their members and the ordinary cane-growers did not know that that letter had been signed. That was a very strong allegation. Obviously something funny has been going on.

As the honourable member for Mulgrave said, someone has to come clean. This could be the time to ask the Minister for Primary Industries to institute a judicial inquiry or royal commission into the consequences of the sunset clause of this Act.

The sugar quality research aspect of the Bill needs to be explained. Any decision on that subject should be made by the industry, but this Government has not given the industry the opportunity. Who pays for sugar quality research? To be fair to the entire industry and to the cane-growers, this Government must give that opportunity openly, fairly and cleanly for the industry to decide who pays for sugar quality research.

The honourable member for Mulgrave also raised the aspect of the underwriting scheme. I ask the Minister: When did the Queensland Cane Growers Council officially request an underwriting scheme? Has the Government costed such a scheme? If such a scheme is implemented, how much will the millers receive as compared to the growers? Why should profitable millers be given extra money under an underwriting scheme when any available money should be going to needy cane-farmers?

A Government Member interjected.

Mr CAMPBELL: He said, "We will sympathetically consider it." I ask again: When did the Queensland Cane Growers Council officially request such a scheme? Can the Minister show me the letter? What is the date of the letter?

I believe that we have to go back to the amendments that were made to the Sugar Acquisition Act in 1982 and see what was said at that time. If we look at what happened then, we can understand what is happening now. In his opening remarks, the then Minister for Primary Industries said, in relation to sugar research—

"... the Bill will validate expenditure on such work. It will also validate action taken by the board in implementing research results.

A further amendment will permit the payment to certain mills of transport allowances for special shipping arrangements, together with allowances or compensation when mills are required to manufacture to specific standards for certain overseas markets.

Another proposed amendment will allow the payment to millers of interim allowances between the initial and final payments for raw sugar acquired during a season. This system of payment is currently in operation, but some doubt has been raised as to the adequacy of the present Act to provide for such payments.

I believe that the amendments I propose will correct the more pressing problems currently being faced, but I feel that the time is appropriate to undertake a complete review of all sugar industry legislation. In this regard, I propose to involve all sectors of the sugar industry in a full-scale review during the next 12 months and will shortly be announcing the appointment of a representative committee to carry out such a review."

The letter indicating that the sugar industry organisations would agree to an extension of the period was dated May 1984—18 months after the Minister had given an undertaking to have a full-scale review within 12 months.

At that time, the Opposition gave its view on the Bill and on the role of the Sugar Board, and I believe that that was understood by the whole sugar industry. At that time an Opposition spokesman stated—

"It provides for the Queensland Government to acquire or commandeer the sugar produced from the cane crop, pay for it and, after all costs incurred in the handling, selling, marketing, etc., of that sugar have been taken from the proceeds of its sale, disburse the proceeds to the original owners—with equity, I might say. In other words, the Government, having appropriated sugar to itself, guarantees to pay the previous owners thereof the full value of such sugar after its sale."

The board is not doing that at present, and it wants to continue not doing it. The Opposition spokesman continued—

“If there have been any complications as a result of any departure from the spirit of the Act, they have been the responsibility of nobody but the Sugar Board.”

That board is not elected by the industry; it is appointed by the Minister. The Opposition spokesman continued—

“Under the existing Act it is not the function of the Sugar Board to authorise the transfer of sugar funds rightly the property of all mills and cane growers to certain regions or to certain millers for the purpose of meeting interest on loans, to compensate for manufacturing losses or for the provision of equipment for mills. Nor is it the Sugar Board’s function under the existing Act to fund research in mill or field to produce acceptable sugar, such research having approximately two-thirds of its funding paid from moneys otherwise destined to be paid to cane growers.

The Bill appears to provide for payments to be made to mill owners out of raw sugar proceeds, which payments may be separate from and additional to the prices for sugar specified in a proclamation made under the Act. This amendment provides for the Sugar Board to authorise any agent of the Government of the State of Queensland to pay to mill owners out of such moneys in the hands of the agent in respect of raw sugar acquired such sums as the Sugar Board recommends be paid from time to time.

A lot of people believe and hope that that simply means progressive payments to the millers for the sugar as it is acquired by the board. Even if that were so, that lends itself to giving advantages to the millers

Quite obviously the validating sections of the Bill and the Minister’s second-reading speech indicate that the Government accepts that the pay-out by the Sugar Board of sugar moneys for research and milling equipment is contrary to the Act, or that would not need to be validated.”

Opposition members are in favour of sugar quality research, but they believe that the industry should be given an opportunity to say who pays for it. The industry has not been given that opportunity, and that is the cause of the present problem.

An article that was quoted at the time of the introduction of the legislation in 1982, and which appeared in “The North Queensland Register” of 15 October 1982, stated—

“A Bill currently before State Parliament will mean ‘ultimate ruin’ for many canegrowers, according to the former chairman of the Queensland Canegrowers’ Council, Sir Joseph McAvoy.”

How true! The report continues—

“He refers to a Bill to amend the Sugar Acquisition Act of 1915. The Minister for Primary Industries, Mr Ahern, has moved the second reading of the Bill. Sir Joseph said the amendments depart from the long-standing object, spirit and intention of the Sugar Acquisition Act. Under the Act, The Government, by proclamations, acquires sugar, the product of the cane crop, and guarantees to pay the proceeds from the sale of such sugar to the owners, after meeting all costs of refining, treating, transporting and selling. Sir Joseph said he had to intervene to try to avert a situation arising in the sugar industry which would cause division, strife, hardship and ultimate ruin to many canegrowers.”

This Government has done nothing to stop that. The report continues—

“He said North Queensland growers particularly would be affected as cane price was, already low, and further reduced by the diversion of sugar industry funds to certain sugar millowners’ enterprises. ‘As the chairman of the Queensland Cane Growers’ Council over recent years, I have been in the position of a spoilsport to sectional interest in the councils of the industry where I was one canegrower amid

many mill owner interests. Confidentiality, industry unity and consensus prevailed until my tenth three-year term expired and I did not renominate. Freed from these constraints, I recently drew attention to mill owner influence. I was amazed by the savagery of the reaction by a certain milling company.'

Sub-section two of the proposed new section four will provide for the continuation of the multi-counting of millowner interests through the expression of views of all the voluntary associations representing in total one third of the industry equity."

I would like to place on record some of the comments that were made at the time. The honourable member for Mulgrave had this to say—

"I am very concerned about the proposed Bill. In fact, together with other honourable members, I oppose most aspects of it. In my view, the proposals in the Bill and the amendments circulated by the Minister take away the inbuilt protection that has existed and that has allowed the sugar industry to prosper in security over the years. If the Bill is passed, those things will be thrown overboard. Therefore I cannot accept it. It is a simple, short Bill but, as the honourable member for Murrumba said, we are considering the protection that every individual has enjoyed.

The co-operative sugar millers and the Queensland Cane Growers Council are not happy with the Bill. I know for sure that the co-operative mills ask for the complete deletion of new section 4A (2) which gives the Sugar Board corporate powers. That is very dangerous. Although the amendments circulated by the Minister spell out that it is to operate only in Queensland, once a body becomes a corporate body it could get round the new section. The Bill is the greatest threat to the industry since the Act was introduced 67 years ago. For that reason alone I oppose it."

The honourable member for Mulgrave went on to say—

"Someone asked me for a few facts. The sum of \$12.58m unlawfully advanced by CSR Limited to certain sugar milling companies in the Mackay area were moneys which belonged to the State Government and were destined to be divided amongst all the cane growers and sugar millers of Queensland. Part of that sum, \$6.77m, is said to have been loaned to the sugar milling companies of North Eton, Farleigh, Proserpine and Amalgamated Sugar Mills, a satellite company of CSR Limited, a company which, as agents of the Queensland Government, purported to make the loan of State Government sugar funds to its own subsidiary company."

The National Party Government supports those actions. The honourable member continued—

"That is what has been going on. Not only were these loans unlawful, but the hasty amendment to the Sugar Acquisition Act will not enable the Government to get the money back that was loaned. I cannot see that in the Bill.

The Bill is detrimental to the interests of the cane growers. Whether a grower is growing cane in Mackay or in North Queensland, sooner or later the provisions in the Bill will be used against him and every other cane grower."

Those were the comments of the honourable member for Mulgrave.

I turn now to the comments by the honourable member for Barron River. This is what he had to say—

"I make it quite clear to the Chamber that I will second the amendments that he (the member for Mulgrave) has foreshadowed for tomorrow because I believe that they are correct and represent the views of cane farmers."

The honourable member for Barron River continued—

"The Bill proposes to validate everything unlawfully done in the past but fails to make proper provision for moneys loaned to those mills.

The Board should not be given power to spend growers' money in any way it sees fit.

The Bill also gives to the Sugar Board power to spend growers' money on research. That is completely unnecessary because already there are capable organisations, such as the Sugar Experiment Stations Board and the Sugar Research Institute, that have efficient and qualified staff to do the job. That power is absolutely unnecessary and will result in a waste of growers' money. A judicial inquiry is needed into what has happened in the industry. Some strong recommendations that protect individual growers are needed. I oppose the Bill in its present form."

**Mr Davis:** Martin Tenni is now a Minister.

**Mr CAMPBELL:** Yes, he is a Minister.

I now quote the comments of the honourable member for Whitsunday (Honourable G. H. Muntz). He said that over a proposed two-year period a complete review of all sugar industry legislation would be carried out and finalised and recommendations considered, and then put into effect at the expiration of that two-year period.

Mr Muntz then went on to say—

"I commend the Minister for proposing the amendments, and particularly the compromise in the amendments circulated in the House today, under which the provisions of new sections 4 and 4B shall cease to operate on 31 October 1984. That is a compromise until a full inquiry is carried out and its recommendations implemented."

One by one, Government members said that they would protect the interests of the cane-growers. They have not done so.

I shall now quote what the honourable member for Mirani had to say. He made some very good points. He did not mind the money going from the cane-growers to the sugar-millers. He said—

"It is pleasing that the Minister has introduced this Bill, and it is pleasing to learn of his circulated amendments. I refer particularly to the sunset clause that will enable the existing commitments and procedures to be legalised and continued and, in the meantime, enable an inquiry to be conducted into the Act and enable changes to be implemented.

