

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 1986

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

TUESDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 1986

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr Speaker—

Government Loan Bill;

Land Act Amendment Bill;

Off-shore Facilities Bill;

Pyramid Selling Schemes (Elimination) Act Amendment Bill;

Roman Catholic Church Lands Act Amendment Bill;

Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT**Public Accounts**

Mr SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Auditor-General of his report on his audit of the Public Accounts for the year ended 30 June 1986.

Ordered to be printed.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Railway Staff Levels, Bundaberg

From Mr Powell (108 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will not implement the proposed reduction in railway staff levels at Bundaberg.

[A similar petition was received from Mr Campbell (111 signatories).]

One Vote, One Value Legislation

From Mr Burns (82 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will revoke present legislation on electoral boundaries and replace it with legislation based on one vote, one value.

Bayside Bus Company, Wynnum and Manly Services

From Mr Burns (463 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will review the licence to the Bayside bus company if adequate services cannot be provided in Wynnum and Manly.

Housing Commission Estate, Morris and Gynther Roads, Rothwell

From Mr White (291 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take action to ensure that 50 per cent of the Housing Commission estate at Morris and Gynther Roads, Rothwell is sold on the open market.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

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

Report. Departmental Accounts Subsidiary to the Public Accounts for the year ended 30 June 1986.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Proclamation under the Diseases in Plants Act 1929-1972

Orders in Council under—

Constitution Acts Amendment Act 1971-1983

Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977-1981

Queensland International Tourist Centre Agreement Act 1978

City of Brisbane Market Act 1960-1985 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984

Meat Industry Act 1965-1984

Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1985

Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1985 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984

Urban Public Passenger Transport Act 1984 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982

Regulations under—

Marine Parks Act 1982

Public Service Act 1922-1978

Agricultural Standards Act 1952-1981

Brands Act 1915-1979

Diseases in Plants Act 1929-1972

Fishing Industry Organization and Marketing Act 1982-1985

Poultry Industry Act 1946-1984

Reports—

Barley Marketing Board (Qld) for the year ended 30 June 1985

Queensland Fish Board for the year ended 30 June 1985

Bread Industry Committee of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1986.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Auditing of Queensland Day Committee Accounts

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (11.3 a.m.), by leave: Mr Speaker, since the House rose last Tuesday afternoon, the Leader of the Opposition has seen fit to make numerous statements to the media, which have received wide publicity, alleging that I misled the House in an answer that I gave on Tuesday morning, 26 August 1986, on Government auditing of the Queensland Day Committee. I most certainly have not misled the House.

The basis of the claim by the Leader of the Opposition appears to be that the Crown prosecutor in the District Court trial of Judith Anne Callaghan, Mr D. Bullock, made a statement that no audit was conducted in relation to the Queensland Day Committee up to the year 1984-85, whereas I had informed the House that it was untrue that no audit of the financial activities of the Queensland Day Committee had been carried out by the Auditor-General's Department between the time when the committee began operation in May 1981 and 1984-85.

The facts speak for themselves. I hope that the representatives of the media here today will give as much publicity to my remarks as they have given to the misleading statements of the Leader of the Opposition in recent days.

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Wolston.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: In a ministerial statement that I made to the House on Tuesday, 18 February 1986, I stated, amongst other things, that "funds are allocated to the committee in the Estimates of my department and these funds are audited annually by the Auditor-General. The audit has found no anomalies in the expenditure of these funds whatsoever."

The Crown prosecutor—and this is what the Leader of the Opposition neglected to say—drew to the court's attention that the accounts set up by Mrs Callaghan, without the approval of the Queensland Day Committee, were not authorised and, as a consequence, had not been audited.

I would have thought that even the Leader of the Opposition would understand that the Auditor-General could not audit accounts that he did not know existed. It is as simple as that, but the Leader of the Opposition could not work that out.

For the benefit of the Leader of the Opposition, I state that the Crown prosecutor, when discussing further the audit of the books of the Queensland Day Committee, went on to say—I quote from page 147 of the transcript, lines 19, 20 and 21, so that there cannot be any possible misunderstanding of what the Crown prosecutor informed the trial judge—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! At every sitting of this Parliament I have had to warn honourable members that they will listen to ministerial statements—

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am speaking generally at the moment. I ask honourable members to listen to ministerial statements in silence.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Surely they have to be—

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

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The Crown prosecutor stated—

"Of course there is no suggestion that the Premier's Department wasn't audited in terms of expenditure for the Queensland Day Committee."

So much for the allegation by the Leader of the Opposition that I misled the House! He has been caught out once again. From the information in the ministerial statement that I made last February, he knew that the departmental accounts of the Queensland Day Committee had been fully audited from the time the committee was established—he tried to mislead people on that—but he has continued to make untrue statements to gain cheap publicity for his own political purposes. People are getting used to that from the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Warburton: No I haven't.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The Leader of the Opposition had his say in the media. I am having mine here.

Mr Burns: That is the only place where you—

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

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The Leader of the Opposition has continued to make untrue statements to gain cheap publicity for his own political purposes. All honourable members know that he does that.

I also wish to comment on the media reports that continue to make reference to the Leader of the Opposition's having pursued the public funds scandal for more than nine months. In my ministerial statement of 18 February 1986, I pointed out that neither

the Leader of the Opposition nor any other member of the Labor Party had anything to do with the investigation carried out. The inquiries were initiated by a very dedicated young officer of the Auditor-General's staff. When the matter was brought to my attention, I recommended that it be handed to the police.

Land-rezoning, National Party Headquarters

Hon. R. J. HINZE (South Coast—Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing) (11.13 a.m.), by leave: The totally artificial and contrived so-called controversy which has been created about the rezoning of the site owned by the National Party at the corner of St Paul's Terrace and Boundary Street, Spring Hill, exists only as a desperate exercise in cheap political point-scoring.

For the information of honourable members, I would like to put the record straight. About two years ago, following an approach to me from the National Party, which was seeking permission to redevelop the St Paul's Terrace site which it then owned, I began discussions with the then Lord Mayor, Alderman Roy Harvey. Subsequently, officers of my Local Government Department and the Brisbane City Council continued those discussions.

To try to suggest that either the former Labor council or the present Liberal council was unaware of these continuing discussions about the proposal is complete nonsense. The National Party had proposed redevelopment plans drawn up and these were discussed with council officers. It was established in early discussions that these proposals were too ambitious for the then site and, acting on the advice of council officers, the National Party acquired the corner of the present site; that is, the area covering from 2 to 4 St Paul's Terrace, which is now occupied by a small barber's shop, a newsagency and an empty former bank premises.

In a letter to the Town Clerk dated 21 April last, the Acting Director of Local Government said, among other things—

“The proposed redevelopment would comprise a ground floor, five upper floors and two levels of underground car parking having a capacity for 118 vehicles. The gross floor area proposed is 5,500 square metres and the redevelopment is to be used for the principal purpose of offices.”

That letter continued—

“Advice was obtained from senior council staff that, having regard to the general topography of the area, the level of existing development on nearby lands and traffic densities, the council would offer no objection to the lands being included in the special commercial 5 precinct under the Spring Hill Development Control Plan”.

I think that that letter clearly indicates that the present council administration was aware of the continuing discussions and that its expert officers had raised no objection to the proposed development plans. Any previous objection that council officers had was removed when the National Party acquired that site that I mentioned previously on the corner of St Paul's Terrace and Boundary Street in July 1985.

Cabinet authorised me to initiate procedures so that the proposed development could be proceeded with and, following that decision, the city council was asked for the names and addresses of adjacent property-owners so that they could be notified and asked if they had any objection. On 21 May this year the council replied to the Director of Local Government, supplying those names and addresses and saying that the council was concerned to ensure that amenity of the residential area was not detrimentally affected.

In order to ensure that there would be no detrimental effect, that letter from the council made some careful and detailed requirements. As a result of that advice, preliminary design plans were prepared for the site for consideration by the council, and its senior officers, who examined them, advised that they complied in all respects with the requirements of the special commercial 5 precinct and that the council would offer

no objection to my taking action pursuant to the provisions of section 7 of the City of Brisbane Town Planning Act to exclude the land from the special residential 12 precinct and include it in the special commercial 5 precinct.

At this point it should be noted that the proposed development is considered desirable for the area in that only 25 per cent of the site will be covered, with the balance being high-standard landscaped open space.

On 6 June, in the *Daily Sun*, the appropriate notice appeared outlining the proposed action and inviting any interested party to inspect relevant maps and other particulars at the Local Government Department. Objections could be lodged at any time up to 7 July. A few days earlier, all adjoining property-owners had been advised individually by letter by the Director of Local Government.

I was greatly amused by the claim in one sensational newspaper article that there had been a "storm of protest". There were, in fact, only three objections, none of which came from adjoining property-owners. Nevertheless, those objections were carefully assessed by my Local Government Department officers before their recommendation to me that the proposal should proceed.

Approval of the rezoning followed at Executive Council on 21 August and notice subsequently appeared in the *Queensland Government Gazette*. I make the point also that a prominent sign indicating the nature of the proposal was placed on the site for the month during which objections were invited, giving the information that had been contained in the newspaper public notice; so there can be no suggestion that there was any attempt to try to sneak the approval through.

I regret that I have had to occupy the time of the House in explaining the sequence of events that led to the planned development. However, it is necessary to quell any bizarre attempts to try to make political capital. All necessary procedures and all legal requirements have been followed.

I will not have my good name, integrity and reputation questioned by some self-important upstarts who have not even had the guts to identify themselves. That is intolerable. The facts give the lie to the allegation by the "City Hall spokesman" who, last Saturday in the media, questioned my right to intervene.

What do you think of that, Innes?

Mr SPEAKER: Order, Mr Minister!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr GOSS (Salisbury) (11.19 a.m.), by leave: I refer to reports on the Judith Callaghan case in today's *Courier-Mail* and *Daily Sun* and in yesterday's *Telegraph*. The article in *The Courier-Mail* states that the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General (Mr Harper) "rejected an Opposition claim that he had not sought advice from Crown Law on whether there should be an appeal."

That misrepresents my position, because it was not a member of the Opposition who made that claim. The statement that was published on the front page of last Sunday's edition of the *Sunday Sun* was—

"Mr Harper said he had not consulted Crown Law officers and was not required by law to do this."

That is a quite specific statement.

On the same day, in an interview contained in *The Sunday Mail*, the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General claimed to have made the decision not to appeal on the basis of having read thoroughly the transcript. Again, the Minister made no reference to Crown Law advice.

The report in yesterday's *Telegraph* also requires explanation. The Minister is quoted as saying, in rejecting my criticism, that he had sought and received documents and

that "Mr Goss would not even know about it." What are these confidential documents that are so relevant and, if they are important, why were they not made public during the District Court hearing?

Mr HARPER: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member for Salisbury (Mr Goss) rose in the House and was afforded the privilege of making what he called a personal explanation. He has gone far beyond making a personal explanation in an attempt to clear up a misguided statement he made to the media.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Yewdale: No point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I assure any honourable member who makes a statement such as that made by the member for Rockhampton North that he will be put out of the House. The Minister for Justice and Attorney-General has risen to a point of order. The honourable member for Salisbury claims to have been misrepresented in the press. I ask him to make his personal explanation.

Mr GOSS: I have virtually finished.

I conclude by referring to the comment of the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General about misguided statements. I note that he has not claimed in the House to have been misrepresented by the *Sunday Sun* and *The Sunday Mail*. He has denied those reports only after the Opposition picked them up. When can the House rely on the word of the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General in this case?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order.

Mr HARPER: I find the comments of the honourable member for Salisbury quite offensive, quite unjustified and quite untrue. He is suggesting that what is printed in the *Sunday Sun* is my word. He should have sufficient knowledge of the media to know that that is not correct. Last Sunday the people of Queensland saw the media having two bob each way: one report was accurate, and one was inaccurate. The honourable member for Salisbury has used words that I find offensive. I ask that he withdraw them unreservedly.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Justice and Attorney-General has asked for the words to be withdrawn, and I ask the honourable member for Salisbury to withdraw them.

Mr GOSS: I am happy to withdraw the words if I am told what they are.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GOSS: What words? I made a long statement. Just tell me.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Justice and Attorney-General has pointed out the words. They are withdrawn.

Mr GOSS: I withdraw nothing until the words are specified.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Salisbury under Standing Order No. 123A for contempt for the Chair. The matter is dealt with. Those words have been withdrawn.

HOLIDAY LEAVE LOADING

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah) (11.23 a.m.): Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Orders 49 and 52, I seek leave to move a motion without notice, a copy of which I have circulated.

Leave granted.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I move—

“That this House demands that the Government, in accordance with the usual practice where rulings of general application are involved, is represented before the Industrial Commission in any hearings concerning the 17½ per cent leave loading to give evidence regarding the state of the Queensland economy, the impact of the loading on that economy and such other relevant information to assist the hearing.”

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House): I move—

“That the House do pass to the next business.”

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 70		NOES, 7	
Ahern	Lingard	Hartwig	
Alison	Littleproud	Knox	
Austin	Mackenroth	Lee	
Bailey	McElligott	Lickiss	
Bjelke-Petersen	McKechnie	White	
Booth	McLean		
Borbidge	McPhie		
Braddy	Menzel		
Burns	Miller		
Cahill	Milliner		
Campbell	Muntz		
Chapman	Newton		
Clauson	Palaszczuk		
Comben	Powell		
Cooper	Prest		
D'Arcy	Price		
Davis	Randell		
De Lacy	Row		
Eaton	Shaw		
FitzGerald	Simpson		
Fouras	Smith		
Gibbs, I. J.	Stephan		
Gibbs, R. J.	Stoneman		
Glasson	Tenni		
Goss	Turner		
Gunn	Underwood		
Hamill	Vaughan		
Harper	Veivers		
Harvey	Warburton		
Henderson	Warner, A. M.		
Hinze	Wharton		
Jennings	Yewdale		
Katter			
Kruger	<i>Tellers:</i>	<i>Tellers:</i>	
Lane	Kaus	Innes	
Lester	Neal	Gygar	

Resolved in the affirmative.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

Questions submitted on notice were answered as follows—

1. Kangaroo Quotas

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

“What progress has been made by the committee of scientists set up to consider and review Queensland's kangaroo quota for 1986?”

Answer—

In reply to the question from the honourable member for Balonne, concerning the progress made by the committee of scientists formed to review Queensland's 1986 kangaroo quota and referred to generally as the Sharman committee, the position is that

I have not received any report from the committee to date but feel sure that the time for the committee's report must now be close. I say this because on 25 August 1986 I received a letter to that effect from the Federal Labor Minister, Barry Cohen. However, he stated that he would not do anything about the Queensland quota for 1986, irrespective of what the Sharman committee said. This statement by Mr Cohen represents one of the greatest deceptions perpetrated on the people of rural Queensland and typifies the dealings with the Labor Government.

Let me briefly outline the history of this saga. Honourable members will recall that Barry Cohen and I agreed to the Sharman committee in mid-February 1986 when I refused to accept outright his estimate of what the Queensland quota should be. An interim quota of 1.38 million was agreed and the Sharman committee was formed with the sole purpose of getting the annual kangaroo quota on a scientific basis rather than a political basis. The 1.38 million interim quota was in fact a political figure itself, because the advice given to Mr Cohen indicated that the minimum figure for Queensland for 1986 should have been 1.58 million.

In good faith, and with the intention of getting a program approved for 1986, I agreed to the interim quota of 1.38 million. People associated with the industry will recall, no doubt with some disdain, the pressure being applied by Canberra at that time.

Now the Federal Minister has totally and absolutely reneged on the deal that he made and, were it not for the fact that it is costing Queensland producers a fortune, it could be considered as just another cheap, snide move to placate the radical Left. Coming as it does on top of the highest-taxing Budget in this country's history, it will further guarantee the alienation of country people from the present Canberra Government.