If I had my way, I would increase the board to five members, and their appointments would be made as follows:—

Two Government members, appointed by the Government;

One miller member, appointed by the mill owners of Queensland; and

Two grower members, appointed by the Queensland Cane Growers Council."

At present, the Sugar Board does not have on it one representative of the Queensland Cane Growers Council. And the State Government says that it is protecting the interests of the cane-growers!

The honourable member for Mirani went on to say—

"I have suggested one miller member, elected by the 30 mill owners of Queensland, and two cane growers, elected by the 30 member Queensland Cane Growers Council. This representation on the board reflects the relative disbursement of the sugar industry's funds.

I suggest that the alternative to the board's structure would solve the question of control and would largely meet those criticisms. I hope that the Minister takes that point into consideration."

I ask: Did either the present Minister for Primary Industries or the former Minister for Primary Industries take that point into consideration? Or is it that they do not listen to the more intelligent Government members?

I now turn to the comments made by the honourable member for Isis (Honourable L. W. Powell), because he really looked after the cane-growers in his area! He said—

“The honourable members for Mulgrave and Barron River did what we are all elected to do—they represented their electorates. That I take issue with them and disagree with their point of view is another matter entirely.”

He did not agree with protecting the interests of the cane-farmers.

He went on to say—

“I spoke with the Minister and then spoke with people who represent sugar interests in my electorate. I found that they were happy with the legislation. Subsequently, some controversy has been caused by the immediate past president of the Queensland Cane Growers Council, Sir Joseph McAvoy. I state quite clearly here and now that he is no longer the chairman of the Queensland Cane Growers Council. Another chairman has taken his place, and it is to him and to the members of the 30-man council, not to the former chairman and the past members, that I go for advice.”

Do honourable members know to whom he would have gone for advice?

**An Opposition Member: Ron Camm.**

**Mr CAMPBELL:** No. He even has a member of the Sugar Board in his electorate. That is the person to whom he would have gone seeking advice. I do not believe that he would have gone to the cane-growers and asked them; he would have gone to a member of the Sugar Board.

The honourable member for Isis went on to say—

“That is what ought to have happened in relation to this matter. Unfortunately, it did not happen in far-north Queensland.”

What he is saying is that he went to the farmers but that all those members of the Government did not go to the farmers and ask for their advice. He went on further to say—

“I am delighted that the Minister has decided to move a number of amendments which will, in effect, quiten some of the complaints made from the north. The inclusion of a specific date by which the reorganisation of the industry will commence is very wise. I support the Bill and I know that every member of this Parliament who has a feeling for the sugar industry will support it.”

He said that every member would support the Bill, particularly the proposal that the sunset clause should go no further than October 1984.

The then Minister for Primary Industries (Mr Ahern) said—

“At the request of the cane growers of Queensland, there will be mandatory consultation with the industry until such time as the committee of inquiry reports, so that cane growers can be adequately consulted about legislation. It was always the intention that a committee of inquiry would look at the entire Act, including the proposed amendments. All we are doing is proceeding with the legislation and inserting a sunset clause of two years. In the meantime, the committee of inquiry will report on the industry.”

The Government has not honoured its promises. It has lost credibility in the sugar industry. The Minister said that a committee of inquiry was not conducted because the Industries Assistance Commission inquiry was already taking place. Mr Ahern said that he knew that the IAC inquiry was going ahead. At no time did he say that that would stop his proposed committee of inquiry going ahead.

I do not believe that, from October 1982 to May 1984, anyone in the industry said that he did not want that inquiry. If anyone did, I ask the Minister to give me his name so that I can tell him who is telling the truth within the sugar industry.

At the time the member for Mackay issued the following warning—

“Quite clearly under the legislation introduced by the Minister or in the circulated amendments, there is no committal by the Government to a committee of inquiry.

The Opposition believes that the commission of inquiry should have been held before such major changes were made to the Sugar Acquisition Act.

Some of the weak, lily-livered members of the National Party who said last night that they would oppose the legislation have changed their minds today because of the sunset clause. They believed that once the sunset clause went out of being, everything would return to normal.”

It has not.

The member for Flinders (Mr Katter) said—

“I would not like to see another industry given a blank cheque. But that has not been done here because there is a two-year period after which parts of this legislation will be phased out. The insertion of that clause prevented an unlimited Donnybrook over the amount that should be provided. So parts of the legislation will be phased out after a two-year period.”

Again and again members on the Government side of the House have said that the legislation would be phased out after a two-year period.

In his reply, Mr Ahern said—

“What I did say is that there is, in relation to certain of these provisions, a sunset clause over a period of roughly two years. During that time there will be a properly constituted committee of inquiry into the legislation. Part of the terms of reference of that inquiry will be a time limit so that it has to report back in sufficient time for the Government and the Parliament to consider the report prior to the expiry of the sunset provision. It might well be that the recommendation is that the old Act does not need any changes, although I can assure the honourable member that I have Crown Law advice that that is not possible. But that is a question for the committee of inquiry. From my perception of the problems I anticipate that the committee of inquiry will recommend change, but that is entirely a question for that committee. Certainly these provisions operate for only two years.”

The Minister gave an undertaking that those provisions would operate for only two years. He continued—

“Further action by way of legislation awaits the report of the committee of inquiry.”

The member for Mackay stated—

“As I said, every member of the Australian Labor Party will keep the Minister honest in relation to the promises he had made today. We will keep the Government honest in relation to the commitments it has made. If at the end of the two-year sunset period those commitments have not been fulfilled, we will continue to remind the cane growers of this State who sold them down the drain.”

I believe that it was important for me to relate what happened at that time. I have outlined the assurances and commitments given by the Government to the sugar industry. Those assurances and commitments have not been fulfilled. I feel sorry for the present Minister for Primary Industries because of the position in which he has been placed with this Bill. First, he has received a letter and he does not really know who signed it. He is not sure whether the industry as a whole has given a commitment. Apparently, the letter was sent in May. Why was this Bill not introduced earlier? If there was openness, not secrecy, it could have been brought out into the open.

The Minister has been placed in a difficult position. He did not participate in the debate two years ago. He had not had an interest in sugar. Now he is relying on people who may be giving him information that will help their own pockets rather than the cane-growing industry as a whole. In “The Courier-Mail” of 30 July, Peter Morley, when

reporting on the National Party conference, said that a Government source said that the stage had been reached at which Mr Turner's standing had hit rock-bottom, particularly with the sugar industry. In my opinion, the Minister is honest and tries to do the right thing.

How much does the Government support the sugar industry? Last year the Government sent to the International Sugar Agreement negotiations the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer (Mr Gunn), who is reported to have said publicly, "I don't know much about sugar, but I am still going over."

**Mr De Lacy:** He does not know much about economics, either.

**Mr CAMPBELL:** No. When Labor Governments were in office in Queensland, people who knew what was happening in the industry were sent to those negotiations. They would not have sent over someone who said publicly, "I don't know much about sugar."

I give another instance of the Minister's telling the truth and another Minister being caught misleading the people. I refer to a press release issued by the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer on Friday, 15 June this year. I requested information about loans to co-operative mills. I questioned whether the loans came from the Rural Reconstruction Board. He said—

"Funds provided to sugar cane farmers for carry-on assistance through the Rural Reconstruction Board had no connection whatsoever with \$10 million provided in loans to Co-operative Mills

The \$10 million provided in loans to Co-operative Mills had been recovered to consolidated revenue from certain special funds.

'The money recovered was not "earmarked" for cane farmers or anyone else,' Mr. Gunn said.

'It was money which correctly belonged to the consolidated revenue fund, being repaid advances originally provided from consolidated revenue, interest and other surpluses to which the rural funds had no continuing entitlement.'

I now refer to a reply that the Minister for Primary Industries gave to a question asked about the same matter on Wednesday, 19 September. He said—

"(1) I understand that \$10m withdrawn from the resources of the Rural Reconstruction Board was used to provide Treasury loans in the 1982-83 year to certain co-operative sugar mills which were experiencing financial difficulties.

(2) The allocation of \$10m to provide urgent assistance to the co-operative milling sector of the sugar industry has reduced the board's ability to meet the needs of some individual farmers, but on the other hand the assistance given to the sugar mills had been of substantial benefit to over 1 200 cane-growers."

In my opinion, there is conflict between those two statements. It is my belief that the funds came from the Rural Reconstruction Board, and that should have been communicated to the cane-growing industry. Members of sugar industry associations did not know that the \$10m provided to the co-operative sugar-mills was supplied from Rural Reconstruction Board funds. \$10m was taken out of the Rural Reconstruction Board funds and was given to the co-operative mills. \$10m in special funding was then put back into the Rural Reconstruction Board for the cane-growers. There were two bites at the cherry. \$10m was taken out, the statement being made that it was for the co-operative mills; and \$10m was injected into the Rural Reconstruction Board. The Government then claimed that \$20m had been given.

*Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.15 p.m.*

**Mr CAMPBELL:** I wish to finish making the point concerning the funds of the Rural Reconstruction Board and the conflict in the information given by the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer (Mr Gunn) and the Minister for Primary

Industries. I am pleased that the record has been put straight. Farmers' money was taken out of the Rural Reconstruction Board and given to the co-operative mills.

The Government has made many accusations that the Federal Government must provide \$5m in much needed funds for the cane-growers of Queensland. If that \$5m is needed so much, why over three years has the State Government taken extra funds out of the Rural Adjustment Fund and credited them to the Consolidated Revenue Fund? These are payments additional to ordinary repayments to the State and the Commonwealth. In 1982-83 the amount was \$2m; in 1983-84 it was \$3.2m and for 1984-85 the proposal is to take another \$3m. That is a total of \$8.2m. Will the Minister explain why, if they have been so required for the cane-growers, those funds additional to normal repayments to the State and Federal Governments have been taken out of that fund?

How much money is presently in the Rural Reconstruction Board? As at 30 June 1984 more than \$30m in the Rural Reconstruction Board and the Rural Adjustment Fund could have been allocated to cane-growers. Last year \$20m was made available for cane-growers but only \$14.7m was allocated.

The honourable members for Mulgrave, Barron River, Mirani, Whitsunday, Flinders and Isis, as well as the former Minister for Primary Industries (Mr Ahern), gave a guarantee to this House and to the cane-growers that they would ensure that a committee of inquiry would be conducted before the sunset clause in the Bill took effect. Those honourable members have not kept their word. Because the Government is allowing money to be taken unlawfully from cane-growers' funds held in trust by the Sugar Board, it has lost all credibility with the cane-growing industry. The Government has an obligation to make certain that that is changed.

**Mr RANDELL (Mirani) (7.18 p.m.):** I listened with interest to the member for Bundaberg, who appeared to have taken extracts from the speeches of other members to make his own. Because some matters can be taken out of context, it is a pity that he did that. I hope that copies of his speech go to all farmers in his electorate so that they will have the opportunity to judge him. I do not think that he will come out of it very well.

The member for Mourilyan said that the cane-growers have not had the opportunity to discuss the proposals before the House. The Mackay cane-growers whom I have contacted are happy with them and have asked me to support the Bill. The member for Mourilyan also said that there has been no consultation. I have a letter signed by the president of the Australian Sugar Producers Association, the representative of the chairman of the Queensland Cane Growers Council, the chairman of the Proprietary Sugar Millers Association and the chairman of the Co-operative Sugar Millers Association asking the Minister to put the Bill through the Parliament. All organisations in the sugar industry have requested the Bill and have asked the Minister to proceed with it. There are no ifs and buts about it; that is in the letter in black and white.

**Mr CAMPBELL:** I rise to a point of order. I ask the honourable member for Mirani to table that letter.

**Mr Turner:** There is no need to worry. I will be tabling it.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row):** Order! I take it that the member for Mirani has no objection to tabling the letter?

**Mr RANDELL:** I have no objection to doing that.

**Mr Davis:** You made that up.

**Mr RANDELL:** I did not make it up. The letter is signed.

**Mr De Lacy:** You said it was signed by the chairman of the Queensland Cane Growers Council.

**Mr RANDELL:** I do not know whether the honourable member is calling me a liar but if he is I object to it. If he had listened he would have heard me say that it was signed by the president of the Australian Sugar Producers Association, the representative of the chairman of the Queensland Cane Growers Council, the chairman of the Proprietary Sugar Millers Association and the chairman of the Co-operative Sugar Millers Association. That is what I said. The honourable member can have a look at the letter later on, although he would not understand it so it is not much use showing it to him.

**An Opposition Member interjected.**

**Mr RANDELL:** I think the letter was sent in May, but the Minister will elaborate on that a little later. I have been asked not to speak for too long, so I will continue.

*Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.*

The honourable member for Mourilyan also asked why a review of the industry had not taken place. He should know that an internal review is now being undertaken. The Federal Government knows that that review has been agreed to by the industry, and that it will be completed in 18 months. Does the honourable member think that it is feasible to start another review before the internal review is completed? Of course not! There is no need for a further review. The internal review may cover everything that is required, so why go to unnecessary expense?

This Bill must be passed. In his second-reading speech, the Minister said—

“In order that this entire review process can take place without disruption to the present legislative arrangements and to allow adequate time for full and detailed consultation with all sections of the industry, the Queensland sugar industry associations have unanimously requested—and I stress unanimously—that I should recommend to Parliament that the sunset provisions contained in the Sugar Acquisition Act be extended.”

The extension must be to 31 October.

**Mr Campbell:** Why didn't they make that public?

**Mr RANDELL:** There is a 30-man council and they know what is going on.

I have great respect for the honourable member for Mourilyan. He is a pretty good fellow, but I think that he misunderstands things. He attacked the members of the Queensland Cane Growers Council and said that they do not have the confidence of the cane-growers. I remind him that the members of the council have to be elected, just as he has. At the end of their three-year term, they come up for re-election. It is a democratic process, and the honourable member knows that. The structure of the industry is such that the council members report back to their mills.

**An Opposition Member interjected.**

**Mr RANDELL:** The member for Port Curtis would know that, as you would, Mr Deputy Speaker. Information goes from the council through the branches and back to the industry. Anyone who wants to find out something can do so easily.

**Mr Eaton:** I was referring to the executive not going back and telling the farmers. The Minister says they did.

**Mr RANDELL:** The honourable member is saying that he has no confidence in the structure that the Queensland Cane Growers Council has built up.

The honourable member also said that the industry is facing its greatest-ever disaster. It is a pity that the Federal Government did not face up to that fact. All we have from it is promises. Reference has been made to the money that the Queensland Government has given the industry. I want to emphasise the fact—even some Government members do not know this—that that money has not been made available as a grant but as a

loan and it has to be paid back. It is a pity that the Federal Government did not react to the sugar industry's plight in the same manner as it reacted when the slump hit the cattle industry. It poured millions of dollars into the cattle industry.

It is time that all sections of the industry pulled together. In this time of great recession there is a great need for unity, yet for political advantage members opposite are attacking the industry and trying to pull it apart. One can tell that that is so from the speech of the member for Bundaberg. Where is the member for Mackay? He does not even have the gumption to enter the debate. He will not do so because he knows that he will have to go back to Mackay to face the growers. He is normally up front, but tonight he has not been game to make an appearance.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr RANDELL:** Member opposite are trying to fragment the industry. I appeal for unity. I wish the Opposition members would get behind the Queensland Government, which is doing so much for the industry. It is a shame that the member for Mourilyan attacked industry leaders such as Harry Bonanno, Ron Camm, Fred Soper, Keith Day and Ron Searle—men of great integrity who know the industry back to front and have forgotten more than Opposition members will ever know. They are men at the top of the industry, of whom we should be proud, and I say: More strength to their arms. I hope that they lead the industry for a long time.

Tonight I want to say a little about quality and research, because so much has been said about it. One must consider the minute sum of money spent on research and the enormous returns that that research has produced for the industry.

The member for Bundaberg would probably have a copy of the speech that I made when the Sugar Acquisition Act was last amended, in which I said that about 0.05 per cent of industry funds are invested in research. The industry gets back millions of dollars from that research. If research is conducted in one section of the industry, the benefits flow to other sections. Opposition members must agree that a problem that arises in, say, Mackay will no doubt occur in another area later. The research that is presently being conducted is for the whole industry.

I wish to speak a little on the research that has been conducted over the years. The result of that research has enabled corrective measures to be adopted in the mills. That, in turn, has given the Australian sugar industry a high reputation for quality, and every honourable member knows that.

The organisations undertaking the research are the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations, the Sugar Research Institute and the central laboratories of CSR Limited. Most of the finance necessary for the research came from funds raised by the research organisations. However, research into some problems relative to marketing was financed by the Sugar Board using pool funds. The board has the power to do that under the Sugar Acquisition Act. However, doubt was expressed as to whether pool funds could be used to finance research into sugar quality before the sugar officially became the property of the Queensland Government.

In conducting the research, the scientists often had to go back in the milling process to find a solution. It was in relation to the money spent in that activity that legal doubts arose, and I think that every honourable member knows that. That was why the amendment was introduced to the Sugar Acquisition Act in 1982.

Several other activities, such as advance payments, bonuses and penalties for sugar filterability, and the implementation of minimum standards of quality control, were also suspect. The amendment gave the Minister the power to approve expenditure for those purposes from pool funds and required the board, if directed by the Minister, to discuss with various sugar organisations the desirability of that research.

A Raw Sugar Quality Technical Committee, comprised of practising scientists, has been set up. It examines any complaints and makes recommendations regarding research,

and any research having a marketing aspect is financed by the Sugar Board after consultation with sugar organisations, and with the permission of the Minister.

The board has financed from pool funds research into marketing problems in all the research organisations. During the last 30 years, a number of major raw sugar problems, namely, deterioration, low filterability, high starch, high colour development in storage, high dextran/grain elongation and others, have adversely affected export marketing. Opposition members have probably not heard of those problems.

In the 1950s the two major quality problems were deterioration and low filterability. The deterioration problem, as the member for Mulgrave would know, related to bagged sugar. It was caused by a combination of insufficient drying and bacterial infection. The problem virtually disappeared with the better drying of sugar, coupled with the change to bulk handling. I wonder whether the member for Bundaberg knows that.

The filterability problem was widespread throughout the industry. It was brought under control by the adoption by all mills of improved clarification-plant design and operating techniques supported by the bonus/penalty financial scheme.

The importance of starch as a quality criterion was recognised during the early 1960s. Starch levels in cane, and therefore in raw sugar, varied widely from mill to mill, district to district and time to time. As I have said previously, there are problems from mill to mill and district to district. Tonight, you, Mr Deputy Speaker, were speaking to me about the different c.c.s. levels in different mill areas. The extensive use of incubation, plus the addition of starch-reducing commercial enzymes, brought the problem under control through the late 1960s. Penalties were introduced in 1965 and bonuses in 1968.

The colour problem—the development of excessive colour during storage, especially in Brand JA—became acute in the mid-60s, and was particularly severe in certain districts. The problem was found to be controllable by ensuring that the sugar was delivered into storage below a certain temperature. However, to achieve this result, it was necessary to use conditioned air at mill drier stations for cooling Brand JA. A penalty for hot Brand JA sugar as delivered was introduced in 1968. I wonder how many members on the Opposition side know about Brand JA. The member for Mulgrave will be able to tell them about it.

The member for Mourilyan may know something about my next point. The dextran/elongated grain problem became acute with the advent of chopper harvesting. The problem has been controlled principally by minimising harvesting delays and paying attention to cane billet quality. In the old days, cane was burnt once a week. The member for Mourilyan would know that, when this problem developed, cane was burnt three or four times a week. Stale cane was the problem and the cane had to be moved from the paddock to the mill as quickly as possible.

Mr Eaton interjected.

Mr RANDELL: I was just about to mention that. The length of the billet from the chopper harvester was important, and there was no delay between burning and harvesting. That meant rescheduling transport.

Mr Prest: You know so much that you are reading it all.