Mr Cohen's reason to me for failing to honour his undertaking is that it would be inappropriate for him to reconsider the quota because there is an Administrative Appeals Tribunal appeal against the 1986 Queensland management plan. Just let me tell honourable members that the first of the 11 grounds of appeal stated against our management program is that the management program does not mention a quota. It is not in the management plan at all and in none of the other grounds of appeal is the size of the quota called into question. Out of respect for the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, I will say no more, as I believe that the extent of Mr Cohen's sincerity has been clearly spelt out.

To sum up, I would say that the progress of the committee looks good—which is more than I can say for the principles of the Commonwealth Government.

2. Effect of Federal Budget on Primary Producers; World Parity Pricing

Mr COOPER asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

“(1) What are the effects of the recent Federal Budget as it pertains to primary producers?”

(2) Will he explain why the Commonwealth Government appears obsessed with forcing Australian primary industries to accept world parity pricing in export sales when the same Government is not making any effort to force the Australian union movement to accept ‘world parity’ in terms of wages and conditions of employment?”

Answer—

(1) I believe the Federal Budget is a huge con trick; it will be known more for what it does not mention than what it contains. As the product of the Government responsible for most of the economic downturn in this country, the Budget has failed to address the real issues of inflation, unemployment and high interest rates.

Unfortunately, the Federal Government has decided not to provide any incentives for the promotion of agricultural exports or incentives to encourage private investment in the rural sector. This investment is necessary to expand and diversify the productive capacity of the rural sector to take advantage of new export opportunities when they

occur. I would suggest that such incentives are crucial if the Federal Government's anticipated trade-led economic recovery is to be achieved.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Answer (continued)—

Instead of providing such incentives, the Government has elected to burden the rural community with additional taxes and charges. These additional taxes—and I ask the honourable member who just interjected to listen to these Federal Government taxes—take the form of—

a 3c per litre increase in petrol and diesel fuel excise, which will have the effect of increasing the cost of transporting rural commodities to markets and increasing the cost of living in rural communities;

an increase in sales tax on wines, fruit juice and flavoured-milk products—another case of the unfair treatment of the rural sector; and finally,

the postponement of the personal income tax reductions and an increase in the Medicare levy, which further demonstrates the inability of the current Labor administration to meet its commitments to the Australian public.

The abolition of the Isolated Patient Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme will also place an additional burden on people in remote areas.

(2) The honourable member has drawn attention to a fundamental inconsistency in the economic strategy which is being pursued by the Commonwealth Government.

The Federal Labor Government's wages policy is currently based on two quite unacceptable principles. These include the retention of the existing inflexible centralised wage fixation system and on an agreement or accord with the Australian union movement with respect to wages and incomes. With these policies in place any deregulation of the Australian labour market is extremely unlikely.

The Queensland Government has consistently argued for the eventual deregulation of the labour market in Australia. Unless this deregulation is achieved, Australian rural exports will eventually become uncompetitive on world markets, to the detriment of highly efficient rural producers in this country.

This two-faced approach to market deregulation practised by the current Labor administration is typical of a party philosophically opposed to any reduction in wage levels, even in the adverse economic climate facing Australia at the present time.

As well, rationalisation following Federal Budget cuts to the ABC will almost certainly mean the abolition of *Country Hour* in its present form. I understand that in about a month's time it will be a national program with space for small inserts—mainly commodity prices. Naturally, the impact on rural and farming communities will be enormous and is another clear indication of the Federal Australian Labor Party Government's lack of concern for country areas.

3. Underage Drinking

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

“(1) For each of the last three years, how many people have been (a) charged, (b) tried and (c) convicted under the Liquor Act of supplying alcohol to underage persons?

(2) Who were they?

(3) How many liquor licences have been suspended, withdrawn, cancelled or otherwise limited in the last three years, for how long (if suspended), and for what reasons?

(4) What are the names of those involved in each case?”

Answer—

(1) (a) 1983 — 6
1984 — 14
1985 — 14

(b) 1983 — 6
1984 — 14
1985 — 14

(c) 1983 — 5
1984 — 13
1985 — 14

(2) Glen Roland Parry,
Vincenzo Salvatore Guiffre,
Noel James Weller,
Kevin John Pear,
Christopher Raymond McKee,
Kym Coral Armitage,
Delicia Veronica O'Flynn,
Barry Francis Pimm,
Geoffrey Rowland,
Brenda Patricia Adams,
Andrew Terence Humphreys,
Gary Neil Joice,
David Andrew Stillman,
Ricky Allan Campbell,
Shane Harvey Trent,
Jeaninne Alma Manz,
Bruce Joseph Shaw,
Howard William Ford,
Peter David Santowski,
Colin Richard Iland,
Terrence David Burns,
Henk Docueneas,
Patrick Francis Michael Hill,
Danny William Blanket,
Ronald Geoffrey Galvin,
Laurence Leonard Schefe,
Rae-lea Cochrane,
Daniel Davies,
John Jones,
Mark Andrew Budge,
Brett Edwin Carpenter and
Tony Robert Anderson

(3 & 4) No licences have been suspended, withdrawn, cancelled or otherwise limited by the Licensing Court in respect of sale of liquor to persons under the age of 18 years. However, in the past three years, 12 licences have been forfeited and 41 other licences suspended by the Licensing Court for varying reasons, such as failure to pay licence fees and breaches of provisions of the Liquor Act.

Amendments that became effective on 23 December 1985 will afford better opportunity for the Licensing Commission to forfeit licences of those who offend by supplying liquor to underage persons. I take this opportunity to warn those who hold licences for premises of any sort that the Government is determined to stamp out underage drinking, and that the amendments affording opportunity to the Licensing Commission will be policed.

4. Computers in Schools

Mr UNDERWOOD asked the Minister for Education—

“With reference to computers in schools—

(1) How many are currently in (a) pre-schools, (b) primary schools, (c) secondary schools and (d) TAFE colleges?

(2) How many have been supplied by (a) Parents and Citizens Associations, (b) State Government funds and (c) Federal Government funds?

(3) What are current projected figures for the further supply of computers to schools by the end of (a) 1986, (b) 1987 and (c) 1988?

(4) Which (a) pre-schools, (b) primary schools, (c) secondary schools and (d) TAFE colleges have computers and how many in each case?”

Answer—

(1) Departmental records indicate the following numbers of computers in various categories of institutions—

(a) Pre-schools	8
(b) Primary schools	2 228
(c) Secondary schools	2 271
(d) Technical and further education colleges	843
Total	<u>5 350</u>

(2) Those computers have been funded from the following sources in the numbers indicated—

(a) Parents and citizens associations	2 152
(b) State Government funds	2 433
(c) Federal Government funds	562
(d) Donations	203
Total	<u>5 350</u>

(3) Because of uncertainties about the availability of resources from diverse funding agencies, it is not possible to provide meaningful figures of projections for future years. The best estimate for the present year is of the order of 1 000.

(4) It is clear by this part of the question that the honourable member for Ipswich West has absolutely no understanding of the size of the Queensland education system. For the information of the honourable member for Ipswich West, I indicate that Queensland has approximately 700 State pre-schools, over 1 000 State primary schools, 150 State secondary schools and 26 TAFE colleges in Queensland. If I took only three seconds to read the name of each school, together with the number of computers that each school possesses, it would take approximately one and a half hours to answer this part of the question. I am not prepared to deploy the resources of my department to compile the information requested; nor am I prepared to monopolise question-time in answering the question.

5. Home and Community Care Program

Mr NEWTON asked the Minister for Health and Environment—

“With reference to a number of representations to me by Meals on Wheels Committees concerned with the increased paperwork required under the Home and Community Care Program prior to subsidies being granted—

Why is this extra paperwork required and is it the State Government that requires this information to be furnished?”

Answer—

Funding under the HACC program provides for a much greater variety of service types than any previous funding. Given also the expected demand and level of HACC funds available, it will be appreciated that the integration of new and expanded service types is an extremely complex exercise. It will involve a variety of agencies, including those which deliver meals and provide many other services. Therefore, clients receiving delivered meals will often be receiving other types of service also. Unless the minimum information is obtained, it will not be possible to provide appropriate multiagency funding in a manner which will ensure that individual clients receive the range of services that they require.

The method of funding under HACC is also different from that which applied previously. It is appreciated that some agencies have expressed concern at being requested to submit an application for continued funding. Officers of my department are available to assist in the preparation of those applications. There is not a massive amount of paperwork. In fact, the original guide-lines suggested by the Commonwealth have been modified in order to simplify the paperwork.

In recording the number of delivered meals, each Meals on Wheels committee was used to establishing variable levels of Commonwealth subsidy claimable in arrears. If my department is to take over the administration of those subsidies and to be accountable for grants, which may be given in advance, it will be necessary for the committees also to be accountable. That means that they should be able to show that identifiable clients do receive the meals claimed. As approximately 139 different committees use many different and sometimes inadequate systems for the purpose, my department has declined to take over the administration of their funding before the new year, in order to provide extra time to develop arrangements for the integration of their services into the whole HACC program.

6. Motor Vehicle Registrations

Sir WILLIAM KNOX asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing—

“(1) What is the total of new registrations of all vehicles registered in Queensland for the 12 months ending May 1986?

(2) What is the total of new registrations of all vehicles registered in each of the other States for the 12 months ending May 1986?”

Answer—

(1) New registrations in Queensland of all vehicles, including sedans, utilities, trucks, motor cycles, buses and all classes of industrial and agricultural vehicles, for the year ended 31 May 86 totalled 246 820.

(2) Comparative figures for each of the other States and Territories for the same period are—

New South Wales	422 799
Victoria	280 665
South Australia	202 498
Western Australia	74 156
Australian Capital Territory	25 613
Northern Territory	21 970
Tasmania	17 963

The figure for Tasmania is for new vehicles only. A figure for second-hand vehicles is not available.

7. Industrial Disputes, Working Days Lost

Sir WILLIAM KNOX asked the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs—

“(1) Following his answer to my question on 20 August regarding the figures of industrial disputes, when will the figures be available and will he make them available to me when compiled?

(2) In the meantime will he supply the information to this House of the number of working hours lost for the 12 months ending March 1986 for Queensland and for each State for the same period?”

Answer—

(1) Figures showing the numbers of working days lost in Queensland owing to industrial disputes during the financial year 1985-86 are not expected before the end of September. The honourable member may be well assured that I will provide a copy of those figures when they become available.

(2) Mr Speaker, I seek leave to table a document indicating the number of days lost owing to industrial disputes in each State during the 12 months ending March 1986, as sought by the honourable member.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the document on the table.

8. Izarra Pty Ltd; Mr J. M. Goicoechea

Mr SMITH asked the Premier and Treasurer—

“With reference to the selection of two properties known previously as Lotus Glen and their subsequent resumption by the Crown on 5 August 1985 for a proposed new prison in the Walkamin area, west of Mareeba, on the Atherton Tableland and in view of the fact that the owners of the properties, Izarra Pty Ltd, were paid the inflated price of \$620,000 for the two properties, Portions 864 and 866, Parish of Tinaroo, containing respectively 735 and 1 494 acres—

(1) Will he reveal the names of the beneficiaries of this company, which is a company with, as of its annual return of 30 June 1985, paid-up capital of \$120, an unsecured loan of \$130,086.20, an overdrawn bank account of \$75,441.76, and lists its activities as being a trustee company?

(2) Does he deny that Joe Maria Goicoechea, company director of 11 Cottesmore Crescent, Yarrawonga, Townsville, and holder of 110 deferred shares in Izarra Pty Ltd, is well known to him as a member and supporter of the National Party in North Queensland, and does he deny that he personally intervened to cause the Prisons Department to recommend, against the professional judgment of its officers, the acquisition of these properties which are unsuitable for their intended purpose?”

Answer—

(1 & 2) I have no knowledge of the information sought by the honourable member in relation to the company he has mentioned, and I most certainly did not intervene in any way in the deliberations by the relevant department in the matter of the purchase of the Lotus Glen property.

9. Prisoners, Cost and Number

Mr SMITH asked the Minister for Corrective Services, Administrative Services and Valuation—

“(1) Is the actual annual cost of a prisoner to the State now approximately \$30,000 and, if so, why has he continued to claim a cost figure of only \$21,000?

(2) In view of the cost of maintaining prisoners and, further, that Queensland has the highest rate of increase of prison population in Australia at 9 per cent

per annum for the past three years, which has resulted in Queensland now having more prisoners (2,128) than Victoria (1,939), while the respective populations are 2,581,000 (Queensland) and 4,163,000 (Victoria), and, further, that the imprisonment of minor offenders under provisions of the Drugs Misuse Bill will further exacerbate the situation, what realistic measures does he propose to bring about a reduction of prison population allowing for the fact that community service, fine option orders and home imprisonment provide only minimal relief from the over-riding trend?"

Answer—

(1 & 2) The Comptroller-General of Prisons has advised that for 1985-86 the average annual cost per prisoner in the Queensland prison system was approximately \$20,000.

The honourable member displays the Labor Party's usual lack of knowledge on most subjects. He should be aware that Queensland leads the field in Australia in alternative sentencing options. Community service orders, the fine option program and the home detention program are all part of the enlightened procedures adopted by the Queensland Government with a view to either keeping first and/or minor offenders out of prison or minimising their stay in institutions.

More than one million hours of community service work have been undertaken by offenders under alternative sentencing options. The home detention program in particular has proved most successful and is the envy of other States. At a recent ministerial conference, various Ministers asked their officers to prepare proposals based on the Queensland experience with a view to such programs being introduced in their respective States later this year. Victoria is able to maintain a lower prison population by virtue of the remarkably generous remission rates that exist in that State. Remission of up to half of the sentence can be obtained in Victoria.

I inform the honourable member, however, that the Queensland Government will not be a party to any proposal under which, solely because of increasing numbers in institutions, offenders who deserve a prison sentence are not committed to prison.

10. Food Irradiation Plant

Mr McELLIGOTT asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

"With reference to the ABC program *Four Corners* of 4 August containing a segment on food irradiation which suggested that the Queensland Government was enthusiastically supporting the construction of a food irradiation plant on Government land next to the Brisbane Markets and that the plant is to be built and operated by an American company, Radiation Technology Inc., and in view of the revelation contained in the program that Radiation Technology Inc. has had its licence suspended indefinitely by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for numerous violations of the commission's regulations—

(1) Will he assure the House that neither Radiation Technology Inc., nor any other company with which Dr Martin Welt is associated, will be permitted to operate in Queensland?

(2) Will he outline any arrangements that have been agreed to in regard to the construction of such a plant in Queensland?"

Answer—

(1) In order to obtain the best possible information about food irradiation, during the course of an overseas visit to Europe, the United Kingdom and North America in January this year, I held wide-ranging discussions with different manufacturers and operators of food irradiation systems.

I have not signed any agreement, nor has the State Government given any undertaking to Radiation Technology Inc., or any company associated with Dr Martin Welt, in regard to operating a plant in Queensland.

(2) No arrangements whatsoever have been made with any irradiation equipment manufacturer in regard to the construction of a food irradiation plant in Queensland.

11. Nursing Home Accommodation

Mr LINGARD asked the Minister for Health and Environment—

“With reference to the recent application to the Federal Government by the Wongaburra Nursing Home at Beaudesert for approval to build new facilities to cater for the long waiting list of needy local residents requiring nursing home facilities and as the Federal Government has disallowed the application even though the organisation has the necessary finance—

(1) Has Queensland sufficient nursing home accommodation to meet current needs?

(2) Has any approach been made to the Federal Government pointing out the need to upgrade funding, particularly in this State, which attracts many interstate people who have retired or are preparing to retire?”

Answer—

(1 & 2) Because of the policies of the Federal Labor Government, Queensland is facing a serious crisis in aged care services. Since coming to power, the Hawke socialist Government has severely restricted the development of nursing homes and now has virtually slashed in half the formula for approving new beds. Under the new formula, gazetted in May, the approved level of beds has been cut from 80 to 44 per 1 000 people aged 70 and above. This new formula will effectively mean that many areas of Queensland will not qualify for new nursing home beds until well into the next century. Queensland currently has an average of about 70 nursing home beds per 1 000 population aged 70 or more throughout the State.