Mr RANDELL: I have to read it to get my points across to members on the Opposition side. If I do make a mistake, I know that the member for Port Curtis will take me up on it.

Another major quality problem emerged in 1968. At that time, it was the major quality impediment to marketing. The problem involved eliminating an impurity in the cane juice which is present in only trace amounts. The member for Mulgrave will know what I am talking about. That problem has been defined, identified and managed.

By mentioning these quality problems and how they have been solved, I wish to draw to the attention of honourable members the fact that the research and expenditure

necessary to develop ways of dealing with these problems were financed mainly from sugar industry funds.

**Mr Davis:** One of the problems with the sugar industry is artificial sweeteners.

**Mr RANDELL:** That is one of the problems; but there are many problems. Members on the opposite side of the Chamber have no interest in helping the industry solve those problems.

The industry funds, through the Sugar Board, were used to find the solution. The mills and, if applicable, the farmers were required to finance the application of the solution for the treatment of the problem. The funding was provided with the approval of all the sugar organisations. I emphasise that point because it highlights the unity of the industry. It was the spending of this money from industry funds on research prior to sugar being manufactured that necessitated the amendments to the Sugar Acquisition Act.

Although members on the opposite side like to suggest it, there is nothing sinister about the amendments in the Bill before the House. It is not surprising that an Act that was introduced in 1915 to regulate sugar payments needs amending.

**Mr Eaton:** Why didn't they make a public announcement on 8 May when they sent the submissions to the Minister?

**Mr RANDELL:** The organisations do many things. The cane-growers have confidence in the structure of their organisations. Members of the organisations are elected to make decisions in the same way that Government members elect a Cabinet to make decisions. The people of Queensland have elected Opposition members to make decisions.

**Mr Davis:** When were you elected to Cabinet?

**Mr RANDELL:** I am saying that members are elected to Parliament to make decisions. Of course, members on this side of the Chamber have the capacity to do that, and it seems that members on the other side do not.

To meet quality requirements of overseas customers, the Sugar Board has expanded its sugar quality incentive scheme in the period since 1960. There does not appear to be any doubt that the operation of the Sugar Board's quality incentive scheme has brought about a considerable improvement in the refining properties of Australian raw sugar. The direct and demonstrable return to the industry from continued export sales, which were in considerable jeopardy at various stages in the last 20 years, could be counted in hundreds of millions of dollars over that period.

Queensland has the best quality sugar in the world. That quality has been achieved by research and there is no doubt in my mind that that quality will be maintained by research.

I support the Minister for Primary Industries in introducing this amendment, I support the industry and I support the Bill.

**Mr De LACY (Cairns) (7.35 p.m.):** This is probably one of the most incredible debates in which I have had the pleasure of being involved. It is a case of the Minister versus the world. That is apparent from the manner in which Government back-benchers oppose the Bill.

The honourable member for Mulgrave said nothing kind about it. He said that he opposed it, and in his speech he did oppose it quite vigorously. I hope that he backs up his comments by actions and opposes it when a division is called.

I am not quite sure whether the honourable member for Mirani opposed the Bill or supported it. I tend to think that he dodged the issue by speaking about irrelevant things such as diseases and research in the sugar industry.

I remind the House of a couple of comments that the honourable member made. He said something, I interjected, and he repeated it. He said that the letter that requested the extension was signed by, amongst other people, the chairman of the Cane Growers Council. I am not suggesting that he is wrong. The Minister said that he will table that letter, and so did the honourable member for Mirani.

**Mr RANDELL:** I rise to a point of order. I did not say that. For the benefit of the honourable member, who does not seem to have enough gumption to be able to understand it, I pointed out that I said twice that it was signed by a representative of the Queensland Cane Growers Council. I said that twice. I ask the honourable member to withdraw that comment.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row):** Order! There is no point of order. The matter has been clarified.

**Mr De LACY:** The matter has been clarified. I will be reading "Hansard" tomorrow morning.

The honourable member for Mirani also accused the honourable member for Mourilyan of attacking the Cane Growers Council and the integrity of its members, who certainly were not listed by the honourable member for Mourilyan. The person who devastatingly attacked the Cane Growers Council was the colleague of the honourable member for Mirani who sits very close to him, the honourable member for Mulgrave. He certainly attacked the Cane Growers Council with a great deal more vigour than did the honourable member for Mourilyan.

At the beginning of my speech, I said that this is a case of the Minister versus the world. By "the world" I certainly mean the ALP, because there is no way that we can support the Bill. I also mean Government back-benchers, and if not the whole of the sugar industry, then certainly the growing section of the industry.

I do not make that statement idly. I know for a fact that cane-growers in the far north, at least, are vigorously opposed to this legislation, just as they were opposed to the amendments that were introduced in 1982. I am led to believe that the whole of the Cane Growers Council opposed those amendments in 1982, as did the Australian Sugar Producers Association and many National Party back-benchers.

Tonight, the honourable member for Bundaberg put together a devastating list of quotations from the speeches made by Government members when they opposed the legislation as it was conceived originally, that is, without the sunset clause. My understanding is that when the amendments were introduced, they were opposed by all those members who represented sugar areas. As I have said, they were also opposed by the Queensland Cane Growers Council and the ASPA.

The only way in which the Minister was able to placate those interests was by introducing the sunset clause. What the Government said, in effect, was, "OK, we will introduce it, but it will exist only for two years. In those two years we will cause to be conducted a comprehensive inquiry into sugar industry legislation. We will conduct that inquiry, and in two years' time we will be in a position to introduce new or different legislation, or revert to the old legislation." Only by attaching the sunset clause to the Bill was the Minister able to have it passed. That is the first reason why the ALP cannot support this legislation, which, in effect, extends that sunset clause.

If members of the Opposition allowed this extension of the sunset clause to be passed, they would be making a complete mockery of the spirit of the reason why the sunset clause was introduced in the first place. The passing of this legislation will make the earlier legislation, which everybody opposed, a fact of life.

I refer to this process as legislation by deception. It makes a mockery of the reason for the acceptance of the earlier legislation. It also makes a clown out of every Government member who supported that legislation as well as those Government members who will support it tonight.

The second reason why members of the ALP cannot, and will not, support the Bill is that it is not in the best interests of the growers. It has removed the protective mechanism that has existed within the industry for generations. I think that the member for Mourilyan said that it has existed for 67 or 69 years. It has seen the industry, particularly the growers, through a long period, which included two world wars, a depression and the ups and downs of the industry.

Power is given to the Sugar Board over the growers' money. I believe that that is unjust and unnecessary. It affects the profitability of growers, as the member for Mulgrave said, by reducing the No. 1 Pool price.

Earlier I said that the Cairns district cane-growers executive opposed the initial legislation vigorously. When the legislation was being debated in 1982, the executive wrote a letter in the following terms—

“Being very conscious of the vested interests and conflicting sugar industry attitudes involved in the interpretation and application of sugar industry legislation the Cairns Executive is most strongly of the view that integrity will only be preserved and wisdom prevail in the long term interest of all the Industry if such an inquiry is conducted at nothing less than Judicial level.”

It was very suspicious of the inquiry because it believed that forces at work in the industry were not on the side of the growers. The letter continued—

“That is, under the Chairmanship of a Supreme Court Judge and conducted within the provisions of the ‘Commissions of Inquiry Act’.”

That is what the executive requested when the inquiry that was supposed to have been launched in early 1983 was to have been conducted. I point out that that inquiry has never been conducted.

The executive continued in its letter—

“The recent amendments of the Sugar Acquisition Act have now made what was a simple piece of very direct legislation into one that has a prior authority over the Cane Prices Act in the distribution of sugar sales proceeds. The Sugar Acquisition Act now has first say in the directing of industry income and, unlike the Cane Prices Act, its distribution of money is not controlled by formula. Its authority is completely discretionary to bless or to blight wherever it chooses.

The Cane Prices Act was specifically brought in to protect growers from millers and to see that the big and the mighty could no longer exploit the sugar industry in a manner tantamount to a royal prerogative.”

In the intervening period, the inquiry has not taken place. I am not aware of any action having been initiated by the Government to set that inquiry in place. Many of the concerns and reservations of the Cairns district cane-growers executive have now come into being. The executive has always been concerned, as most growers have been concerned, that it theoretically owns two-thirds of the crop, but the growers certainly do not have two-thirds of the say. There is great justification for the growers' concern, because the milling part of the industry seems to be having a disproportionate say in what occurs.

Three things have happened to justify their concerns. The member for Bundaberg said that the Queensland Cane Growers Council's nomination to the Sugar Board was rejected and that the Government appointed somebody else. In a democratic sense, nobody on the Sugar Board represents the growers. In the consultative process in the sugar industry, there are only two growers out of 20 persons.

The Queensland Cane Growers Council is only one body out of four that is involved in the current industry review. The other three bodies are the Australian Sugar Producers Association, which theoretically represent growers as well as millers—I believe that many growers think that it represents the millers more than the growers—the Proprietary Sugar Millers Association and the Co-operative Sugar Millers Association. The growers do not

have an equal say. They have what I would interpret as a quarter of the say in the review that is being conducted into the industry.

A point made by other speakers in the debate is that the last three appointments to the Sugar Board were prominent members of the National Party. That would not have done anything to buoy up the confidence of the growers in the organisation that is running the sugar industry.

The third reason why the Opposition cannot support the legislation is that it is a cop-out. Two years ago the Government introduced legislation with a sunset clause. In the meantime, it said, it would carry out a full and proper inquiry into the legislation. What happened? It did nothing. Now it wants to extend the sunset clause for another three years. The reason, I suggest, is so that it can continue to do nothing. It will allow the Government to reaffirm its policy of not having a policy to support the sugar industry.

It is important in the debate for me to develop the point that the State Government is incapable of doing, or not prepared to do, anything constructive to assist the sugar industry. I have said it before, and I will say it again: The Government's only solution to the problems of the sugar industry seems to be to attack the Federal Government. We witnessed a similar approach this afternoon during the debate on the Wheat Marketing Act Amendment Bill. How marvellous when there is a Labor Government in Canberra. It solves all of the State Government's problems. Whenever anything goes wrong in the State, it is simply a matter of blaming the Federal Labor Government.