Our statistics indicate, however, that there are many hundreds of Queensland families already desperately in need of nursing home accommodation for their elderly relatives. During the past financial year, there were some 780 applicants for placement in public nursing homes in the Brisbane region alone, with only 273 being successful. There is currently a waiting-list of more than 750 for public nursing homes in Brisbane comprising people who need that level of care. I am advised that there are also long waiting-lists for admission to many private nursing homes in Queensland.

There were about 300 nursing home beds which received approval in principle from the Commonwealth before the change in formula, but when, if ever, these beds will actually become available is not very clear. Any new beds must be approved by the Commonwealth, even if these are being provided by private organisations with sufficient funds of their own. It is not so much a question of availability of funds as a matter of approval of beds, which limits the number of beds available.

Without a doubt, the Federal Labor Government has turned nursing homes into the poor relations of the health-care sector. Expenditure on nursing home benefits represents only about 10 per cent of overall health-care spending, compared with 19 per cent in the last year of the Fraser Government. To make matters worse, the Federal Minister for Community Services (Senator Grimes) even boasts about the savings he is making by strangling the nursing home sector. What a shameful state of affairs!

The alterations to the formula for approving nursing home beds is nothing more than an expenditure-cutting exercise at the expense of the sick and the elderly. If the measures remain, very few nursing home beds will be approved in Australia in the foreseeable future, and much of that, according to the Commonwealth, will be for so-called disadvantaged groups. The trouble is that this Federal Government does not seem to realise that the whole aged sector is becoming a seriously disadvantaged group under its policies.

12. Export of Flora and Fauna; Wildlife Protection Act

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

“(1) Is it true that, before any flora or fauna can be exported from Australia, a management plan has to be prepared for the particular species involved?

(2) Does the Wildlife Protection Act extend to reptiles such as sea snakes?

(3) Is it true that the requirements of that Act are in a practical sense impossible to comply with, and as a result of this, is the Queensland-based industry in this area being put in jeopardy?”

Answer—

(1) Yes. Before flora or fauna products can be exported from Australia on a commercial basis it is necessary to—

(a) have a management plan relating to the species, or

(b) go through a protracted process of calling for public objections to the export of the fauna or flora on a lot basis, or

(c) show that the fauna is the product of an approved captive breeding program.

(2) Yes. The Act that was proclaimed in 1984 is the Commonwealth Wildlife Protection (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1982 and it does apply to sea snakes. In fact, it even applies to sea snakes that are taken from the sea dead as a result of being an incidental catch of prawning. It plainly defies common sense when an animal that is already taken and dead cannot be put to some use. But, of course, sea snakes are small fry when it comes to examples under this Act of the lack of common sense. Ask any grazier or grain-grower in western Queensland about the kangaroo problems they have had in the last three years since the implementation of this Act and it will be clear what an expensive, frustrating and ill-conceived piece of legislation it is.

That is particularly so when the Act is manipulated and operated for a political rather than a scientific purpose. The Federal Government, on the matter of kangaroos and the export of kangaroo products, has manipulated the Act not to meet the requirements of the graziers and grain-growers of Queensland or scientific criteria, but to appease a radical preservationist fringe which, for the last two consecutive years, has turned round and bitten the hand that has fed it. For two years now, these groups have taken management programs before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, and they now have the Commonwealth Government in a position from which it will be lucky to escape. If it does escape, it will only be at great expense to Queensland producers.

These groups have been elevated by way of Commonwealth legislation to a position which allows them the right to interfere, and interfere maliciously, in other people's affairs when they have no direct interest in the matters.

These groups subvert rational attempts to have biological matters resolved scientifically. I refer to the apparent leaking of the proceedings of the Sharman committee. Further, they engage in overt subversive activities overseas, both in the EEC and in America, to stifle the attempts of responsible Australian agencies to do business with and gain export income from those countries.

The whole matter is in fact a disgrace. I call on the Federal Government to repeal these pieces of legislation and to introduce legislation that not only complies with common sense but also sets a reasonable balance between conservation interests and the interests of primary producers.

(3) Yes. In a practical sense the Act is impossible to comply with and, as a result of that, the Federal Government has not only painted itself into a corner but also ruined a small but lucrative industry in the north. As I am presently advised, the sea snakes skin tanning and export industry in the north has effectively been stopped, and that is a matter of considerable regret. Inquiries that I have made indicate that there is little opportunity for any relief while the present Government is in power in Canberra.

However, honourable members can rest assured that I will be taking every step possible to get the Commonwealth to see sense. I might add that I will also be taking every possible step to get rid of the Commonwealth Government, because that is the only sensible thing to do.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Article in *Sydney Morning Herald* Regarding Letter by Premier and Treasurer to Mr T. Nevins

Mr WARBURTON: In directing a question to the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to a half-page article on page 8 of last Saturday's *Sydney Morning Herald* which contained a copy of a short letter from him to Mr Tony Nevins of Mainsel Investments Pty Ltd. I refer in particular to the second and last paragraphs of that letter, which state in part—

“I am glad that you, Izzy and John, are investing heavily in Queensland projects. That has been good to see.”

The letter is signed “Joh Bjelke-Petersen”.

I now ask the Premier, who is obviously on first-name terms with those two persons: Are the two persons referred to in that letter by their Christian names Mr Izzy Herzog and Mr John Minuzzo, who was previously associated with the Grollo brothers, Bruno and Reno, heading the company known as the Grollo group?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: When will the Leader of the Opposition come up with something positive and do something constructive? He is always down in the gutter, or trying to get down in the gutter. I try to keep him out of the gutter; however, it is quite a job to keep people such as the Leader of the Opposition out of the gutter.

Opposition Members interjected.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Opposition members are obviously laughing at the Leader of the Opposition. I cannot help that.

The two people referred to by the Leader of the Opposition have got nothing to do with the Grollo brothers. Probably more will be seen and heard of that later on.

Once again, the Leader of the Opposition is on the wrong track. I am sorry about that. However, at the moment, I cannot help him any more than I have.

Gold Coast Development by Mr Minuzzo

Mr WARBURTON: I refer to Mr Minuzzo and Mr Herzog, who I understand are still involved in the West Burleigh shopping complex application, having taken over the option from the Grollo group. The Premier and Treasurer will recall the controversy over that proposed complex, at the same time as his Government was moving to take away the right of appeal to the Local Government Court. I ask the Premier—

Mr Hinze: The court approved it.

Mr WARBURTON: Is that allowed? Mr Speaker, will he be warned?

I ask the Premier: Prior to his recent meetings with Mr Minuzzo regarding a major proposed Brisbane development, had he previously had discussions with Minuzzo in 1984 or 1985 concerning a Gold Coast project, and was he aware at the time of those meetings of Mr Minuzzo's background and his appearances before Melbourne's courts?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Negative yet again. It is the same thing, the same tactics of trying to scrape up mud and dirt. When the Leader of the Opposition gets into that area, he obviously cannot see clearly and does not reason fairly and justly.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I remind the honourable member for Lytton that the Leader of the Opposition has asked a question. The question is being answered and the honourable member will listen to it.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Cannot the Leader of the Opposition be positive for once? The people he has referred to have come to Queensland from Melbourne and are investing many hundreds of millions of dollars in this State. They are doing something constructive and very positive. They will play a very important part in various business activities and will provide thousands of jobs. People like the Leader of the Opposition attempt to destroy confidence when somebody is doing something positive. Those people have done a tremendous job. I warn the Leader of the Opposition to be careful about what he says outside this House, because other people in Sydney will get to know about that particular aspect.

Queensland must be positive and do something constructive. Those people will be involved in the development and not, as the Leader of the Opposition suggests, the Grollo brothers. The Grollo brothers certainly have nothing to do with the new developers in any shape or form. I have checked that matter out and, on my information, the Leader of the Opposition is completely wrong in his suggestions in that regard. One could go on and on, but the Leader of the Opposition has no hope in the world of getting anything, other than the mud that he throws himself and will end up all over him.

State Service Superannuation Fund

Mr NEAL: I ask the Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police: Is he aware that in certain press articles on the State service superannuation issue claims were made that tax-payers' funds had been injected to assist the State Service Superannuation Fund? Can he inform the House if that is in fact true and, if not, what is the correct position?

Mr GUNN: An article appeared in *The Courier-Mail* that I believe should be corrected. The article read as follows—

“In this case the surplus represents a turnaround from a position where the fund was in the red. And it was an injection of tax-payers' money, not that of contributors, that rectified the situation.”

That is entirely incorrect. It continued—

“If anything, the bonus should have gone to consolidated revenue, where it could have been used for the benefit of the community.”

The fact is that the State Service Superannuation Fund is made up of the contributions of officers in Government service who are members of this scheme, and interest thereon paid by the Treasury at the rate prescribed under the legislation. It should be appreciated that the fund contains no Government contribution whatsoever. In fact, it would be illegal for the Government to make contributions to the State Service Superannuation Fund.

Under the provisions of the State Service Superannuation Act 1972-1985 the investigations into the state and sufficiency of the State Service Superannuation Fund are to be made by the fund's actuary, who is to report the results of his investigations to the State Service Superannuation Board. The legislation requires that, where a surplus is disclosed, the actuary is to recommend the manner in which the surplus may be dealt with. As there was a surplus of \$138m in the fund, of which there was no Government contribution whatsoever, the actuary advised the board accordingly, and made certain recommendations to the said board.

Fees Paid by Tertiary Students

Mr NEAL: In directing a question to the Minister for Education, I refer to the announcement in the Federal Budget that a \$250 administration charge will be imposed on tertiary students, 90 per cent of which will constitute yet another tax. I ask: Can the

Minister inform the House if it is true that all students, whether they are full-time students studying more than a dozen subjects a year, or part-time or external students studying only one subject per year, will pay a \$250 fee?

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr POWELL: It is obvious that Opposition members are not keen to hear my answer because they are not interested in external students. Sometimes because of the place where a person lives or the type of work that he undertakes, he has to obtain his degree by external methods. Because of the \$250 administration fee that is being imposed on tertiary education, it is quite clear that the Labor Party will be hurting many people. Some members of the Labor Party do not like to be referred to as friends of the Government in Canberra.

Last Tuesday, a fellow named Dawkins, who is the acting Federal Minister for Education, made it quite clear that even part-time students and external students would be required to pay the \$250 so-called administration fee, 10 per cent of which will go to the tertiary institutions and 90 per cent of which will go to the Federal Government. So it is just another tax that is being imposed by the Federal Government.

It is interesting to note that in his statement Dawkins said that it would be a flat fee. It is funny that the Federal Government, when it wants to impose taxes on people, makes it a flat tax across the board, but when it is trying to organise income tax it does not do the same thing. Of course, if it did that, it would benefit the middle income-earners and those people who are making this country work.

I condemn completely the fact that the \$250 is being paid straight across the board by everybody who is seeking tertiary qualifications, whether he is studying one subject per year, which many people must do, especially teachers in country areas—

Mr De Lacy: What about if they are getting a TEAS allowance?

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister does not have to answer the interjection.

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I thank you for reminding me of the way in which the Parliament works. The honourable member for Cairns is obviously so stupid that he does not understand how tertiary education works in this State. Of course, he is not alone; many other Opposition members do not understand, either.

As I was saying—I condemn completely the attitude of a Federal Government that is obviously trying to condemn people who, because they live in a decentralised area of this and other States of Australia, are trying to obtain tertiary qualifications by external methods. Those people cannot obtain those qualifications except by paying an extra \$250 for every year they study at a tertiary institution, be it a university or a college of advanced education. Obviously, the backlash of the Federal Government's decision must be being felt by members of the ALP, particularly those living in the country areas of this State.

It is clear that a further tax is being imposed upon the people of Australia. The tax is being imposed on those people who are trying to better themselves, something that the ALP finds completely opposite to its charter.

**Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing; Southern Access Road,
Cairns**

Mr De LACY: In directing a question to the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing, I refer to the comments on far north Queensland television in July by the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services (Mr Tenni) while opening the Clohesy River Bridge near Mareeba that he expected to be the Minister for Main Roads after the next election and would then ensure that the money spent down south would be spent in the north. I ask: Does that mean that he expects to be sacked, deposed,

defeated or disendorsed? Secondly, will he take up Mr Tenni's point and ensure that the money spent down south is spent in the north, and particularly that money is made available immediately to construct a southern access road into Cairns?

Mr Tenni interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HINZE: Was that question without notice?

Mr SPEAKER: I believe it was without notice.

Mr HINZE: It was such a jumbled sort of question that it was nearly impossible to understand.

I agree with the Minister for Education, who said that the honourable member for Cairns (Mr De Lacy) is stupid. I see no significance in the question the honourable member has asked. I believe he is trying to upset me. However, in my present frame of mind it would be almost impossible to upset me.

Proposed Changes to Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act; Babinda Sugar-mill

Mr De LACY: In directing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries, I refer to the Government's back-down, as reported in this morning's press, on proposed changes to section 33 of the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act. In the light of the fact that this back-down has occurred only days after the chairman of the Queensland Cane Growers Council, Mr Fred Soper, warned that the Government faced a severe electoral backlash if it proceeded with the controversial amendments, I ask: Will the Minister give an ironclad guarantee that the proposed changes have not been shelved until after the forthcoming State election? Furthermore, in the light of that back-down, is the Minister prepared to guarantee that substantial assistance will still be given to the Babinda sugar-mill in order to ensure its long-term viability?

Mr TURNER: It is my intention to introduce legislation during this session of Parliament to amend the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act. The majority of the proposed changes are in accordance with what has been accepted and agreed to by all sectors of the sugar industry.

When that proposed legislation is brought before this House, the honourable member for Cairns will be able to ascertain its contents. If he was aware of the procedure for introducing legislation, he would know that until such time as proposed legislation goes into the party-room, it will not necessarily be what the Government will adopt.

That proposed legislation will be put forward within the next week or two. I am certain that the sugar industry in general will be as happy with the proposed legislation as it has been with past contributions by the State Government towards assisting the sugar industry. That is, of course, in stark contrast to what the Australian Labor Party has done in the Federal arena.

I can give no guarantees at the moment, but I indicate that the Government has made a commitment to ensure that the Babinda mill remains viable and continues to operate in the interests of cane-growers, those people employed within the Babinda district, the business sector, and unionists in that area of north Queensland. The Government seems to be more concerned than the honourable member for Cairns for those people.

Mortgage Rates

Mr STONEMAN: In directing a question to the Minister for Works and Housing, I refer to the front-page headlines in today's *Sunday Sun* that indicate that mortgage interest rates could rise again next month. Many people, particularly young married couples, are finding themselves in increasingly difficult situations because of rapidly escalating monthly mortgage payments. I ask: What steps are being taken to assist those

people in very serious situations? No doubt thousands of people are watching their dreams evaporate in the face of economic hardship.

Mr WHARTON: I share the concern of many Queenslanders in relation to the high interest rate policy that has been adopted by the Federal Government. The mortgage relief scheme, which is part of the Mortgage and Rent Relief Scheme, has been reviewed because of the hardship that is being experienced by many people through the high interest rate policies of the Federal Government. That hardship is a tragedy for both the people of Queensland and for all Australians. Many people are seeking assistance because they can no longer meet rising interest rates. The housing package introduced by the Federal Government means that anyone purchasing a \$40,000 house will have to pay an extra \$62——

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

Mr WHARTON: Sit down.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I have risen to a point of order on the basis that, if the Minister is going to reply from written notes, he should have the courtesy to pick them up so that honourable members can see them.

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

Mr WHARTON: I thank the honourable member again. The Government accepts that he has to read all his notes and he has to do several other things. The honourable member has often asked 10-part questions in written form, but the Government ignores that.

Even in today's paper it is stated that the banks are considering raising the interest rates again, which will affect many more people. More people will be applying to use the rent relief scheme, which has been amended recently.

Mr Mackenroth: Will the Housing Commission put its interest rates up?

Mr WHARTON: No.

Mr Mackenroth: You do every time the banks do.

Mr WHARTON: That is supposition by the honourable member. He works on supposition and cannot get far without it. There is no truth in that statement. The Mortgage and Rent Relief Scheme has been amended.

Mr Mackenroth: Very reluctantly.

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

Mr WHARTON: Because of the increasing interest rates that have resulted from the Federal Government's policy, the Mortgage and Rent Relief Scheme has had to be amended. The Federal Government's policy is ruining many people. The scheme now provides for a loan of \$4,000, whereas previously it was \$2,000. No repayments will be required for the first 12 months and the balance will be repaid over five years. No interest is charged on that \$4,000.

The scheme has been amended for the benefit of the house-owner. The Government met with the lender, the Housing Commission, and arranged that people who have difficulties with house repayments can approach the Housing Commission, which will review the case and help the borrowers if a need can be established. The scheme is to be advertised in the media.

The Federal Government's policy on interest rates is affecting the livelihood and the life-styles of many people in Australia.

Teachers' Accommodation and Locality Allowances

Mr STONEMAN: I direct a question to the Minister for Education. The provision by the Queensland Government of subsidised rental accommodation and locality allowances has long been accepted as a means of attracting qualified, experienced teachers to remote and isolated parts of Queensland. I ask: What are the implications of the Labor Government's fringe benefits tax on these benefits?

Mr POWELL: I thank the honourable member for the question. Once again, honourable members find an action by the Federal Government that works seriously against the people of Queensland, particularly those who live outside the metropolitan area. It is interesting to note how the Federal Labor Government has tried to hide the fringe benefits tax by bringing down the Budget in the very cunning way that it did. No-one should accept as a principle that an employer should be taxed for a benefit that an employee receives. That is a basic method of levying taxation that Australians should not accept. However, the Federal Labor Government believes that it is a principle that should be introduced.

The taxing of the locality allowance and the subsidised housing for not only teachers but also other public servants is something that is completely opposed to the Queensland Government's philosophy. It should not be paid. The Queensland Government will be fighting Canberra on that tax.

The legality of that tax should be questioned. Many Queenslanders oppose the principle of an employer's being charged tax on an employee's benefit. The last time that a fringe benefits tax proposal was raised was in 1981, when the Federal Treasurer was Mr John Howard. It is interesting to note that Mr Howard created so much enthusiasm for the proposal among the people of the central highlands area that they asked their State member at that time, the honourable member for Peak Downs, who still represents them (Honourable V. P. Lester), to organise rallies in Moranbah.

At that time the president of the Queensland Teachers Union was Mr Lyle Schuntner, who, at the next State election, will be the Liberal candidate for the electorate of Mount Coot-tha. He attacked the Fraser Liberal Government about the level of industrial disputation that marked the period, expressing the belief that, by proposing the introduction of a fringe benefits tax, the Federal Government was going about it in the wrong manner. At that time, the then president of the Queensland Teachers Union had this to say—

“I have no hesitation in ascribing to the Federal Government an overwhelming share of the blame. A careful consideration of events of the last few years makes it difficult to come to any conclusion other than believing that the Federal Government has been consciously implementing a plan to divide our nation.”

It should be remembered that that person is a candidate for the Liberal Party in the forthcoming State election. I wonder whether that Liberal Party candidate would have the same belief about the proposition if it were presented by the State branch of the Liberal Party?

The levying of a fringe benefits tax on employers because of benefits that they provide to employees who live in remote areas of this State is a disgusting way for a Federal Government to raise funds. The Queensland Government condemns it, and has challenged the scheme before the High Court of Australia.

Palmer Tube Mills Australia Pty Ltd

Mr CAMPBELL: In directing a question to the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology, I refer to the fact that the Premier and Treasurer (Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen) telephoned the managing director of Palmer Tube Mills Australia Pty Ltd, Mr Ross Palmer, early one morning and sought thousands of dollars worth of goods to be dispatched to the Ten Mile property that is run by the Bjelke-Petersen family. I ask: Is it a fact that, after the consignment was dispatched, Mr Palmer telephoned the Minister directly and expressed his concern about whether there would be payment for the goods

by the Premier and Treasurer? Will the Minister confirm that the telephone call took place?

Mr AHERN: If this is a sample of Australian Labor Party activity, heaven help it. I was fortunate to be in the company of the Premier and Treasurer recently when he opened the Palmer Tube Mills establishment. At that time the question was asked by representatives of the media.

In my presence, Ross Palmer indicated substantial satisfaction because he had received an order for some bore-casing from the Premier and Treasurer for use on a property. Mr Palmer was openly very happy that the order had been placed and indicated to me on that occasion his extreme satisfaction in the order's having been placed and filled locally. If that question sets the standard of allegation that is being made in the House, as I said previously, heaven help the Labor Party.

I know Ross Palmer very well. On that occasion, I spent at least an hour with him inspecting the factory. He raised the matter with me privately. He also indicated that media representatives had been asking questions and that he had dismissed the matter completely out of hand. The information of the honourable member is dead wrong again, and he should apologise to the House for the imputation.

Administration of Sir Leslie Wilson Youth Centre

Mr FOURAS: I ask the Minister for Welfare Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs: Is the Minister aware that very serious problems exist in the administration of the Sir Leslie Wilson Youth Centre and that that maladministration has resulted in very low staff morale? Is she aware that substantial quantities of marijuana and other drugs were recently found at the centre? Is she aware that a 13-year-old boy was raped homosexually by three other boys, and that the ringleader of the rape was put on remand for two days and then discharged, in an attempt to cover up the rape? Is she aware that boys have been transferred to the girls section, which has resulted in a *Love Boat* situation? Is she aware also that children as young as 13 years of age are given a weekly cigarette quota? What action will the Minister take to remedy the shocking situation I have described?

Mrs CHAPMAN: I am unaware of the problem that the honourable member speaks about.

Mr Fouras: I will place it on notice if you like.

Mrs CHAPMAN: I never cease to be amazed at the way in which some members of the Opposition are so aware of the problems associated with drugs. I understand that the Labor Party's policy is to make drugs available to anyone, and that appals me.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mrs CHAPMAN: The honourable member may not realise it. He should read his own party's policy, which has come from Bob Hawke.

From the other problems——

Mr MACKENROTH: I rise to a point of order. What the Minister said is untrue. The fact is that this Government is the greatest supplier of methadone in Australia.

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

Mrs CHAPMAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. There certainly was no point of order.

I am unaware of any of the other problems associated with the home. If the honourable member puts the question on notice, I will certainly check them out.

Mr FOURAS: I do so accordingly.

Legal Costs of the Premier and Treasurer

Mr FOURAS: I ask the Premier and Treasurer: Can he explain why he is paying for the legal costs associated with his defamation action against Liberal Party President, Mr John Moore, while the Queensland public is paying for the legal costs associated with his defamation actions against members of the Australian Labor Party and news media outlets?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: I do not see what the payment of legal costs when I am defamed or when the Government is defamed, has to do with the price of butter. Surely the honourable member can work that out. Indeed, the honourable member is so far behind the times that I just do not know what to say to him, except that he seems to be in line with the rest of the Opposition members. It is quite simple. If he cannot work out the answer to his own question, it is just too bad.

Parking at the Toowong Village Development

Mr BAILEY: I ask the Minister for Transport: In view of the very critical, inaccurate and ill-informed statements by the Lord Mayor on ABC TV when she attacked the Roma Street development, Expo, the Central Station railway redevelopment and the Toowong village development, can he assure my electorate that more than adequate parking provision has been made at the Toowong village development; that it is very similar to that so warmly embraced by the Liberals before my election to Parliament; and that it is only petty political point-scoring that is motivating the Lord Mayor and other Liberals in an unreasoned attack on the Toowong development and other developments?

Mr LANE: It was with great regret and disappointment that I heard the interview with the Lord Mayor, Sallyanne Atkinson, on television a week or two ago in which she condemned two of Brisbane's best developments, namely, the Brisbane Transit Centre and the Toowong village development. I was quite astounded to hear her criticise developments that are currently providing employment. Upwards of 500 people are employed on the construction of those two very worthwhile projects.

The Brisbane Transit Centre is the only centre of its kind in Australia. Indeed, I have travelled extensively around the world and I have yet to see a centre that brings together so many forms of transport under one roof and provides such convenience for public transport-users. The fourth floor of the Brisbane Transit Centre provides 27 bus-parking bays, which open into a lounge in which services similar to those in an international airport are provided. From there, bus travellers have a choice of journeys throughout Australia.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Brisbane Central has been trying my patience all day. His constant interjections are inane.

Mr LANE: Visitors may travel down the escalators to the next floor, to eat at a range of restaurants and eateries or to shop at a number of specialty stores.

Another journey down the escalators brings visitors to the foyer of an international standard hotel, which is being managed by South Pacific Hotel Corporation and is already booked out on a daily basis. From there access can be obtained to railway platforms from which travellers may choose to travel on modern electric trains throughout the Brisbane suburban area or as far afield as Caboolture, Ipswich or Wellington Point. Soon they will be able to travel to Cleveland.

If travellers pass from there through a modern tunnel to another section of the complex, they can travel to all parts of the State by main line rail. Also situated there is the interstate railway line, which regularly carries the Brisbane Limited between Brisbane and Sydney. All of those facilities are together under one roof.

Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen: She should go and have a look.

Mr LANE: I would be surprised if the Lord Mayor has taken the trouble to inspect the complex. I invite her to do so forthwith.

I now turn to the Toowong development, which will cost upwards of \$80m and which is being developed by private enterprise. A new, modern railway station is being constructed beneath it. The development has provided in the vicinity of \$5m worth of public facilities, including a new, wider road bridge across the railway line, the widening of the roads in the surrounding area and foot-bridges across the railway line, which separate pedestrians from motor traffic in both directions. It is a wonderful development.

It already contains provisions for car-parking for more than 1 600 cars above the airspace that formerly was not utilised. That is being built by the developer at no cost to the tax-payers of Queensland. When the building is opened, that airspace above the railway line will be the site of the largest David Jones shop in the State of Queensland. A number of other large shops and supermarkets will also be located in the development. A pharmacy—I think it is to be operated by the honourable member for Redcliffe (Mr White) who, as usual, is not here today—will be within the complex. I might say that he was glad to pay about double the usual commercial rent to get into that complex, obviously because he embraces it as a popular commercial centre.

What is being created for the public of Queensland is a village in the centre of Toowong. It will enhance shopping in the area generally. The adjoining strip-shopping area will find that many people will come to the centre and that they will do more business. It will lead to greater commercial activity. Ultimately, a tower will be constructed.

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Crown Appeal on Sentence of Mrs J. A. Callaghan

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (12.34 p.m.), by leave: In an attempt to justify some remarks that he made to the media, the honourable member for Salisbury (Mr Goss) this morning sought leave to make a personal explanation, during which he digressed from the subject. For the sake of the record, I read from an extract from *The Courier-Mail* of 1 September—

“The Attorney-General, Mr Harper, should have sought the advice of Crown Law officers on whether an appeal was to be lodged against Mrs Judith Callaghan’s sentence, the Opposition said yesterday.”

Perhaps the honourable member for Salisbury dissociates himself from the Opposition.

The next paragraph stated—

“Labor’s justice spokesman, Mr Goss, said the decision not to appeal was unnecessarily rushed.”

So, I believe that it was not unreasonable of me to tie those two paragraphs together and to assume that on this occasion the honourable member for Salisbury was pleased to speak as a representative of the Opposition.

Mr Goss: Read the last paragraph of that same column.

Mr HARPER: The honourable member asks me to read the last paragraph of that same column. I am pleased to do so. It states—

“Mr Harper reportedly”—

and I emphasise “reportedly”—

“said he had not consulted Crown Law officers on whether to appeal against the decision.”

That is completely erroneous. At no time have I said to the media that I have not consulted Crown Law officers on whether to appeal against the decision. On Saturday morning the question was asked of me, and I indicated to the journalist who inquired

that it was not incumbent on me to do so. However, at no time did I say whether I had or had not done so.

So that the record of the House is clear, and to save the time of the House, I will seek leave to have incorporated in *Hansard* a media release that I made yesterday, which has not been reported fully but which sets out clearly the position. However, before seeking leave to do so, I will read the second paragraph. That paragraph states as follows—

“In fact I began discussions and consultation with those officers immediately I became aware of the sentence imposed on Wednesday morning last and my decision was made late on Saturday morning after perusing a number of documents for which I had called.”

I seek leave to have the whole of that media release incorporated in *Hansard*.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call upon the Minister to provide me with a copy of that media release.

Mr HARPER: While you are looking at that document, Mr Speaker, I draw to the attention of the House some comments made by the honourable member for Salisbury this morning on a television program. For obvious reasons, I do not intend to read the whole transcript of that program. However, I will refer to part of it. Let the public of Queensland be aware of what the honourable member for Salisbury said. The transcript reads—

“‘Good morning Mr. Goss. Well a sentence of 30 months, for misappropriating \$44,000, is it fair?’

Goss—‘Well it’s probably in the range of what’s normal, it could have been higher, but that’s not so much the growing concern in Queensland I think, but rather how long, this woman will actually serve.’”

This morning, on television, the Opposition spokesman indicated clearly that nothing is wrong, that there is no room for criticism of the court in regard to the sentence of 30 months. However, the honourable member then made remarks about the Parole Board, which is a statutory body. I do not intend to outline those remarks.

That is what has been said by the Opposition justice spokesman in this Parliament. Let him cast his eyes on some of the things that have happened in other jurisdictions. Let him address this House and appear on television and comment about what happened in the Federal Parliament in relation to Mr Justice Lionel Murphy. Let him appear on television and comment about what happened in New South Wales under the Labor Government. Let him appear on television and tell the people of Queensland what will happen under the legislation that his colleagues—his comrades, I apologise—in Canberra would impose on the people of Australia in the form of the so-called Bill of Rights and the Human Rights Commission, which will set up a Star Chamber in this country.

The honourable member for Salisbury has the audacity to criticise the Parole Board in Queensland but supports his parliamentary colleagues in Canberra setting up a Star Chamber, a place of inquisition, from which the people of Australia would have no appeal. I suggest to the honourable member that he is being very, very two-faced in his attitude to these matters.

Mr GOSS: Methinks he protesteth too much.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have studied the document. Is leave granted that it be incorporated?

Leave granted.

Attorney-General and Justice Minister, Neville Harper said today that media speculation as to whether he had consulted his senior Crown Law Officers before making a decision not to give notice of appeal against the sentence of 30 months imprisonment imposed on Judith Anne Callaghan was without substance.

"In fact I began discussions and consultation with those officers immediately I became aware of the sentence imposed on Wednesday morning last and my decision was made late on Saturday morning after perusing a number of documents for which I had called."

"I consider that further procrastination in this matter would have been unwarranted and not in the best interests of justice."

"I reiterate a statement made to the media following my decision on Saturday that neither the Premier nor the Cabinet had ever attempted to influence any decision I have been required to make in regard to a Crown appeal against a sentence imposed by a Court."

"I have never taken a matter of that nature to the Cabinet nor can I recall such a matter being raised in Cabinet during my presence."

"Undoubtedly Ministers have at least an equal right to discuss such matters as do other sections of the community, including the legal fraternity."

"So far as the matter of the sentence imposed on Judith Anne Callaghan is concerned I have not spoken to the Premier nor, as far as I am aware has he sought to contact me."

"In sentencing, the learned Judge indicated that "the Court was faced with the oppressively difficult task of balancing considerations of justice and mercy."