**Mr Eaton:** The Government is not frightened to make public statements accusing the Federal Government of doing underhanded things, but it did not make a public statement about requests coming in from the organisation. It did not tell the cane-growers about that.

**Mr De LACY:** That is so. The Government has a double set of standards, one to be used when it is attacking the Federal Government and the other to be used when it is dealing with the people it is supposed to represent.

I will record the way in which the State Government has failed to respond to the legitimate needs of the industry. All it has done—and it could probably be said that it has done it quite cleverly—is make political capital out of the matter. It has done nothing to represent the people who need its assistance.

Earlier this year a deputation from what is called the super-wet belt met the Queensland Minister for Primary Industries, the Premier and members of the Department of Primary Industries. A request was made of the Queensland Government to pursue four main points with the Commonwealth Government. First, it asked the Government to provide support for the submissions that the group had made to the Commonwealth Government. As far as I am aware, that has not yet been done.

The second request was that the Government guarantee a minimum delivery advance of \$180 for the 1984 season. I appreciate that that has been done, but it was not done in the first place. It was avoided until the death. The Government then demanded that the Commonwealth cover the interest component, even though it had been advised by the Commonwealth that that was not possible. It was used as an opportunity for making political capital. The Government should have accepted its responsibility and taken a weight off the growers' minds by saying that it was prepared to increase the minimum delivery advance to \$180, as it was requested to do by the deputation from the super-wet belt as long ago as May or June.

Thirdly, the Government was asked to provide a commitment to match any research funding that could be obtained. That was not done.

Finally, the deputation asked the Government to implement a regionally based Rural Adjustment Scheme with greater flexibility and terms more concessional than the current scheme. The Government clung to that point in an effort to score political points

off the Federal Government. Ultimately, \$5m was made available under the Rural Adjustment Scheme. However, it is at the old interest rates and not regionally directed to address itself to the various problems encountered by different areas.

On the matter of the \$5m, the Government decided that it would be good politics if it were able to put the Commonwealth Government on the spot. A telegram was sent off one day without any supporting information, without any adequate costing and without any scheme that would demonstrably improve the sugar industry. The telegram demanded \$5m from the Commonwealth to match the \$5m from the State Government. Then the State Government went to the press, attacking the Federal Government for not providing any money.

In May this year the Minister undertook to contact Mr Kerin to advise him of the State Government's support. That still has not been done. On 5 July, after a breakdown in talks to establish a new International Sugar Agreement, the Minister called for an expansion in the sugar industry in an effort to get a bigger share of the world market. I have said it before and I will say it again: That is probably one of the most indiscreet remarks ever made by a Minister for Primary Industries. If a Labor Minister for Primary Industries ever said something like that he would be reminded of it for another 25 years. That demonstrates that the Minister is a prisoner of the millers, not the growers. The Minister is reflecting the viewpoint of the milling sector of the industry, because the millers will make money if they can increase their volume. The growers can make money only by getting a bigger price for their product.

I will tell the House something else that the State Government has not done and has not even addressed. The Queensland Cane Growers Council approached the Government and asked it to consider reducing some of the costs and charges that were squeezing the growers. Costs were increasing and, as all honourable members know, the price for sugar on the world market was falling. The growers were being caught in that age-old cost/price squeeze that most primary industries know so much about. However, instead of there being a reduction in charges, as all honourable members know and as has been said in the House, State Government charges are rising at a much faster rate than inflation. Even though the sugar industry is facing the greatest recession of the century, the Government is still increasing charges and extracting its toll from the poor old cane-farmers in terms of motor vehicle registration, water charges, electricity tariffs, mortgage and stamp duty charges, rail freights and so forth. If the State Government was fair dinkum and concerned about the plight of this great industry—I agree with the member for Mirani when he spoke about the great sugar industry that has done so much for Queensland—in an effort to tide it through and rescue it from this difficult period, it would get its act together and reduce the charges over which it has control. Government members cannot give me one single instance of a charge being reduced in an effort to help the sugar industry.

I turn to the Federal Government. The members for Mirani and Mulgrave and the Minister for Primary industries always speak about the broken promises of the Hawke Government. I could have made his speech for the member for Mirani. Perhaps the next time he stands to make a speech, I should do it for him because I know what he will say.

I will consider the promises made by the Federal Government and take them one by one. Before the last Federal election, Mr Hawke and Mr Kerin said they would look sympathetically at any request for an underwriting scheme. They have never said that they would not come into an underwriting scheme. I ask the members for Mirani and Mulgrave whether they have seen a copy of the submission made to the Federal Government with a properly costed and detailed underwriting scheme. If that exists, I would like to have a look at it and I will undertake to give it to the Federal Government for consideration. The only thing that has happened in terms of an underwriting scheme is that every second person in the National Party has screamed to the press that the Federal Government has not introduced an underwriting scheme, but the Federal Government has not been presented with a properly detailed and costed proposal. The

only one that was suggested or mooted in the early stages was costed by the Federal Government at \$190m. It did not incorporate a long-term solution to solve the sugar industry's problems; it offered only short-term relief.

**Mr Randell:** They promised an underwriting scheme. As soon as they got into power, they wanted an internal review, and you know that that will take nearly two years. How is the industry going to hang on that long?

**Mr De LACY:** At the risk of repeating myself, I remind the honourable member that the Federal Government promised to look sympathetically at an underwriting scheme, and it will still do so.

**Mr Randell:** They promised an underwriting scheme.

**Mr De LACY:** The Federal Government promised that it would look at an underwriting scheme.

**Mr Randell** interjected.

**Mr De LACY:** Just let me answer the question. What is needed is a proper scheme that will solve the industry's problems on a long-term basis. If this Government had undertaken a full and proper inquiry, which it promised when the 1982 legislation was introduced, perhaps the Federal Government would now be in a position to implement an underwriting scheme. But no-one can throw \$190m around like a drunken sailor. That is just throwing good money after bad, particularly when no-one knows where it is going.

A former Federal Minister, the marvellous Mr Sinclair, who did so much for the sugar industry during his regime, came to Queensland and said—surprise, surprise!—that if the Federal Opposition was returned to Government, it would introduce an underwriting scheme. I know that Mr Sinclair has a reputation for saying anything at all, but the obvious question is: why, if they are now in a position to introduce an underwriting scheme, did they not introduce an underwriting scheme when they were in power for goodness knows how long? The time to introduce underwriting schemes, incidentally, is when the industry is in fairly good shape. One cannot wait until it is in the state it is today and then come in with an open cheque-book and solve all the problems.

I will tell members what Mr Sinclair did say about an underwriting scheme while he was here in Queensland. An article in "Queensland Country Life" of 29 February stated—

"Mr Sinclair also pledged an opposition commitment to reduce government interference in private enterprises such as the sugar industry.

'The National Party believes the industry must be left to get on with the job as far as possible,' he said."

Good old Mr Sinclair!

The second promise made by the Federal Government was to administer a new maximum domestic price scheme. That was signed on schedule by 1 July. It increased the price of sugar by \$27.63 per tonne to a total of \$508 per tonne. I know that that increase was not as great as some sections of the industry wanted, but I am sure that Government members will agree—I will be interested to hear from them if they do not—that most responsible sectors of the sugar industry agreed that it was probably as far as the Government could go. If the increase in the domestic price was too great, that would leave the way open for the starch-based sweeteners—I know that the member for Mirani uses starch-based sweeteners—the high-fructose corn syrups and other artificial sweeteners to take over, particularly in the confectionery market, or at least make large inroads into that market. It would then be too late for the industry to come back and say, "We will reduce prices." So that was the most responsible way of increasing the domestic price of sugar.

The third promise made by the Federal Government was to retain the import embargo on sugar. The Industries Assistance Commission opposed that embargo on the grounds that it provided no real assistance to the sugar industry. I tend to think that Mr Kerin believes that it is probably not providing any assistance either. However, out of deference to the sugar industry, he agreed to retain the embargo.

The fourth promise was to provide rural reconstruction funds or carry-on finance for those growers who were in difficulty and having trouble carrying on.

Last year the Federal Government provided \$10m. After listening to the screams about \$5m this year from Government members, one would not think that the Federal Government provided anything. The member for Mirani made the point tonight that the money is being provided only by way of loans. An industry reaches the stage at which loans, even at a reduced interest rate, do not achieve anything because, in simple economic terms, the industry cannot borrow to pay the interest.

I believe that Mr Hawke has written to the Premier suggesting that the Federal Government would agree to money being taken out of what is called Part A of the Rural Adjustment Scheme and put into Part B and used as carry-on finance. It is up to the Queensland Government to look at its priorities and decide whether it will make that \$4m available to sugar farmers who are in difficulty, or use it in some other way.

**Mr Randell:** Didn't you say that they could not afford any more loans?

**Mr De LACY:** I said that an industry gets to the stage at which it cannot borrow its way out of trouble and other means of assistance have to be provided.

**Mr Randell:** An underwriting scheme?

**Mr De LACY:** Sure.

**Mr Randell:** Then why don't you back what we have done?

**Mr De LACY:** There was a Government of the honourable member's political persuasion in office in Canberra from 1975. What happened to it? Did it introduce an underwriting scheme?

**Mr Randell:** If they had been there, we would have had the scheme.

**Mr De LACY:** The honourable member may have faith in Mr Sinclair and his promises, but I do not, and I know that sugar farmers do not. They treat him with contempt because he treated them with contempt. The Federal National Party and the State National Party believe that the farmers' vote is spoken for, so they do not have to worry about it. They say, "They will always vote for us, so let us go into the cities or somewhere else and see if we can pick up a few votes."

Mr Sinclair came to north Queensland and attacked the Federal Labor Government for the way in which it had reduced funding under the Rural Adjustment Scheme from \$35m in 1983-84 to \$25m in 1984-85. What he conveniently failed to mention was that in 1982-83, during the greatest drought this century, his Government provided \$17m as funding under the Rural Adjustment Scheme. When the Federal Labor Government came to power, it doubled the amount of money available under the scheme.