"The recommendation to the Parole Board for consideration to be given to release on parole after serving three months of the sentence of 30 months imprisonment is a matter for consideration and determination by that Board, which has an independent statutory role."

"I have decided not to give notice of appeal against the sentence of thirty months imprisonment imposed on Judith Anne Callaghan."

SUPPLY

Committee—Financial Statement—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 26 August (see p. 646) on Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen's motion—

"That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1986-87, a sum not exceeding \$709,000 to defray Contingencies—His Excellency the Governor."

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate—Leader of the Opposition) (12.40 p.m.): Mr Speaker, I rise today in response to the Premier and Treasurer's fourth and last Budget Speech. Four times the Premier has delivered State Budgets cooked up with the same tired old National Party recipe—equal parts of deceit, propaganda, rubbery figures, lame excuses and twisted priorities. Thankfully, he will not be doing the job after the coming election. Quite frankly, I cannot say that I really look forward to cleaning up the mess he has left behind.

I am certain that everyone is in for a shock when a Labor Government gets a good look at the true state of Queensland's finances after years of National and Liberal Party administrations. The Budget that the Premier presented one week ago is one that typifies his Government. It is drab, selfish, and out of touch with what is desperately needed. While all major economic indicators show a change in economic direction is overdue in the State of Queensland, the Premier delivers a budget that does not even attempt to come to grips with the problems confronting our great State.

My immediate reaction to this year's Budget was that it was a Budget of lost opportunities. It displayed no vision, no strategy, and no initiatives designed to tackle Queensland's serious economic problems. It was a sample bag Budget—glossy and expensive on the outside but empty on the inside.

That view was reinforced when financial and economic commentators and newspaper editorial writers had their say. The *Daily Sun* commented that it was a lack-lustre, lazy Budget. The *Courier-Mail* called it uninspiring but responsible, while a financial reporter on the ABC's *7.30 Report* called it "a very thin layer of cream on a crumbling cake". In response to the Budget claim that it was a Budget about jobs, *The Courier-Mail* concluded that it offered very few initiatives on employment.

This is an accountant's Budget, not an economist's Budget. It is a Budget concerned about adding up sums; not a Budget that tackles Queensland's economic problems head on. This Budget contains no policy directions and economic initiatives to rescue the Queensland economy from the morass into which it is slowly sinking. Only a Government with a leader who cannot think past the nearest crane could have produced such a dull and unimaginative Budget as this one. It is a Budget predicated on failure.

The projections admit that the Queensland economy will grow little if at all in 1986-87, and that capital works will fail to be sufficiently counter-cyclical. The Budget fails to do anything of significance for regional development; fails to promote decentralisation; fails to adequately address the problems facing small business and industry; fails to tackle and resolve the crisis facing the provision of services in Queensland; fails to tackle public service and quango waste and mismanagement; and, above all, it represents the inability of this National Party Government to think beyond simplistic clichés.

The Premier has fumbled the opportunity to pursue and implement policies that are desperately needed if Queensland is to weather this economic downturn and set the economy on a course of sustained growth.

Despite the highly selective presentation of indicators in the Premier and Treasurer's Budget Speech, the Queensland economy is crashing down around the Premier's ears, and all that he can do is blame everyone except his own Government and its dismal performance.

The economy of Queensland has become the "Johke" economy of Australia. For the benefit of National Party members, I point out that "Johke" is spelt "J-o-h-k-e".

In his Budget Speech, after making some facile comments about supposed Medicare and road underfunding, without mentioning that Queensland received one of the most favourable funding deals of any State in this year's Federal Budget, the Premier went on to list the Budget priorities as he saw them. One could be forgiven for thinking that what he said came out of a comedy workshop on the Government's handling of the Queensland economy.

Queensland has by far the worst record of any State in all those areas, yet the Premier is claiming that that is what the Budget is all about. Even Ministers must have had a good chuckle when the Premier trotted out those lines. In his declining years, the Premier apparently wants to take up a new career as a stand-up comic. But, after the last laugh, the economic legacy that the Premier will have left will be a crumbling economic base in Queensland and a huge cost burden on future generations.

Let me examine and analyse the Premier's claims one by one. I would have hoped that we could all agree that the most important problem that the Premier's Budget should address is unemployment and employment opportunities. As with so many things that the Queensland Government touches, when one looks beyond the propaganda and the public relations gimmicks and searches for the specific initiatives on employment generation, one is left with a very empty feeling. All honourable members can agree with the motherhood statement that we have to "encourage positive economic growth which provides stable long-term jobs in the private sector". But how do we do that? On that question the Budget has very few answers.

The first Government initiative referred to is the famous task force on employment, established as a political stunt in the heat of the Rockhampton by-election in early 1985. Do honourable members remember the presentation of its report almost one and a half years ago? The task force was a direct steal from the Western Australian task force on employment that was initiated two years prior to Queensland's effort. Is it not amazing that, when it comes to ideas and initiatives to solve Queensland's economic problems, the first thing that the Queensland National Party Government does is send a group of public servants off to the Labor States to see how it is done? Apart from the fact that the few initiatives suggested by the task force were very slow in getting off the ground,

the initiatives were a direct pinch from Labor Party policy that the Opposition had been proposing for years.

I refer specifically to the task force recommendations to establish the Queensland Industry Development Corporation and other measures such as streamlining all Government procedures and the slashing of red tape. Those ideas are good in principle, but, as with anything connected with the National Party, questions were raised almost immediately about the direction in which those proposals were heading and, in particular, about political interference and cronyism.

The QIDC was set up on 1 July, almost a year after it was first announced. Already, claims of political interference in its operations are being made.

Last year, in my response to the Budget, I stressed that the QIDC was doomed to failure if it became the subject of political interference. One would have thought that, after so many disasters and fiascos caused by Government interference in commercial decisions, the Government would have learnt its lesson.

Members will recall the Evans Deakin Industries share fiasco, which the Government tried desperately to forget. Members well remember that the Government lost \$6m in trying to prevent a take-over of EDI and, in addition to the direct loss of \$6m, which was two-thirds of the Government's initial investment of \$9m, it also lost the opportunity to do something positive with that \$9m. Queensland cannot afford a Government that throws away millions upon millions of dollars tilting at share market windmills.

Members will also recall the Walkers, ANI and Bundaberg Engineering fiasco. The Government tried to stop a take-over of Walkers by buying ANI shares in the company. Unfortunately, the Government's share offer was so generous that it gave ANI a million-dollar profit, which it promptly used to take over another Queensland company, Bundaberg Engineering. I am told the directors of ANI are still laughing about that one.

Only last week it was rumoured that the QIDC was likely to provide \$5m to the financially troubled Sanctuary Cove development on the Gold Coast. If that financial deal goes ahead, as rumoured, it will provide further evidence that this Government is more concerned with propping up the projects of its political cronies than with promoting properly assessed projects that are likely to have substantial economic spin-offs for the Queensland economy. It will be a total betrayal of the aims and objectives of the QIDC if, because of political pressure, public funds are channelled to the political cronies of this Government.

Can honourable members believe that a Government that cannot find sufficient funds for pensioner housing and low-income rental accommodation can find \$5m to plough into a luxury resort development for millionaires, from which the ordinary Queenslander will be forcibly excluded? If this deal goes ahead, as rumoured, it will be a case of millionaire socialism. Taxpayers' funds provided by the ordinary person will be used to provide luxury facilities for millionaires.

In last year's Budget honourable members were told that the purpose of the QIDC was to encourage industrial ventures in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors that showed potential economic promise but did not meet the usual minimum financing criteria. I fail to see how a real estate development could possibly qualify as an industrial venture. I also fail to see how a project such as Sanctuary Cove would have major economic spin-offs for the Queensland economy. Sanctuary Cove is a millionaires' playground and if it has suffered because of overruns or partnership problems, the last organisation that should become involved is the QIDC. Already the State Government has provided infrastructure such as bridges for the development. It would be a betrayal of tax-payers' money if the Government, through the QIDC became further involved.

Tax-payers should not subsidise the creation of a playground for millionaires that will have few economic spin-offs apart from the initial construction phase. The QIDC has the potential to provide substantial stimulus to economic development in Queensland, but it will fail in these objectives if it becomes the subject of political interference and political cronyism.

Capital works is the second item that is mentioned as an employment generator. This is true. However it is equally true that if capital works are provided at a cost that makes projects uneconomic, capital works themselves can be a destroyer as well as a creator of jobs. That has occurred in Queensland, particularly in the electricity supply industry.

Before I go into that, I should mention that Queensland's Capital Works Program has been declining in recent years. Even with the inclusion of the so-called Special Major Capital Works Program, capital works expenditure has been declining in Queensland since 1982-83.

Two years ago I detailed how the Special Major Capital Works Program was a public hoax, created to give the impression that the Government was doing something to combat our rising unemployment. The Co-ordinator-General's schedule of works clearly showed that the Special Major Capital Works Program was simply a rearrangement of funds designed to give the impression that it was something special and above normal. The roadworks associated with the Gateway Bridge were listed in this category, and the Government asked honourable members to believe that those roadworks were special and above normal and would not otherwise have been carried out. Are honourable members to believe that the Government intended to open the Gateway Bridge without any roads to and from it?

Two years ago, when the Special Major Capital Works Program was announced, it was funded by transferring moneys from the Special Projects Fund and consolidated revenue into this new account. Now honourable members see that with the end of the Special Major Capital Works Program in sight, the Special Projects Fund, which has exactly the same purpose as the Special Major Capital Works Program Fund, is to receive a financial boost from \$118m to \$181m.

As I said before, capital works can both create jobs and destroy jobs if they are not done on a cost-effective basis, and rarely in Queensland has a cost-benefit analysis been applied to capital works projects. The electricity industry is probably the best example of that. Because of poor planning and inefficient pricing policies, Queensland has the highest electricity charges in Australia.

Queenslanders will recall the huge blunder associated with the development of the Tarong Power Station, when the Premier overruled the electricity authorities and his Mines Minister and insisted that the new 1 400 MW power station be built at Tarong, near his home town of Kingaroy, rather than at the preferred site of Millmerran. That political decision cost Queensland consumers and Queensland industry an extra \$259m. That decision and others such as the cross-subsidisation pricing policy, which penalises efficient and cost effective electricity boards and subsidises inefficient boards, has meant that Queensland consumers pay for the most expensive electricity in Australia. Yet in our own backyard are huge deposits of steaming coal.

Queensland consumers pay approximately \$150 a year more for the same amount of electricity than their New South Wales counterparts. A typical electric home uses 1 000 KW hours (peak) and 1 000 KW hours (off peak) supplied per quarter. In New South Wales the cost of that supply is \$112.54 per quarter compared with \$124.55 in Victoria and a whopping \$140.98 in Queensland.

The current average selling price of domestic electricity in New South Wales is 6.75c per kilowatt hour, 7.66c in Victoria and 9.21c in Queensland. Even with the long overdue pensioner rebate for electricity of \$6 per month, which is much less than the \$23 per quarter rebate which the ALP offers, Queensland pensioners will still pay the highest electricity charges in Australia.

The point is that poor capital expansion planning in Queensland, and the refusal of the Government to follow the most cost-effective recommendations, has caused a massive loss of jobs because high electricity prices make projects uneconomical. I pointed out three years ago that the electricity consumption projections by the Queensland Government belonged in fantasy land.

When the annual report of the Electricity Commission was tabled in Parliament, it was easy to see that even at that stage the projections were 600 MW out. That is, when the report was tabled the projections for electricity consumption that year were 600 MW above the actual peak consumption. When I pointed that out to the Minister for Mines (Mr Gibbs), all he could do was abuse the Opposition for being negative. Now Queensland has over 2 000 MW of excess generating capacity, which means an excess investment of approximately \$2,000m.

I will list some of the stupid and crazy investment decisions in the electricity-generating industry over the last few years so that honourable members will see why Queensland is in economic turmoil. Apart from Tarong and its unnecessary \$259m expenditure, \$34m was spent on putting filter bags on the Tennyson and Bulimba power stations, after which they almost immediately closed. There was a headlong rush into building the power station at Stanwell, yet power stations such as Swanbank and Collinsville were closing down because of excess capacity.

Those projects were financed by borrowing and, as of a year ago, the debt of the Queensland Electricity Commission stood at over \$3,000m, with \$400m being required each year for interest payments. Honourable members have yet to know what the debt is this year. However, I am told that last year the Electricity Commission lost \$38m in foreign exchange on its overseas borrowings. I hope that the Minister will confirm my belief that that \$38m loss is correct.

In order to meet the increased debt-servicing costs, a 25 per cent tax, otherwise known as a capital works levy, was slapped on all electricity boards. That in turn translates to a 20 per cent tax on household power bills.

Sitting suspended from 12.59 to 2.15 p.m.

Mr WARBURTON: The record of this Government in the electricity industry is one of complete and absolute failure, and is a superb example of capital works projects implemented by Governments that destroy rather than create jobs.

Finally, the initiatives announced under the Department of Employment and Industrial Affairs are so limited as to be laughable. The initiatives themselves are laudable, but the funding restrictions severely limit their capacity to tackle our unemployment problem. Queensland's efforts are abysmal when compared to those in New South Wales, Victoria and other Labor States.

I find it incredible that only \$2.11m could be found for employment and training initiatives. Last year, New South Wales found over \$12m, which is, in per capita terms, three times that which Queensland will spend this year for specific employment initiatives. Victoria spent over \$40m on various employment programs compared to Queensland's lousy \$2m.

One can only come to the conclusion that this Government does not take our unemployment problem seriously. The Premier and Treasurer asserted in his Budget speech—

“The key to economic recovery lies with the private sector. The role of government is to provide a framework for growth in this area.”

It is a pity that this Budget does not put the Government's money where the Premier and Treasurer's mouth is. The employment initiatives announced are token gestures from a token Government, interested only in passing the buck to the private sector and doing nothing more.

The Government had a number of ways in which to move, but, as a first initiative that would be cost effective, the Government should have provided pay-roll tax and workers' compensation rebates for all apprentices and first-year employees. Secondly, it should increase dramatically the education and training opportunities available to young people through those programs.

In terms of generating jobs, this Budget is a failure. Projections for pay-roll tax support that assessment. Wages growth this year is expected to be a little more than six per cent, and projected pay-roll tax increases are of the same order. Therefore, Treasury expects little or no growth in employment this financial year. Employment initiatives have been placed on hold in the State's Budget. What has not been put on hold is the National Party's deceit and its dishonesty.

Although it is not my intention today to present an alternative budget, I will outline briefly Labor's alternative approach to managing Queensland's finances and economy. Overwhelming evidence is available to support the contention that gross waste, extravagance and mismanagement occur in Queensland's public sector. That is particularly true of our quangos.

Queensland does not have the structures of accountability to ensure the proper management of statutory authorities, boards, committees and other semi-Government bodies. For years, the Government has ignored recommendations by various Auditors-General that were designed to produce efficiency and accountability. The Government has taken the view that changes are not needed as long as the costs of inefficient practices can be pushed onto consumers.

In Government, Labor will establish a parliamentary public accounts committee—something that the Nationals and Liberals, who were part of the coalition for so long, have failed to do in the last three decades. Labor will provide for a system of program budgeting to ensure the clear identification of individual programs within each Government department. That will allow a flexible and rapid implementation of changes in spending priorities. In relation to quangos—Labor will set up a statutory bodies review committee with full powers to investigate the management and financial practices of quangos. That will allow a Labor Government to decide whether the objectives of quangos are being met, and to set down guide-lines designed to ensure that the taxpayers get proper value for their money.

The number of quangos in Queensland multiplied dramatically between 1957 and 1983—when the Liberals were part of a coalition Government, incidentally. So much for the Liberal Party's sudden interest in reducing quango numbers! The Liberals have now set up a waste-watch committee to look at such things as the inefficiency of quangos. It is a pity the Liberals did not have such ideas—such bright ideas—while they were in Government. Instead of putting them forward now and expecting people to believe they are genuine. All they did in government was watch waste multiply and quangos run completely out of control.

In Government, Labor will establish a Cabinet Economics Committee to do something this Government and previous Governments have never done, and that is to take control of the economic reins of this State. The Cabinet Economics Committee will also oversee the implementation of Labor's State and Regional Development strategy. Labor's strategy—and let me remind all honourable members that the Labor Party is the only Party in this State with such a program—will co-ordinate Government services and assistance to boost private sector developments on a regional basis. This in turn will aid decentralisation, create new jobs, halt the drift away from rural and provincial areas, and lift the economy of the State as a whole.

Labor will also introduce capital budgeting and works programming as well as a Parliamentary public works committee to ensure that the millions of dollars in public funds spent by a Government on capital works are spent wisely.

Labor will also introduce long-overdue changes to the system of State taxes and charges. A complete review of State taxes, fees and charges will be undertaken with a view to lessening their impact on Queensland families. The contribution of those taxes and charges to the public accounts will no longer be hidden; it will be clearly identified in future State Budgets.

The Budget that I will present next year will be vastly different—I mean it—from the paltry document tabled here last week by the Premier. Labor is committed to dragging

Queensland's budgetary processes out of the quill-and-ink days and into the computer age.

Clearly, this Budget is a prime example of this Government's failure to come to terms with the problems confronting Queensland. It displays a complete inability to adjust to the needs of our community faced with a depressed economy.

The Queensland Government refuses to heed the repeated advice about the urgent need for it to change economic direction. This Budget gave the Government opportunities to act—opportunities that it has either deliberately cast aside or not had the capacity to embrace. It is a budget of lost opportunities. As I said earlier, the Budget presented by the Premier has the same qualities as his Government—it is deficient, dull, and deceitful. It makes no effort to tackle any of Queensland's economic problems. It gives no incentive to the private sector to expand. It goes no way towards addressing our single biggest problem—unemployment and, in particular, youth unemployment.

This National Party Government has no answers. It thinks only of itself. It squanders public funds on luxuries and its own indulgences while other areas of genuine need in our economy—areas that could stimulate economic growth—are starved of funds.

This National Party Government, like the previous coalition Government, acts as if the money it spends on its Budget is its own. When it comes to public accountability, this National Party Government thinks it is a law unto itself. No other Government in this nation is so arrogant, so selfish and so reckless in the spending of public funds.

One of the questions foremost in the minds of Queenslanders now is just how much of their money has been wasted and continues to be wasted, misused, misspent or misappropriated because of the National Party Government's point-blank refusal to introduce mechanisms to make Ministers, and those who handle the public purse, fully accountable for their actions. This Government has been plagued by scandal after scandal. Its financial integrity and propriety have been found wanting.

The public funds scandal in which one person has been gaoled and two others face charges has given all concerned Queenslanders good reason to question the standards of this Government. The repeated scandals involving public funds that have erupted within the National Party Government have shown quite clearly that for years there has been no real control over the spending of tax-payers' money.

It is a scandal in itself that the person who masquerades as the financial decision-maker of the State of Queensland—the Premier and Treasurer—should evade his responsibility for one of the worst cases of misappropriation of public money. That misappropriation occurred in his own department, in a committee which came under his direct ministerial control.

It was ironical that on Tuesday—exactly one week ago—the Premier stood in this very place to deliver his fourth and, as I said, last Budget, and spoke of responsible financial management. It was ironical because, the very next day, someone who had her fingers in the public till right under the Premier's nose was convicted and sentenced to 30 months' imprisonment. I know there is an argument that goes, "Well she was caught, wasn't she?" I accept that, but what I want to know is: How did the Premier and Treasurer allow such crooked and corrupt activities to occur in his own department and under his own name? The short answer to that question is that he did nothing about it and did nothing to prevent it.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: I rise to a point of order.

Opposition Members interjected.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: It is not unusual to interrupt when the Leader of the Opposition is speaking. On this occasion he is quite wrong. It is completely wrong and untrue to say that public moneys were being misappropriated and all the rest of it.

He knows that these funds were collected outside of the Government's own area of responsibility and activity. In that context the Leader of the Opposition has——

Opposition Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! I will make the decision on what is a point of order.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: I point out that the Leader of the Opposition is quite wrong. I know that so many times he is wrong. He refuses to acknowledge that what he said is not true and is quite incorrect. The Government funds were audited and were correct. It was money that was taken from the public and that nobody knew was involved in the matter before the courts.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr WARBURTON: Last month I made reference in this House to the out-of-court settlement of a defamation action involving the Premier and the Brisbane television station QTQ 9. I said at that time, and I repeat it again today, that if the settlement figure paid to the Premier by the Bond Corporation is somewhere between \$400,000 and \$500,000, I do not believe the Premier to be a fit and proper person to hold the reins of Government in this State, nor do I believe the Bond Corporation fit to hold a television licence in our State.

I called on the Premier to reveal if the reported settlement figure of \$400,000 or thereabouts was correct, and I do so again today.

On 5 August in this Assembly, when speaking about this payment, I said—

“Was it a general ‘you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours’ payment by the Bond Corporation to the Premier, or was it a more specific sling for particular political favours?”

I went on to say—

“If the payment was made to the Premier, he is embroiled in the most serious political scandal in Queensland’s history. If the Premier accepted that alleged payment, he is not a fit and proper person to hold the reins of government in this State. Furthermore, if the Bond Corporation, as is alleged in the media reports, paid that amount to the Premier, it is not a fit and proper company to hold a television licence in this State.”

On 6 August in this Assembly I asked the Premier—

“Why don’t you want the public to know the settlement amount? What have you got to hide?”

I went on to say—

“... if that payment was, as has been reported in the vicinity of \$400,000, the Premier’s position is indefensible. The Premier is on a hook of his own making.”

Most honourable members in the Chamber are aware of media coverage given to this secret settlement affair. Most people would have already read or heard public statements by journalists and commentators that State Government sources had confirmed that an amount of about \$400,000 had been paid by the Bond Corporation to the Premier.

I turn to more recent events and information relating to that important issue. The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal is at present considering the circumstances that relate to that defamation settlement. In a letter to the solicitors of the Bond Corporation on 25 August, the tribunal said as follows—

“The tribunal has formed the view that the serious allegation raised in the Warburton statement and associated documents address, among other things, the fitness and propriety of the licensee.”

That statement reveals that the tribunal is very concerned about the whole affair. In fact, today honourable members read in the newspapers that the tribunal has given the Bond Corporation until 10 September to provide details of the defamation settlement.

The Premier has dodged the issue of the amount of the Bond payment by maintaining that he is bound by a confidentiality clause in the terms of the defamation settlement. I agree that confidentiality arrangements are often part of settlement deals of that kind. However, as I have said so often, it takes two to make the deal, and those two can just as easily agree to reveal the facts in the public interest.

Honourable members will recall that the company that put the *Today Tonight* program together for Channel 9 was known as Tripod Television. The Bond Corporation paid out Tripod's contract after deciding to axe *Today Tonight*. No confidentiality clause was stipulated as far as that settlement figure was concerned.

As is often the case in serious matters such as this secret settlement affair, further information came to hand. Mr Ernest Oliver, who had been a board member of Channel 9 for 26 years and was unceremoniously removed when the new regime took over, made it very clear indeed during television interviews last week that Channel 9 fully intended to defend the Bjelke-Petersen defamation action.

And why would that action not be defended when it is realised that Channel 9 was at that time paying out a very hefty premium each year for a \$250,000 insurance cover? Why would any company that was prepared to pay a massive premium—said to be about \$48,000 a year—to insure itself against defamation actions not defend such actions, and in this particular case, avail itself of the \$250,000 cover as payment or part-payment of the settlement amount?

The reason has now emerged. The insurers for whom T. W. Biggs and Biggs solicitors acted would have no part of any out-of-court settlement. They would not have any part of it.

Mr BAILEY: I rise to a point of order. I apologise for not being in my correct seat. Is this not supposed to be a debate on the Budget?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr Warburton: Their line was to defend the action that they apparently believed was defensible. In fact, there is also reason to believe that Channel 9 had additional defamation coverage beyond the amount that I have already mentioned.

I certainly trust that the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal will inquire of members of the previous Channel 9 board as to what its intentions were regarding this defamation action.

One of the persons who took a place on the revamped Channel 9 board was the Premier's close associate and financial adviser, as well as a trustee of the National Party, Sir Edward Lyons. Although that association needed no reinforcement, Lyons raised the matter of the writ at the first meeting of the new board which, incidentally, he chaired in his capacity as deputy chairman, telling all in attendance that the Premier intended to "go all the way".

In relation to that matter, I refer to a statement by Mr Hugh Cornish, former general manager of QTQ 9, to a licence transfer hearing of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal last year in Brisbane. I refer to that statement for a specific reason. Mr Cornish, who commenced duties with the channel in 1959, was at that time their chief news reader. He became general manager and took up that post in July 1981. He said this—

"After the take-over of QTQ by the Bond Corporation, there were two occasions which caused me great concern as general manager of QTQ.

The first was that the Board Meeting conducted in the offices of the company on Tuesday, 26 February 1985, when the Queensland members of the QTQ Board attended for the first time. The Deputy Chairman, Sir Edward Lyons, indicated that he felt there was an imbalance in our news reporting and current affairs programs,

particularly relating to the then industrial disputation between the electricity unions and the Premier.

He felt that certain items were 'weighted' against the Premier and instruction was then given to the General Manager to prepare a paper relating to unbiased and balanced reporting of news and current affairs to be tendered at the next Board Meeting on March 26."

Mr Cornish went on to say in that statement—

"The second occasion concerned the coverage of the Sheffield Shield final between Queensland and New South Wales, held from Friday, 15 March 1985 to Tuesday, 19 March 1985."

In part, Mr Cornish states—

"On Monday, the 11th March the Deputy Chairman, Sir Edward Lyons, rang and indicated"—

would you believe it—

" 'that the Government wished the Station to cover the Shield' and that the matter had been discussed in Cabinet. I indicated to Sir Edward that the matter of providing such a service was almost impossible since TCN could not provide an outside broadcasting coverage."

I refer to that statement from Mr Cornish because I wish to indicate the Lyons influence in the National Party Government in Queensland.

At this juncture I would like to briefly outline aspects of the Bond Corporation's takeover of Channel 9, and related matters. On 15 January 1985, the Bond Corporation's take-over of Channel 9 was transacted. On 20 January 1985, Sir Edward Lyons was approached to serve on the new board of directors. On 30 January 1985, Bond Corporation executives met with the Queensland Premier and discussed the appointment to the new board. Those appointments, including that of Sir Edward Lyons, were approved at a meeting of the QTQ 9 board on the afternoon of 30 January 1985.

On 26 February 1985, Sir Edward Lyons, in his position as deputy chairman of the board, complained at a board meeting about what he perceived as the station's political bias against the Queensland Government. His complaint arose in discussion about outstanding writs involving Channel 9, one of them the writ in question issued by the Queensland Premier. On 30 April 1985, Sir Edward Lyons resigned as deputy chairman and board member of QTQ 9 in the wake of his involvement in the TAB credit betting scandal. On 1 May 1985, the day after Sir Edward's resignation, the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal began hearings in Brisbane to consider, among other matters, how new directors had been appointed to the board of QTQ 9 following the Bond take-over. Sir Edward Lyons did not appear before nor did he give any evidence to the tribunal's hearings. On 20 December 1985, the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal formally approved the Bond Corporation's take-over of Channel 9. On 2 April, 1986, notice was given in the Supreme Court of Queensland that the Premier's defamation action against Channel 9 had been dropped.

There has always been concern about why the program *Today Tonight* was axed. Many people point to the Premier's loans mission to Japan story—the one which prompted the Premier's defamation action—and the fact that it was the same television program that investigated and broke the story concerning the Lyons/TAB credit-betting scandal. As I said previously, there are those who are no longer prepared to sit back and remain silent. Certainly Mr Oliver has made significant comments. Let me assure members here and now, I emphasise that there are others who are only too willing to appear before the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal and give evidence under oath. Others are prepared to give evidence under oath before any tribunal, evidence that relates directly to this particular defamation issue.

I have no idea how far the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal intends to pursue the defamation settlement issue; that is for it to decide. However, it is my belief that the

tribunal needs to inquire as to whether Lyons had any involvement in the *Today Tonight* story that caused the Premier to take the defamation action against Channel 9, bearing in mind Lyons's subsequent appointment as the deputy chairman of the new board following the Bond take-over.

Does the tribunal intend to call before it those journalists and producers who were involved and inquire as to whether discussions were held with Lyons over this story? I believe sincerely that it should.

What was the nature of the discussion held between Lyons and the journalists involved when he met them over lunch at a well-known Brisbane restaurant prior to the broadcast of the offending *Today Tonight* program? Is it correct that Lyons, after he departed from the Channel 9 board, was involved in discussions with board members as to the best way to resolve the Premier's defamation action?

Mr Oliver has clearly outlined Channel 9 policy on defamation writs for the 26 years that he was a board member. I am sure that the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal would be very interested to see a list of all outstanding writs at the time this particular action was under consideration and the advice from the then Channel 9 board as to what course it had decided to take in each case.

I say again: If the Premier thinks this matter is going to die down and go away, he has another think coming.

The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal has given the Bond Corporation until 10 September to provide "a comprehensive response dealing with all matters relevant to the settlement, in April 1986, of the defamation action brought by the Premier of Queensland against QTQ".

Notwithstanding the inquiries being pursued by the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal, I believe very strongly that the Premier has a public duty to reveal the amount of the settlement payment he received from the Bond Corporation. The Premier says that he is prevented from revealing the amount involved by the terms of settlement. However, as I have pointed out, it would be a relatively simple procedure for that particular condition of settlement to be set aside. It would probably need to involve nothing more than a telephone call between the Premier and the Bond Corporation.

As I said, I realise that it is not unusual for out-of-court settlements to contain confidentiality conditions, but I do not believe that the existence of such a condition should be set above the greater principle of the integrity and propriety of a Government's being seen to be beyond reproach. The people of Queensland will not be fobbed off by the Premier's playing hard to get on this issue. Until he discloses the amount of the defamation settlement involved and gives a satisfactory explanation of the circumstances under which it was paid, there are 400 000 good reasons why the Premier and his discredited National Party Government deserve to be voted out of office at the forthcoming State election.

The Budget places on public display just how bankrupt of financial and economic expertise the National Party State Government really is. I find it difficult to believe that the Government could come forward with such a hollow, shallow document. It is not a proper Budget; it is a facade. The Government tries to hide its inadequacies by dressing up the Budget with most outrageous claims.

The deceit surrounding the Budget is extraordinary. Take, for example, the full-page advertisements that appeared in every newspaper throughout the State last Thursday. The advertisements hailed a "good news Budget", describing it as a "breath of fresh air". The only odour I detect about the Budget is that of a decaying, declining Government. The so-called good news has simply been dreamt up—manufactured! The Budget is a work of fiction.

The newspaper advertisements make two major claims about the State Budget: Firstly, that it imposes no new taxes, with Queensland continuing to have the lowest

tax rates in Australia; secondly, that it is a balanced Budget. The first is an exercise in illusion; the second is evidence of delusion.

I shall examine those two claims in some detail. The Premier says that the Budget will not burden Queenslanders with any new State taxes. Why would it, when the Government is making such a killing from the State taxes, fees and charges that already apply?

Over the last five years, the Queensland Government's revenue from State taxes, fees and charges has increased by 75 per cent. In dollar terms, the State Government will collect \$1,250m more in its own tax collections this year than it did five years ago. This is the very State Government that would have people believe that it is attracted to taxes in the same way as Superman is attracted to kryptonite.