While I am speaking about funding under the Rural Adjustment Scheme—the member for Bundaberg also mentioned that there seems to have been quite a bit fiddling by the State Government with its funding under the Rural Adjustment Scheme. It seems to me that the State Government has been devious, if not dishonest. I know that the member for Bundaberg made that point, but it is such a good point that I think it is worth repeating.

The honourable member said in a press release that \$10m had been withdrawn from the Rural Reconstruction Board and given to the co-operative sugar mills. I do not think it is a bad thing that the money went to the co-operative sugar mills; in fact,

I think it is a good thing. The Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer, that economic giant who sits on the Government side assisting the Premier and Treasurer, came back very quickly—he must have had his spies out in the country/press—and attacked my colleague and said that funds provided to sugar-cane farmers for carry-on assistance through the Rural Reconstruction Board had no connection with the \$10m in loans to the co-operative mills.

**Mr Randell:** Who said that?

**Mr De LACY:** The Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer (Mr Gunn). He said that the \$10m provided in loans to co-operative mills had been recovered from consolidated revenue and from certain special funds.

*Time expired.*

**Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (8.4 p.m.):** Obviously the honourable member for Cairns is still suffering from jet lag from his recent ride on a push-bike. In fact, it is interesting to note that, because he took a full week away from Parliament, he lost touch with the sugar industry.

I do not plan to make a long speech or to use up the time of the House. I do plan to pass on to the House the benefit of the latest information that comes direct from the farmers. After all, we are talking about the effect that this Bill will have on them.

Unfortunately, I was unable to be in the House this afternoon to hear the debate on this Bill. However, to get their most up-to-date views, I have taken the time to communicate with and contact those members of the Queensland Cane Growers Council who represent the producers in this State.

Only a few moments ago I spoke with Mr Les Searle, who is the junior vice-president of the Queensland Cane Growers Council. Mr Soper is overseas and Mr Day is on his way overseas. Because those two gentlemen are away, Mr Searle is the leading spokesman for cane-growers in Queensland. Today Mr Searle spoke with Keith Day, who was moving through Townsville on his way overseas. He discussed with Mr Day the implications of the Bill and sought his attitude to the amendments.

It is obvious that the ALP is out of touch with the needs and express concerns of the industry and does not have the up-to-date information.

In 1982, when amendments were introduced to the Sugar Acquisition Act by the then Minister for Primary Industries (Mr Ahern), the cane-growers met and conveyed their views and concerns to him. The Queensland Cane Growers Council said that Mr Ahern did everything that he said he would do after the introduction of the amendments. The present Minister for Primary Industries (Mr Neil Turner) is continuing the good work of Mr Ahern.

I have been informed directly by Mr Searle, who was in touch with Mr Day and Mr Belcher, that the industry is in agreement on the amendments. The industry agrees that there is a need to roll over the legislation. The inquiry that was originally planned would have been held between the months of April and October. Had that inquiry started then, it would have destroyed industry confidence in the review that is presently being carried out.

**Mr De LACY:** I rise to a point of order. I thought that the member for Burdekin said that he spoke with Mr Day today. To my knowledge, Mr Day is overseas.

**Honourable Members interjected.**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row):** Order! I will have silence in the Chamber. I ask the member for Cairns to repeat his point of order because I could not hear it above the noise in the Chamber.

**Mr De LACY:** The member for Burdekin made an incorrect statement. He said that he spoke with Mr Day today, but, as I understand it, Mr Day left for overseas today.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I ask the member for Burdekin to clarify his remark.

**Mr STONEMAN:** I would be delighted to. Obviously the bike ride of the member for Cairns is still ringing in his ears. I did not say that I spoke with Mr Day. I said that I spoke with Mr Searle who spoke with Mr Day. Mr Day travelled through Townsville this afternoon on his way to meet an international flight going to Paris. I am sorry to disillusion the member for Cairns, but he is way out. That is what I said, and that is the fact. Mr Day was in Townsville today, he was spoken to by Mr Searle and I spoke to Mr Searle.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I think that there has been enough levity; I ask that it cease. The honourable member for Burdekin will continue with his speech.

**Mr STONEMAN:** I note that, because they have made a joke out of it, Opposition members treat Mr Day's name with some contempt.

**Mr Comben** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr STONEMAN:** Opposition members are amused with the words "Day" and "today". I do not think that that will go unnoticed in the industry.

**Mr De Lacy:** Your comments about him won't go unnoticed because he does not support it, and if you can say that he supports this legislation, that won't go unnoticed.

**Mr STONEMAN:** I did not say that Mr Day accepted it; I said that he is quite happy to accept the need to roll over this legislation, because without it the review that is currently going on within the industry could not be carried out.

As I understand it, the industry leaders have considered the implications of the Bill and accept the need to roll over the provisions. They have expressed very real concern, just as they expressed it in 1982. I do not walk away from their expressions of concern as it would be irresponsible to do so. I note those expressions of concern, and the industry leaders have noted them. However, the total package that is accepted is the need to roll over the provision of the Bill.

The concerns that have been expressed are that the Sugar Board appeared to be taking on extra powers to use sugar funds to conduct research into matters relating to the quality of sugar and material from which sugar is made. I am unable to comment on the concern that has been expressed. However, I have an obligation to pass the expressions of concern on to this House. That some sections of the sugar industry express grave concern does not mean that they do not accept the provisions of the Bill. They have adopted a realistic attitude, for which I applaud them. Nothing that they have said can be construed as meaning that they are totally in agreement with everything that was done. However, the total package has been accepted.

As I mentioned earlier, next week the industry leaders are meeting with the Minister. I have his assurance that he is mindful of their concern, just as I am positive that the Minister has the best interests of the industry at heart. I have travelled with him throughout the length and breadth of the State and I know that he has talked to industry leaders, farmers and others. Quite unlike members of the Opposition, the Minister is totally in touch with the industry. I commend his attitude and sincerity in introducing the Bill.

**Hon. N. J. TURNER** (Warrego—Minister for Primary Industries) (8.13 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contribution to the debate. I have listened

to some illogical and irrational speeches that must cause the members who made them concern when eventually they return to their cane-growing electorates.

The honourable member for Mourilyan (Mr Eaton) led the debate for the Australian Labor Party. He said that the proposal for the amendment was not discussed with the sugar industry and implied that I did not have consultations or discussions with the industry.

I listen to the elected bodies of industries. If the president of the United Graziers Association was to come to me with a particular proposal concerning the grazing industry, I would not see my responsibility as having to go to every primary producer in Queensland and ask him whether he is individually in favour of the proposal.

I am on record, as was my predecessor, Mr Ahern, as expressing my conviction that unity within the sugar industry is of vital importance. To that end, I make it a rule to consult with representatives of all Queensland sugar industry organisations on industry matters. Furthermore, as far as it is administratively possible, I invite industry organisations to consult with me together.

Since I was appointed Minister for Primary Industries, I have visited numerous sugar areas in the State, I have attended Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations field days, I have been to domestic sugar agreement talks with Mr Kerin, I have attended International Sugar Agreement talks in Geneva, I have attended several Agricultural Council meetings at which sugar industry matters were discussed, and I have visited many mills and farms throughout the State. I shall continue to encourage unity within the industry.

It is unfortunate that some members have seen fit to use this debate for the purpose of promoting divisions that can only do harm to the industry.

I shall take the trouble to read and table a letter that sets out the reasoning behind the Government's support for this Bill. I am not sure whether the honourable member for Mirani has already tabled a copy of this letter.

I received the following letter dated 8 May 1984 from the Queensland Sugar Industry Association. It states—

“Dear Minister,

On 23 March we advised you of the unanimous resolution of the joint meeting of the Executives of our Associations held on that day, to commence forthwith a full scale study into industry practices and regulations.

This is the first step in a process of maximising economic efficiency which is essential if the industry is to retain its internationally competitive position as a major world sugar producer and exporter.

We also advised you that the joint meeting on 23 March decided that if there were issues which did not yield to resolution by consensus, the Queensland Government will, if necessary, be asked to establish a formal inquiry involving the industry to look into those outstanding issues and recommend appropriate action.

We are now planning the industry-wide study which we believe can be completed within about 18 months. The first stage in this consultation process has already commenced.

If a formal inquiry is then necessary, it would take place immediately following this consultation process. We foresee that such a programme would enable any legislative changes arising out of the industry study, if acceptable to the Government, or from an inquiry, to be enacted in time for the commencement of the 1987 season.

Your predecessor in office proposed at the time of introducing the amending legislation that an inquiry be held in relation to the Sugar Acquisition Act prior to the ‘sunset clauses’ in that Act taking effect in October.

Since the issues likely to be canvassed in such an inquiry will be among other matters considered in the industry study, it would appear appropriate for the inquiry

not to be held until the industry study and consultation process has been properly exhausted.

If you concur on that course of action, extension of the sunset provision in the Sugar Acquisition Act would be necessary.

When you consider it propitious to announce such a extension publicly, commitment to an inquiry which would examine the Sugar Acquisition Act could be reconfirmed. Importantly, it could be advised that the inquiry would also take account of the outcome of the consultation phase of the industry review programme."

That is precisely what the Government is doing. The letter is signed by Mr D. C. Watson, president of the Australian Sugar Producers Association Limited; Mr R. Deicke, chairman of the Proprietary Sugar Millers Association Pty Ltd; Mr J. Rigby, chairman of the Co-operative Sugar Millers Association Ltd; and Mr Belcher, for Mr F. J. Soper, chairman of the Queensland Cane Growers Council. That is the support that the Government received for its industry proposal.

I point out to the member for Mourilyan (Mr Eaton) that the Queensland Cane Growers Council is a 30-man council, with one councillor being a representative from each mill area. The council conducts its own affairs. It is not my intention to interfere with the council's internal affairs. A great deal has been said about millers and growers. A tremendous amount of criticism has been levelled.

The following letter, which is dated 4 October, was sent by the Mackay Sugar Manufacturers Association to Mr J. Kerin, the Federal Minister for Primary Industry—

"Dear Minister,

I write on behalf of the Members of the Mackay Sugar Manufacturers Association representing all the Sugar Factories of the Mackay Proserpine region, in response to your press release of 17th September.

We are concerned at your assertion that a major factor in the present plight of the sugar industry was the Queensland Government's rash action in encouraging the Industry to expand. We are further concerned at your contention that cane growers have had little input or influence over expansion decisions, and the inference therefrom that millers have exerted undue influence, and have in fact forced expansion upon growers.

We can only assume that you have been misinformed as to the mechanism by which expansion decisions have been arrived at. In every case, the Industry has first been invited to express its opinion, at public hearings before the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board. The proceedings of these hearings are themselves a public record, and the transcripts that contain submissions from every mill and every mill suppliers committee in the Industry. Of the thirty mills which make up the Queensland Industry, the extent of support for moves to expand may most easily be gauged by tabulation from the information in the transcripts the numbers of organisations which opposed expansion of production. They are as follows:—

Year	No. of Mills	No. of Mill Suppliers Committees
1975 (January) . . . . .	Nil	Nil
1980 (July) . . . . .	2	2
1980 (December) . . . . .	2	3
1981 (December) . . . . .	1	2
1982 (December) . . . . .	2	3

It is therefore obvious that any recommendation by the Central Board to the Queensland Minister for Primary Industry which favoured expansion would have reflected the overwhelming support of the Industry as a whole for such a move. The Government through the Minister, have therefore done nothing other than to follow the wishes of the Industry.

It would also be obvious from the information tabled above that there was no one section of the Industry, either miller or grower which exerted undue influence on the Industry as a whole to expand. Thus any assertion that the milling side of the Industry in particular forced an expansion is clearly incorrect."

The member for Mulgrave touched on a number of issues. In my second-reading speech, I gave the reasons for the delay in holding the inquiry. We were waiting on the outcome of the Industries Assistance Commission report, particularly in relation to the embargo. I am pleased to say that we were successful in retaining the embargo. There were protracted talks on the International Sugar Agreement. Now an internal review is taking place within the industry. That, I point out, is at the industry's request and should have the support of everyone associated with the industry. Nevertheless, I appreciate the views put forward by the honourable member for Mulgrave.

The member for Bundaberg spoke about costs. In order to give honourable members an idea of the research costs funded by the Sugar Board, I point out that in 1983 the cost to growers was 1.5c per tonne of cane, and it is estimated that in 1984 it will be 1.3c a tonne. I remind him that co-operatives are grower-owned mills and that, therefore, moneys lent to them directly benefit growers.

I thank the honourable member for Mirani for his contribution. He has an intimate knowledge of the industry as a grower and as a member representing the major cane-growing area of the State. He has displayed his knowledge and expertise in sugar matters.

The honourable member for Cairns said that it was the Minister against the rest of the world and that no-one was on side. If he had listened earlier, he would have heard me relate the sections of the industry that support the amendment. The review under way in the industry has the industry's support. He spoke about underwriting the industry. The Federal Government was presented with a properly costed underwriting scheme by the Queensland Cane Growers Council. The Federal Government's sympathetic consideration of the scheme is having a longer run than "Blue Hills"

The member for Cairns spoke about the submission put by the super-wet belt, asking for my support for that submission. My support was forthcoming, as I indicated to the Federal Minister for Primary Industry. The honourable member spoke about the increase in the first delivery advance to cane-growers from \$160 to \$180 per tonne. It was tremendously important to put cash into the pockets of people in the industry. We asked the Federal Government to pick up the interest component; but, like our submission on Rural Adjustment Scheme funding, the request fell on deaf ears. I point out that the industry, including many of the growers, was by no means unanimous on the desirability of increasing the advance to \$180 per tonne.

A regionally based Rural Adjustment Scheme was mentioned by the member for Cairns. Regional needs can be coped with under the present system as they come to hand. As he is well aware, we have made \$5m available to the Rural Adjustment Scheme. On numerous occasions I have contacted Mr Kerin. I will be meeting him on the 24th of this month for further discussions about assistance for the Queensland sugar industry. When I answered a question in Parliament yesterday, I expressed my belief that Mr Kerin is sympathetic to the sugar industry and primary industries generally in many ways, but that his major problem is obtaining financial assistance through a socialist Cabinet that is not desirous of helping primary industries.

The honourable member for Cairns said that, following the break-down of the Geneva talks on the International Sugar Agreement, I supposedly called for an expansion of the industry. At that time Australia was trying to get a quota of 2.7 million tonnes of a world quota of 20.8 million tonnes. Australia was being asked to take a lower reference export availability. The industry would have been severely disadvantaged if it had accepted the proposals that were put forward, proposals that would have been advantageous to Cuba, the European Economic Community and other countries. I made the point that, with the stocks the industry had in hand, it should go out to try to capture as many markets as it could. That was in the industry's interests. The alternative

must be considered. If at some time in the future further negotiations are to take place round the table to attempt to establish another International Sugar Agreement and if the industry in Australia remains static or declines further, when Australia returns to the negotiating table with Cuba, Brazil, Argentina, the EEC and other countries, all of which will have expanded, Australia will have no hope of getting 2.7 million tonnes at REA. Australia would probably be offered about 1 million tonnes.

**Mr Yewdale:** Mr Ahern gave you a sick baby.

**Mr TURNER:** No, that is not so. The former Minister handled the portfolio quite well.

I have the support of the industry in what is being done and I confirmed that by reading a list of the industry organisations that support the Government in the introduction of the Bill.

The Opposition attacked the grower representation on the Sugar Board. The growers' representative on the Sugar Board (Mr Harry Bonanno) has worked tirelessly for the industry. His honesty and independence has not been, and could not be, called into question.

The honourable member for Burdekin made what I believe to be a sensible and constructive contribution to the debate. The sugar industry faces tremendous problems, brought about chiefly by the fact that 80 per cent of the product is sold on world markets which are presently returning very depressed prices.

The Queensland Government has a wonderful track record in its assistance to the sugar industry. In recent years it has made available \$30m in assistance. The Government is paying half the cost of the internal review that is currently under way at a cost of \$175,000 and the Government has picked up the interest component, which the Federal Government would not pick up, on the first delivery advance, and lifted it from \$150 to \$180 a tonne. In the corresponding period, the Federal Government has contributed only \$10m. The industry is of national importance. Because the Federal Government takes the major share of taxation from the industry, which returns a tremendous amount of national export income earnings to this country, and has done so over a considerable period of time, the Federal Government has a responsibility to the industry. However, it has abrogated that responsibility.

The industry agrees with the Bill presented to the House. I am not surprised that a number of members of the Labor Party have objected to it, but it has the support of the industry. I thank honourable members for their contribution to the debate.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time (Mr Turner's motion)—put; and the House divided—

Ayes, 41			Noes, 24	
Ahern	Kaus		Burns	
Alison	Knox		Campbell	
Austin	Lane		D'Arcy	
Bailey	Lickiss		De Lacy	
Bjelke-Petersen	Littleproud		Eaton	
Booth	McKechnie		Fouras	
Borbidge	McPhie		Hamill	
Cahill	Newton		Mackenroth	
Chapman	Powell		McElligott	
Cooper	Randell		Milliner	
Elliott	Simpson		Palaszczuk	
FitzGerald	Stephan		Prest	
Gibbs I. J.	Stoneman		Price	
Glasson	Tenni		Scott	
Goleby	Turner		Underwood	
Gunn	Wharton		Vaughan	
Gygar	White		Veivers	
Harper			Warburton	
Harvey			Warner A. M.	
Henderson	<i>Tellers</i>		Wilson	<i>Tellers</i>
Jennings	Lingard		Wright	Davis
Katter	Neal		Yewdale	Comben

Resolved in the affirmative.

### Committee

Mr Booth (Warwick) in the chair; Hon N. J. Turner (Warrego—Minister for Primary Industries) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of s. 4C; Operation of ss. 4 and 4B—

**Mr EATON (8.38 p.m.):** This clause is the crux of the whole argument. It gives the Sugar Board authority to use farmers' money. That is the amendment which has caused concern since it was introduced two years ago.

The Opposition would like to know why the farmers could not have been better informed by the Minister or by the four industry organisations that wrote to the Minister requesting that the provisions be extended. This matter will create a bit of turmoil in north Queensland.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth):** Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. This is the important clause, and it is only fair that we should hear the honourable member.

**Mr EATON:** I do not doubt the statement that the Minister made, but we, as elected members of Parliament, were asked to fight this case. We were given certain information. The only occasion on which I used a name in the debate tonight was when I quoted a newspaper report. I would have liked to name several people, but I do not believe that this is the place in which people should be castigated. When I return to the north, I will certainly do some very strong talking. Some of the information that I was given is in conflict with what the Minister has stated. The Minister was good enough to put the matter in black and white in answer to a question. Many questions will have to be answered about this clause.

This Minister is well aware of the plight of the sugar industry. The Government is giving an open cheque to the Sugar Board. It could send a man to do some fishing in a creek and claim that he was engaged in research. The board is being given an open cheque in that it is not accountable to anyone.

The concern expressed by the people who approached me was justified. Earlier, I said that the Minister received the request on 8 May. The Minister did not make a public statement and the four industry organisations who made the request did not make a public statement. Had that request been made of the Federal Government, criticism of the Government would have appeared on television and every news media outlet in Australia. The industry organisations have acted in a deceitful manner, and someone has a lot of answering to do. No doubt it will all come out in the wash. Opposition members have lost the day in this debate, but at least they fought the fight. They must accept that a numbers game is played in this Parliament. They might have been morally right but, without the numbers, they were technically wrong. That is the whole crux of the argument.

**Mr De LACY:** I have in my possession two documents that were referred to during the debate at the second-reading stage. One is a lengthy telex from the Innisfail district cane-growers executive. It was read into "Hansard" by the member for Mourilyan. That executive appealed to the Premier and Treasurer and to the Minister for Primary Industries to not extend the sunset clause along these lines—

"The executive requests the Minister refrain from taking any further action to extend the sunset clause and seeks your support to have the proposal deferred."

Verbal assurances have been received from the Cairns district cane-growers executive that it is totally opposed to the sunset clause. Also in my possession is an open letter from that executive which states that the executive was bitterly opposed to the 1982

amendments. Am I to understand that the Minister is to ignore the wishes of all far-north Queensland cane-growers?