Honourable members are familiar with the Government and National Party's advertisements about their attitude to taxes. We are peppered with claims about cutting taxes, lowering taxes, reducing taxes, eliminating taxes, and about how the National Party regards taxes as the financial equivalent of AIDS—to be avoided at all costs. But what do we find on examination of the State Government's tax receipts? Its revenue has increased by 75 per cent, or \$1,250m, over the last decade. That figure does not include revenue from two of the State Government's biggest money-spinners—electricity tariffs and motor vehicle registration fees. The amounts that the Government raises from these two sources are not listed in the Budget papers. Honourable members know that both have gone right through the roof in recent years. Any Queenslander could verify that. If those electricity tariffs and motor vehicle registration fees were taken into account, the increase in the State Government's taxes, fees and charges over the last five years would be even higher than the 75 per cent rise that can now be easily identified.

Some of the individual items that contribute to State Government revenue are worth mentioning. Railway fares and freight charges have increased by 105 per cent over the last five years, from \$490m to \$1,008m. Mining royalties and receipts are up by 132 per cent from \$87m in 1981-82 to \$202m this year. Land revenue is up by 96 per cent over the period, and miscellaneous receipts have jumped 130 per cent. Direct State taxes, such as pay-roll tax and stamp duty, have risen by almost 50 per cent, from \$730m in 1981-82, to \$1,085m this year. All of that comes from a State Government that says it has an aversion to taxes and is repulsed by taxes.

In reality, this National Party State Government has gone on a tax binge over the last five years. It now collects close to \$3 billion a year—that is, \$3,000m a year—in State taxes, fees and charges and other forms of revenue. That figure does not include electricity tariffs and motor vehicle registration fees.

Perhaps the most incredible statement of all in the Premier's Budget Speech is that the Government's fees and charges cannot be considered as taxes but represent reasonable charges for services provided. With this very sweeping statement the Premier dispenses with the thousands of increases in fees and charges that occur throughout the year, but about which no information appears in the Budget papers.

Irrespective of the service provided, Government fees and charges do form a substantial part of the Government's revenue-raising operations but are conveniently excluded from the annual Budget process. Increases are notified, as they occur, in the little-known and scarcely read *Queensland Government Gazette*. So, in effect, we have two Budgets here in Queensland—the public Budget and what I call the Government's hidden Budget.

Some of the increases in fees and charges attract publicity because they affect the entire Queensland population. Electricity charges, motor vehicle registration fees and rail fares are the main examples. However, as a rule, the increases in these fees and charges receive no publicity whatsoever.

The Deputy Premier has the nerve to reject claims that the increases are made stealthily. He says that they are published in the *Government Gazette*, which is a public document. But how many people know that the *Government Gazette* even exists? Probably

one in a thousand, if that. And how many actually get to see that *Government Gazette* in which these increases are listed each week? Probably one in ten thousand, if that. These fees and charges contribute directly to cost-of-living increases, and the Queensland Government is not one to hold back in this area.

Figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that the contribution of State and local government charges to cost-of-living increases in Queensland has consistently been higher than that in other States. The Premier cannot seem to quite make up his mind about how and why increases in the Government's fees and charges are determined. In his Budget Speech last year, the Premier said that the Government was required by the Financial Administration and Audit Act to maintain the value of all fees and charges. This year, the Premier says that fees and charges have been reviewed and, where appropriate, increases have been implemented.

The true situation is that there is no legal requirement on the State Government to automatically adjust fees and charges to maintain their value—in terms of inflation or anything else. Every time these fees and charges are increased, it is by the conscious decision of the National Party State Cabinet. Any increases can occur only as the result of a deliberate decision of the State Government.

The Government is quite able to hold fees and charges steady if it so desires. The simple fact is that the Queensland Government has chosen not to take that option.

I assure the people of Queensland that a State Labor Government elected later this year will overhaul the system of adjusting fees and charges. To begin with, a Labor Government will include details of any adjustments in the State Budget papers. A Labor Government will also discontinue the current practice of increasing fees and charges just for the sake of it. In fact, there is very good reason to believe that many of the charges could be reduced significantly. The Queensland Government reaps a financial bonanza from this source of revenue.

Since last year's Budget, there have been more than 6 000 individual increases in fees and charges under more than 100 different Acts of Parliament. In the last two months alone, there have been almost 3 000 increases in various fees and charges.

As for the Premier's statement that these fees represent a reasonable charge for a service provided—he quite obviously is prepared to condone this form of extortion and these rip-off practices. Take, for example, the charge for a single photocopied page of a Supreme Court document—\$6.20. That is not reasonable. That is daylight robbery. I had personal experience only the other day of being charged that sum.

There is another important aspect of this false premise about the Budget's containing no new taxes that cannot be overlooked and that is the provision of State Government services. In his Budget Speech, the Premier talks in terms of enhancing Government services to the community as if adding icing to a cake. Given the deplorable standard of Government services in Queensland, the so-called enhancements outlined in the Budget are nothing more than the Government's pretending to meet its most basic responsibilities. The Government finances its services to the community from two sources—Commonwealth payments and State-generated revenue. However, despite a massive 75 per cent increase in its own revenue base over the last five years, and better-than-average payments from the Commonwealth, the Queensland Government continues to starve the Queensland people of those services for which it is responsible.

The Premier and the National Party make a great hullabaloo with their phoney claims of running a low-tax Government. This argument is built on rotten planks.

The National Party Government claims that certain taxes might be lower in Queensland than in other States. So, too, is the capacity of Queenslanders to pay those taxes, because they have the lowest average weekly earnings in Australia. The standard of Government services they receive in return for their taxes is also the lowest in the nation. What is worse is that the Queensland Government is refusing to spend the full amount of Federal funds it is provided with to finance services to the Queensland community.

The Queensland Government is allocated funds to provide services at a level equivalent to a set national standard, but the money does not end up being spent where it is really needed, or on what it was originally allocated for. The Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing (Mr Hinze) might agree that that is so. Where is the money going? It is either being wasted—that is extravagantly or inefficiently spent—or it is being diverted to other State Government programs.

The Commonwealth Grants Commission report documents the Queensland Government's underfunding of services to the community. The commission's latest report shows that Queensland spends \$104 per capita a year less than the national average on health, education, welfare and other community services, and that that represents underspending on services for which it is responsible of \$260m a year. It is no wonder that Queensland does not have enough police officers, nurses, fire-fighters, ambulance officers or prison warders. It is no wonder that parents and citizens' associations have to shell out in excess of \$20m a year on items that the State Government should be providing in Queensland schools. It is no wonder that Queensland does not have sufficient police officers to implement an effective system of random breath-testing in Queensland.

The Government's deliberate policy of understaffing the Queensland Police Force is definitely costing lives on our State's roads. The Government has the distinction of achieving what was always considered impossible—that is, putting a price on people's lives. I do not say that lightly.

This Budget provides for an extra 281 police officers, whereas the Police Commissioner says that an additional 463 officers are needed urgently. The Queensland Police Union puts the figure at in excess of 1 000. On closer inspection, it can be seen that only 100 of the number of police officers are allocated to alleviate the current understaffing crisis in the police force. The remaining 181 are provided as forward commitments against future population increases. I thought that this was meant to be the Budget for the 1986-87 financial year.

Not being content with mortgaging our State's financial future through its reckless program of borrowings, this National Party Government is also mortgaging the future of our State's police force. I remind the Minister for Police of his commissioner's comments of September last year. In his annual report, Commissioner Lewis had this to say—

"I estimate that the Department requires an additional 463 personnel just to deal with the tasks which presently need to be addressed. This does not take into account any further increases in population, crime rates and demands for a host of police services which are likely to continue into the foreseeable future."

The Queensland Police Force is taking two steps forward and, unfortunately, three steps back, because the additional police approved in the annual State Budget fail to cover staff wastage. That not only stretches to the limit the capacity of the Queensland Police Force to protect our community, but also places an unacceptable burden on serving police officers. The thin blue line is becoming thinner each year and the Queensland Government is unable to comprehend the false economy of its policy of police services on the cheap.

The National Party Government is afflicted by the same stingy and short-sighted attitude in regard to nursing services. Honourable members would recall that the Queensland Nurses Union requested an extra 1 500 nurses in its pre-Budget submission to alleviate what is widely recognised as a critical shortage of nursing staff. Although it has been estimated that a further 2 500 nursing staff would be required to bring Queensland staffing levels up to the average of those in other State public hospital systems, the Budget provides for a total of 550 nurses "and other hospital staff"—that is, other staff that is included in that number—which will only accommodate the expansion in current services and will do nothing to address the massive backlog in staffing needs.

Nursing services in Queensland's hospital system are in a state of collapse. Many nurses are either leaving the profession or heading interstate. It is typical of the National Party Government's ruthlessness that it does not hesitate to exploit and debilitate the State's nursing profession.

The story is the same in the Government's funding of fire-fighting and ambulance services. Both are evidently expected to operate on shortened, shoe-string budgets. Once again the lives of Queenslanders are placed at risk as a direct consequence of the National Party Government's miserly penny-pinching ways. Ambulance services, particularly in the outer Brisbane and non-metropolitan regions, are underfunded and, in many instances, undermanned. It is disgraceful in this day and age that Queensland has ambulance services which are one-person operations.

For years the Queensland Government has refused to participate in numerous Commonwealth programs to improve services to the community. One such program is the provision of paramedical services to the aged in their homes.

The Queensland Government also restricts funding for the Blue Nurses. Their home nursing service has been forced to operate on severely limited budgets because the Queensland Government refuses to match the Commonwealth on a dollar-for-dollar basis up to the maximum subsidy level available to home nursing services.

This Government is at its lousiest when it comes to providing grants to charitable and non-profit organisations. Meals on Wheels—that great organisation—received \$10,000, or the equivalent of three days' travelling expenses for the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs. I saw no allocation at all for the RSPCA and I ask the Minister whether the Queensland Government does in fact give anything to that organisation. Similarly, no mention was made of any specific grant to assist Boys Town—another very worthwhile institution—in its invaluable work. I asked myself why. Why does no specific grant exist? Boys Town is, as everyone knows, struggling to keep its head above water. The art unions that it organises help keep it financially afloat, but only just. But guess how much Boys Town paid to the State Government last year in the form of art union permit fees? A massive \$113,000! I emphasise that the responsible Minister ripped \$113,000 off a charitable organisation—an organisation of such worth as that.

Public housing is another facet in which the Queensland Government puts profiteering before helping the needy. Queensland, with more than twice the population of South Australia, has only half the amount of rental housing accommodation of that State. Recently the manipulation by Queensland of the Federal Government's Mortgage and Rent Relief Scheme came to light. It hurt the National Party, about which most people in Queensland are very happy.

Approximately \$8m is available for distribution by the Queensland Government to assist the needy and the low-income-earners who are having difficulty keeping up with their home-loan payments, but last financial year only 27 applicants were approved by this Government and only \$45,000 was paid out—\$45,000 out of that massive amount of almost \$8m, or 0.5 per cent of the funds available. Queensland now accounts for 50 per cent of home repossession in Australia, but only 27 families were assisted through that scheme. In contrast, Western Australia, which is a State with which Queensland compares favourable geographically and in other ways, but has a smaller population, assisted 493 families.

Until recently, Queensland limited the repayable grant to \$2,000 and charged interest on that amount. For the first two years, six per cent annual interest was charged. The remainder had to be repaid within the next four years at current bank interest rates. On today's interest rates, the loan of \$2,000 would cost an additional \$1,360 in interest. The Queensland Government would make 68 per cent profit on the \$2,000 repayable grant, \$1,000 of which was supplied by the Federal Government. Before the changes last month, Queensland was the only State that charged interest on loans provided under that scheme.

One can only conclude, as with so many other Federal Government schemes, that the Queensland Government regarded mortgage relief funds as a money-making opportunity for itself. Families with home loans who were facing repayment difficulties were thrown on the scrap-heap whilst the Queensland Government played the money market and imposed conditions which made the scheme financially unattractive.

The maximum loan available under the scheme in Queensland is now \$4,000 and, only now, no interest is charged initially. But this long overdue change would have come too late for many families who have lost their home because of the National Party Government's tight-fisted attitudes. There is no doubt that this change was forced upon the National Party Government by revelations of its management of the available funds.

Mr WHARTON: I rise to a point of order. What the honourable member has stated is not correct. He knows that the whole trouble is caused by high interest rate policies. That is what causes all the trouble, but he does not like to admit that. That is why people are suffering. What the Leader of the Opposition has said is not right.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr Warburton: I now wish to turn to the hoary old claim that Queensland balances its Budget while the Federal Government does not, and the grossly deficient financial information presented in this Budget. Queensland refuses to publish its Budget papers in national accounting form and therefore no Budget deficit is calculated. After all, there can be no Budget deficit if one is not calculated. One has to wait until the Australian Bureau of Statistics calculates Queensland's deficit before the facts become clear. In calculating Queensland's deficit, the ABS uses the same methodology as the Federal Government uses in calculating its deficit. Fortunately, very few people now believe the nonsense that the Queensland Budget is balanced. Last year the Budget papers admitted that only the Consolidated Revenue Fund was balanced.

In recent months I have noticed that even the Liberal leader, himself a former Treasurer, has begun to echo Labor Party comments, particularly my comments, about the balanced Budget myth. The member for Nundah (Sir William Knox) has been very critical of the Premier's reliance on that balanced Budget myth. I will go back to the Budget Speech of 1977, which was delivered by none other than the member for Nundah. He said—

“The Government was able to complete the 1976-77 year with a deficit of a little over \$1 million—virtually a balanced Budget.”

I will now quote from the same Treasurer's Budget Speech of the following year, 1978. He said—

“... the Government was able to finish the year with a virtually balanced Budget...”

Those words are from the very same person who now claims that the Premier is misleading Queenslanders when he talks about a balanced Budget, and that a balanced Budget is only a matter of juggling a few figures.

The great hypocrisy is that the member for Nundah never shied away from peddling the same myth when he was Treasurer of this State. It is very simple to do if one runs an account with a surplus and then switches the surplus funds over into the Trust and Special Funds just prior to the end of the financial year. That is a very neat trick. At the end of May, just one month before the end of the last financial year, there was a surplus of \$211m in this State's Consolidated Revenue Fund. That magically disappeared to balance the accounts at the end of the month.

It would take an extremely naive person to believe that the Government had such fine control over expenditure that it could use up any unexpected revenue by adjusting expenditure programs on a month-by-month or day-by-day basis. That is, of course, not the case.

This year for the first time the Treasurer's Annual Statement is presented with the Budget papers. On pages 12 and 19 of that statement the magical switching process is detailed.

In last year's Budget papers it was estimated that \$102m was to be transferred from consolidated revenue to Capital Works Programs in the Trust and Special Funds—the Special Major Capital Works Program and the Special Projects Fund. However, the income from interest payments and railway freights was much higher than anticipated and a massive \$283.7m had to be eventually transferred by the Government.

It is easy to balance consolidated revenue when all one has to do is transfer any excess—any of those unspent millions—into a convenient hollow log. Just imagine the cries for extra money from teachers, nurses, police and other services if that surplus was left lying around in the Consolidated Revenue Fund. People would then have the proof that much more could be done than is now being done by this National Party Government to improve the standard of services in Queensland.

However, for the benefit of the National Party back bench, and I dare say most of the Ministry, I point out that balancing consolidated revenue is not of very great interest. What is of interest is the total outcome of all three accounts of the State Budget sector, that is, consolidated revenue, Trust and Special Funds and the Loan Fund.

It is when one looks at the total result that one gets the full terrifying picture of how much Queensland is in the red thanks to the National Party—and the Liberal Party, which was in coalition with it.

Queensland has by far the largest per capita deficit of any State or, indeed, the Commonwealth. The Australian Bureau of Statistics calculates the Queensland Budget sector deficit in 1985-86 at \$1,153m or \$450 for every Queenslander. That is more than double the deficit of New South Wales and Victoria, and it is substantially higher than the Commonwealth Budget deficit of \$315 per person.