**Mr TURNER:** In reply to the honourable member for Mourilyan—if I had to make a public statement with every letter that comes into my office, I would do nothing but make public statements. This morning, I answered a question from the honourable member in relation to which organisations approached me and when they approached me about supporting the Bill being debated this evening. I have tabled a letter and listed the organisations that have supported this Bill.

I do not doubt that the member for Cairns has letters from different sections within the industry that oppose this Bill. The Bill was put forward on the basis of the support that the Government has received from organisations within the industry and because the sunset clause ended at the end of October. It is the intention of the Government to proceed with the legislation.

**Mr EATON:** Because four organisations were so deceitful in their approach to the Minister, and because the extension to the sunset clause gives the Sugar Board power to deduct money from the farmers, there is nothing to stop the industry organisations from being deceitful in the future.

The four organisations that I have referred to have lost a lot of credibility today, particularly as a result of the honest answer given by the Minister this morning. In the north, many questions will need to be answered. The farmers were not informed of developments by their representatives on the industry organisations. Among those are the four organisations to which I have referred.

I do not put the blame on the Minister. He could have made a public statement, but I understand that he must maintain confidentiality. In some situations a confidence cannot be broken. Although the Minister might be politically opposed to me, I do not expect him to break a confidence when he is dealing with problems in the industry. The farmers were concerned that no public statement was made, and that is the point that I wanted to make. Five months ago, negotiations were begun to extend the sunset clause in the Bill. The action of the industry organisations has concerned the cane-growers.

**Mr TURNER:** I did not invent the letter or write it myself. I had the support of those organisations and the duly elected members of those organisations. I would suggest that the growers, if they are concerned, take the matter up with their organisation.

**Mr CAMPBELL:** The Minister referred to a letter from the Mackay Sugar Manufacturing Association in which it is said that, before any expansion is carried out, public hearings are conducted. Can the Minister tell me why the Government and the industry departed from accepted practice and did not conduct public hearings before the legislation was introduced in 1982 and before this sunset clause was brought forward?

**Mr TURNER:** When referring to the letter, I made a point in relation to expansion in the industry. I read the whole of the letter and had it recorded in "Hansard". The mechanism that applies to expansion and public hearings is quite obvious. I have tabled the letters that I have received from the various organisations. I do not think I have to walk along Queen Street wearing a billboard displaying every letter that the Department of Primary Industries receives setting out the opinions held by various organisations. The support of the industry has been reiterated over and over again this evening. I do not see any point in prolonging the debate.

**Mr CAMPBELL:** Back in October 1982, the former Minister for Primary Industries (Mr Ahern) said that, under the sunset clause, some significant provisions in the Bill would apply only until 31 October 1984. He added that, in the meantime, an inquiry would be held into the sugar industry.

Honourable members have been advised that a letter was received from the sugar industry organisations in March 1984. Can the Minister tell me what action the

Government took between October 1982 and March 1984? Over that period of 18 months why was not something done?

**Mr TURNER:** I was not a Minister or the Minister for Primary Industries in 1982. I have been Minister for approximately nine months, from a date only a few months before this matter came forward. I have indicated precisely what transpired in the intervening period. The course of action taken by the Government and the industry up till now is quite obvious.

**Mr CAMPBELL:** In other words, the Minister is saying that the Government did nothing between October 1982 and March 1984 to implement this inquiry.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

### Third Reading

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

### KANGAROO POINT LAND DEVELOPMENT BILL

**Hon. W. H. GLASSON** (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide for the taking and acquisition of certain land at Kangaroo Point, Brisbane, the development of such land and the alienation thereof and for related purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

### First Reading

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

### Second Reading

**Hon. W. H. GLASSON** (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police) (8.50 p.m.): I move—

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

The purpose of the Bill is to provide for the acquisition of certain small parcels of land adjoining the former Evans Deakin shipyard site at Kangaroo Point. The lands are to be acquired with a view to improving the potential of the site for redevelopment and to give it a frontage to the Bradfield Highway, which is the southern approach to the Story Bridge.

The Bill also provides for the lands taken to be developed by demolition or otherwise as necessary to facilitate the overall redevelopment of the site, and for the ultimate disposal of the whole site by the Crown.

The schedule at the end of the Bill indicates the large portion 301, which is the bulk of the former shipyard site, and which is Crown land, and the adjacent small freehold portions to be acquired to enhance the site. A small severed part of the former lease area is not dealt with, as its best use may be inclusion in the Yungaba migrant centre reserve, which it adjoins. It is a separate entity and is to be dealt with separately.

Evans Deakin Industries Limited closed its shipyard during 1975-76 and its special lease over the area was surrendered to the Crown on 31 March 1977. The area's use for ship-building purposes can be traced back to the last century and its use as a shipyard virtually ended with the construction of the 80 000-tonne “Robert Miller” completed in 1974. Honourable members will recall it as the ship which almost caused a major disaster during the 1974 floods.

As the area could no longer be used economically for ship-building purposes, the Government commissioned a report from consulting engineers and town-planners, Cardno

and Davies, on the best long-term use of the area. The consultants presented a very comprehensive report in 1980. They saw the site as being very valuable and well suited to development for quality medium density residential use such as home units and town houses. They also suggested that the residential use could be supplemented by ancillary uses, such as conversion of the dock to a marina, a yacht club/residential centre, limited professional offices and local shopping. The possibility of an international standard hotel was also canvassed in the report.

In recommending these uses, the consultants had regard to the closure of ship-building activities and the more diversified uses of the Kangaroo Point area in recent times. These uses include the Mount Olivet Hospital, Travelodge and other motels, the technical college and a general trend towards apartment dwelling with some tower blocks of home units. It is noted that the consultants and planners generally see a need for inner city residential areas to support the vital city business centre.

A report in "The Courier-Mail" of 24 February 1984 draws attention to the possibilities of Kangaroo Point for medium-density residential development as it is within a short ferry ride of the city. The newspaper report draws attention to the possibility of a major residential-type development on the shipyard site. It mentions the possibility of a similar development on the site now occupied by Peters Slip and a further proposal for a 16-level home unit building with a marina further to the north. It also refers to a further possible residential-type development adjacent to the shipyard site on the northern side of Darragh Street.

The newspaper article quoted a well-known city real estate agent's opinion that, "Kangaroo Point needed one large pioneer development and many more would follow." The report concluded with the opinion that, "If this site was in Sydney, it would have been developed and redeveloped by now."

The consultants submitted two possible schemes for development. The first scheme was based on the existing restricted site of the former shipyard lease. The second scheme provided for the extension of the site to the Bradfield Highway and, on the north, to Rotherham Street. The second and larger alternative site had the advantage of ensuring a homogenous residential area. The larger area could not be prejudiced by low-standard residential, warehouses, or industrial sites nearby and would have had frontage to the highway. By contrast, the existing site suffered badly from the irregular shape, and the long northern tip was of little practical use. Access was inferior, and there was a risk of poor adjoining structures remaining.

After consideration, the Government decided that it should endeavour to improve the site by acquiring a reduced privately owned area as now proposed, together with the closure of Ferry Street and Prospect Street and their inclusion in the site. Presently, these streets reach a dead end on the former shipyard site.

In deciding on that compromise, the Government felt that Brisbane is very fortunate in having an area of 5.9 ha available so close to the central city, and that it should make the most of the site by at least acquiring the small areas proposed to enhance its redevelopment potential. Although this will no doubt cause inconvenience to the landholders involved, it is considered essential in the long-term public interest and in the interests of good planning and the orderly redevelopment of the immediate locality.

The result of the acquisition will be that a large composite site will be available. Applications will then be called on an Australia-wide, and possibly a world-wide, basis for development proposals. The large area and proximity to the city should attract the best-equipped developers available to come forward with imaginative concepts for the development of the area. Those may or may not be along the lines of the former consultant's suggestions but will certainly be required to be oriented towards quality medium-density residential use.

The purchase price of the whole area for redevelopment will more than compensate the State for the outlays on the small areas to be acquired. The site is very valuable,

and developers would be required to indicate what they would be prepared to offer the Crown in return for the right to develop and use or market the site.

The Government has already made a good start on the acquisition of the small parcels of land, which are in 10 different ownerships. To date, amicable settlements have been effected with five owners by the Land Administration Commission. The Bill provides for validation of these acquisitions and their inclusion in the site for redevelopment. It was considered that one short piece of legislation would provide for the tidying up of the site and allow for any redevelopment needed before the site was offered. There was a need for simple legislation to cover the acquisitions to date, further acquisitions in terms of the Acquisition of Land Act, any necessary demolition or improvement and the resale of the whole site. I can assure honourable members that all land-holders whose properties are acquired will be treated with fairness and every consideration possible.

Although part of the area is subject to flooding during major floods, that can be overcome by correct development plans. There is also the opportunity to use the existing dry-dock facility for aquatic pursuits.

The Government has considered the possibility of the use of the area for some public facility, but has concluded that, in the interests of better long-term planning for the city, proposals for a prestige privately funded development of a residential type should be sought. The site has obvious area limitations for purposes other than high-rise facilities and would involve serious limitations and problems if used for any major public utility. Having regard to the major development at the Cultural Centre and the areas that will become available from the Expo redevelopment, the best use of the subject area will be for a privately funded development that will add to overall inner-city planning and modernisation. This type of high-rise development can best utilise the available site.

The consultants, in their report to which I have previously referred, indicated that, after considering the planning concepts of the Brisbane City Council and the policy of the Brisbane Development Association, there was consensus with their view that inner-city areas, including Kangaroo Point, should appropriately be considered as sites for inner-city living.

I would mention that in any development plan eventually accepted, the needs of the public in relation to access along the river-bank will be considered important. It would be expected that any development will be a major aesthetic and practical facility for the benefit of the city of Brisbane.

In conclusion, I suggest that the Government would be remiss in its responsibilities to the city of Brisbane if it failed to involve itself to the limited extent proposed in improving the site. This is regarded as the least that should be done to give a good, consolidated site.

I believe that the Government's efforts could result in a development of immeasurable value for the city of Brisbane and in something in which we can all take pride.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Prest, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 9.1 p.m.