The only thing that the Queensland Government can show the rest of Australia is how to get deeper and deeper into debt. The deficit of the Queensland Government represents the amount that had to be borrowed to balance the books. In that context, Queensland does not have a balanced Budget; it has a borrowed Budget. No wonder Queensland refuses to calculate its deficit as the other States do.

In drawing up its Budget, the Queensland Government works on the notion that you can fool some of the people some of the time and the National Party back bench all of the time.

Since Queensland Treasury officers have agreed to adopt national accounting conventions, why does the National Party Government refuse to present a Budget in national accounting format? The only reason for that refusal is that this State Government has something to hide, and the calculation of the deficit is that something.

Of even greater concern is the level of the State debt. However, nowhere in the Budget papers is a comprehensive summary presented of the total net debt of the State Government and its statutory authorities. All that is shown is the net public debt under the 1927 financial agreement, which now stands at \$2,456m and \$254m incurred in interest payments.

What is not mentioned is that that debt represents only about one-fifth of the total debt of the State Government and its statutory authorities. The balance is made up of departmental borrowings outside the financial agreement, and semi-Government borrowings and other guarantees.

Nowhere can one obtain an accurate figure of the total net debt of the State Government and its statutory authorities. It seems that no work has been done by State Treasury to calculate that figure and, indeed, it was only a few years ago that one Treasury official bemoaned the fact that debt redemption was sometimes included under travelling expenses and incidentals.

At the moment the best that one can do is to try to estimate net debt by deducting interfund transfers, and it is found that that has exploded from \$8,731m two years ago to more than \$12,500m as at June 1986, or \$5,000 for every man, woman and child in Queensland.

The Deputy Premier made an absolute fool of himself earlier this year when he tried to argue that this debt was not a burden on Queensland tax-payers. He said it was a burden on Queensland consumers. I ask any person in Queensland to indicate whether he is not both a tax-payer and a consumer. Whether someone is slugged as a tax-payer or slugged as a consumer in Queensland, it doesn't make much difference; he is still slugged. This level of public sector debt represents a huge burden on future generations and, unfortunately, it represents a burden placed upon them because this Government has financed some very dubious capital works.

Another concern is that the Government seems to have lost track—would you believe it—of its overseas borrowings. Last year, a question was asked of the Deputy Premier on the total overseas currency exposure of the Queensland Government and its statutory authorities and the realised foreign currency losses on those borrowings. We were told that foreign currency borrowings amounted to \$1,705m from which the Government suffered realised losses of \$75m and national overall currency loss of \$346m. This year on 6 August a similar question was asked of the Deputy Premier (Mr Gunn), but he claimed that the information was not centrally held and therefore he could not give an answer. Either the Government has lost track of its foreign borrowings or it is engaged in a cover-up on the extent of the losses sustained. I have been informed that the Queensland Electricity Commission alone lost \$38m last year on its foreign borrowings. If that figure is correct, I would estimate that the total currency loss suffered by the Queensland Government and its statutory authorities last financial year is in the order of \$150m. Again, I call on the Treasurer to provide an answer. No private company would let its directors get away with a claim that they do not know the currency losses on borrowings because they do not hold the information centrally.

Queensland's economy is headed for recession under this Government, but whereas the Budget papers recognise this, the Government proposes nothing to counteract it. Firstly, within the confines of zero growth in outlays, much could have been done to stimulate the Queensland economy through selective capital expenditure policies and appropriate regional and industry policies. If Queensland had program budgeting in place, it would have been a simple job to accelerate those programs that had priority and cut back those programs that were of less importance. Instead, in the absence of program budgeting, the Government has effectively left cost-cutting or expansion to the departments themselves.

Queensland's refusal to implement program budgeting, based I understand on a report by Treasury 20 years ago, denies Government a major tool in the implementation of economic policy, and is the major reason why the so-called initiatives of this Budget are so vague and watery.

I call on the Premier to explain why the Government has ignored calls for program budgeting from previous Auditors-General, and ask whether this refusal is based on his objections and what these objections are. I do that because program budgeting is widely regarded as a major advance in Government budgeting procedures. Public sector management and efficiency has to be brought into the twentieth century.

The Savage report on regulation review exposes the fact that Queensland is by far the most regulated State in Australia. Indeed it is the red-tape State of Australia—testimony 10 years of poor administration by the National and Liberal Parties. Very little has been done since this report, and nothing would have been done in the first place if it was not for the good work of the New South Wales Public Accounts Committee and the Victorian Parliamentary Statutory Authorities Review Committee, which provided most of the material for the Savage committee report.

Regulations must be systematic and standardised, and the establishment of guidelines require consultation with interested parties, co-ordination across regulatory agencies,

a clear statement of objectives and, most importantly, the preparation of an assessment of the economic and social costs and benefits prior to the development of any major regulatory reform.

Queensland has yet to do anything of significance on regulation reform. The Savage report has catalogued the disaster, and everyone is waiting for some action.

The absence of the structures of accountability such as a public accounts committee, program budgeting and uniform accounting and reporting procedures has led to all sorts of problems, particularly with the State Government's statutory authorities or quangos. To date, all the Queensland Government has done is count its quangos.

The Premier likes to tell us that a public accounts committee is not needed because the Auditor-General and the 82 members of Parliament are Auditors-General in their own right. From recent events it is obvious that the job of auditing the 1 000 quangos and their 53 000 employees and \$4 billion expenditure is just too much for the Auditor-General and his overworked staff, and members of Parliament are prevented from being of assistance. I am sure that the Auditor-General and his staff do their best, but they have nowhere near the resources to scrutinise the accounts properly. They go in and do a 'flick-and-tick' job, as the saying goes.

Members will recall that three weeks prior to the financial collapse of the Peanut Marketing Board the Auditor-General's report giving the board a clean bill of health was tabled in this Chamber. Members will also recall the siphoning of funds from the Queensland Dairymen's Organisation over many years. Need I say that all members recall the activities of the Queensland Day Committee, for which the Premier and Treasurer has direct ministerial responsibility.

The only reason why the Premier refuses to hold an inquiry into the State's quangos is that he is terrified of what he will find or, more precisely, what the public may find. It is a fair bet that there are little Peanut Marketing Boards, dairymen's organisations and Queensland Day Committees all over the place.

Hundreds of millions of dollars are lost every year that Queensland delays a proper inquiry into the State's quangos. Urgent economic and financial performance guide-lines need to be laid down to bring them into line. Commercial public bodies, such as the electricity authorities, need to meet the same operating standards as those met by a private company.

Consumers are sick and tired of paying for poor management decisions and unnecessarily high cost structures. Asset and equity returns, pricing structures, accounting and reporting guide-lines, investment evaluation, and non-financial performance indicators, such as consumer service provision and management performance, all need to be re-evaluated.

The industry development policies announced in the Budget can only be described as penny-pinching and parsimonious. Most of the extra funds are swallowed up by Q-Net while the Small Business Development Corporation and other initiatives, such as the Industrial Supplies Office and technology encouragement, are forced to struggle along. If Queensland is to take seriously the objective of broadening our State's economic base, industrial development needs a much higher level of funding.

The Small Business Development Corporation should be given a much higher profile and an expanded role. A toll-free telephone number should be provided immediately so that country businesses have cheap and ready access to it. Unless something is done to counteract that trend, hundreds of country towns face the prospect of becoming ghost towns.

Pay-roll tax rebates of up to 100 per cent should be given immediately to approved country manufacturers and processors. The QIDC should target regional firms for such assistance, and interest rate subsidies, consultancy subsidies, etc. should all be considered. Regional development does not rate a mention in the Budget papers, whereas it should be one of the Queensland Government's most important concerns.

The phantom department of the year award goes to the Department of Northern Development, which exists in name only. It is the only department without a budget. It seems to have been created to give the Minister for Northern Development (Bob Katter) something to put on his press releases.

The secondary processing of primary products is an area of vast potential to Queensland, but no initiatives were announced in the Budget. The export market development function of the Department of Primary Industries should be greatly strengthened and promoted.

Transport and handling costs for Queensland's rural products need to be fully reviewed, as does its minerals revenue policy. There is evidence to suggest that Queensland's railway freight policy is hindering rather than promoting development. I ask the Minister to explain the current impasse in regard to Blair Athol. Regretfully, the Budget is a Budget of lost opportunities. Unless Queenslanders bite the bullet at the forthcoming State election and ensure that the ultra-conservatives in Government are stripped of power, there is no doubt that Queensland's economy will decline even further.

Mr NEAL (Balonne) (3.25 p.m.): Honourable members have been subjected to 90 minutes of financial and other aerobatics and mud-slinging by the Leader of the Opposition. Obviously, that was his election policy speech.

The Leader of the Opposition condemned the State Government for increases in charges. He condemned the Government for not allocating sufficient funds in many areas. However, he did not state the manner in which he would fund them. Obviously, he would fund them by financial juggling, to which honourable members have been subjected for the last 40 minutes. Fortunately for Queensland, the Premier, not the Leader of the Opposition, had the responsibility of bringing down the Budget.

The Budget is a good one. It is tailored to the prevailing circumstances. It has been acclaimed as such. Bringing down a Budget is not an easy task. Many outside factors have a direct bearing on the result at the end of the financial year to which it applies. Queensland's economy, whether honourable members like it or not, is inextricably linked to that of the nation. Queensland's problems are further exacerbated because the Federal Government does not return that portion of revenue to which Queensland is entitled. I will deal with that in more detail later.

In his Budget Speech, the Premier outlined high interest rates, further and heavier taxation, world trade problems, devaluation of the Australian dollar by 36 per cent in three years, balance of payment difficulties, the crisis in the rural sector and unemployment throughout Australia as critical factors that affect the lives of all Australians. There is no doubt about that. In a nutshell, those are some of the major problems.

Obviously Australia is suffering from long-term economic problems that will not disappear. I do not intend to apportion blame for the failure of past Federal Governments to attempt to prevent the development of those problems. However, suffice it to say that the rot set in well and truly during the term of the Whitlam Government.

It is the responsibility of the present Federal Government to come to grips with the economic problem that confronts this country. However, honourable members cannot expect that to happen when the "world's greatest treasurer" talks in terms of a banana republic; when the Federal Government is subservient to the Simon Creans of the union movement, which is virtually an unelected, de facto Government; and when the Federal Government will not make hard decisions, but instead takes the soft options.

The undeniable problems within Australia stem from a lack of international competitiveness, which has been reflected in the falling value of the dollar and the deteriorating current account, as reflected in the huge deficit. Real wages and labour costs have fallen recently. However, there has been a worsening in Australia's terms of trade. The depreciation of the Australian dollar to 60.9 cents against the American dollar has done little to improve the current account deficit and provides evidence that Australia must improve greatly the competitiveness of its industries. Australia's economy relies heavily on exports, but it cannot effectively export. It cannot compete on the international

market because for many years real wage demands have outstripped productivity increases in the most vulnerable area, namely, export industries. In spite of that and despite a fall in Australia's terms of trade of approximately 20 per cent, the Federal Government supports wage increases of 4.5 per cent.

The Federal Government bows to union demands and wants to introduce legislation in its coming Budget session to give effect to the recommendations of the Hancock committee. In other words, the Federal Government seeks to take all industrial relations matters out of the hands of the real courts of Australia and to put them into the hands of a Labour Court that will be staffed by members of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. From it, we could not expect to get judicial outcomes. There would not be any more decisions such as that in the Mudginberri abattoir dispute, in which the owner, Jay Pendarvis, was rightly able to sue the unions for damages under common law. What a breath of fresh air that decision was! Furthermore, that committee specifically recommended that "there should be no right of appeal to any other court against the decision of the Australian Labour Court".

The legislation to set up the Labour Court would specifically deprive an employer and employees of their present legal rights for the redress of grievances via the legal actions in civil courts under the common law of industrial tort.

What chance has this nation of recovering when it has a Government that is not prepared to put a stop to exorbitant union claims, but rather aids and abets them? What chance has this nation of overcoming its economic problems when it has a Federal Government that refuses to clean up a taxation system that creates a large number of distortions and imposes heavy costs on the financial system?

Mr Davis: Have a look at this publication.

Mr NEAL: The honourable member for Brisbane Central would not understand it.

The high marginal tax rate reduces incentive for additional work and risk-taking, and provides incentive for tax avoidance and evasion. Business is subject to a high rate of taxation, particularly when the distortions introduced by inflation are taken into account.

The Bureau of Economics estimates that, when income is corrected for these distortions, the corporate tax rate is as high as 80 per cent. On top of this, that aberration called the fringe benefits tax has been introduced—the hard option, as the Prime Minister calls it; the "we are going to get all those on free lunches" tax and so on. What noble sentiments they would be if such in fact were the case; but such is not the case. Apart from the added problems and costs of collection to the taxation system, to say nothing of the added burden of filling in facts and figures and forms by all and sundry, it seems most unlikely that the tax will fall on those who are regarded as its main target. It will simply be another imposition that business, especially small business, cannot afford. Its effect will be measured by a rise in the CPI as it is passed on down the line.

Furthermore, it is totally wrong in principle for one person to be legally responsible for the payment of another's tax. It is bad enough that an employer should be legally required to act as an unpaid tax-collector for the taxation department, without this further imposition of responsibility and liability for the fringe benefits tax.

The Federal Government has not been able or seen fit to control interest rates, which are at record heights. The benefit that could have been expected to flow to Queensland's export industries as a result of devaluation of the Australian dollar has not materialised.

It is against this background that the business sector, which employs over 70 per cent of Queensland's work-force, is expected to operate, to employ and to create more jobs.

Primary industry has had to endure not only drastic reductions in commodity prices such as for sugar, wheat and cotton, but widespread drought and greatly escalating costs

as well. These influences have had to be contended with, and honourable members also hear the voices of doom and gloom in this Chamber—the ALP, the knockers.

Members of the Opposition use this Chamber to smear and besmirch the character of members of the Government. They prefer to degrade and denigrate, to be destructive in their criticism rather than constructive. Not one shred of evidence have they produced to this stage. Today, members have been subjected to another example of that by the Leader of the Opposition. It is all innuendo and smear that members of the Opposition are peddling. And what a motley bunch they are. Except on a few occasions, never in my term of some 14 years in this House have I seen the Opposition sink to such depths as it has today.

I am particularly concerned for the future of our rural industries. As previously indicated, commodity prices for sugar, wheat and wool have fallen drastically and, coupled with extortionately high interest rates, many producers are facing an extremely bleak future indeed. During the time I have been in this Assembly I have seen the collapse of the wool market in the early '70s and the beef markets in the mid '70s. Properties and stock were being sold at give-away prices.

The Rural Reconstruction Board was inundated with applications for debt reconstruction and carry-on finance, many of which had no hope of success because the applicants owed more than their assets were worth. In both cases, when the prices of the commodities rose, the spate of applications dried up virtually overnight. People who had owed more than their assets were worth suddenly regained equity in their rural operations. Prices for sheep and cattle increased, as did land values. In fact, land values rose higher than those that prevailed before the slump occurred. I refer to those times because I find it difficult to envisage that kind of recovery occurring again. Today, circumstances are entirely different from what they were.

In the first place, the profit margins are not available today as they were previously. Interest rates are up to 20 per cent, compared with 8 to 10 per cent in those days. Furthermore, I do not believe that any appreciable rise in land values will occur simply because, as there is little or no profitability in rural industry, few people with the necessary financial capability are interested in that kind of investment. It would certainly be a game person who would be prepared to borrow to make a rural purchase, bearing in mind today's interest rates.

Added to the high rate of interest is the Hawke Government's capital gains tax. Taking into account small or zero profit margins, high interest rates on borrowings and capital gains tax, I believe that no incentive exists for people to purchase rural land; consequently, because there is no demand, land values will stay at a depressed level. What that clearly means is that some producers will go to the wall.

Avoidance of disaster in our presently depressed rural industries will require a scheme of widespread debt reconstruction and the provision of carry-on finance. In addition, interest rates will have to decline appreciably. Those who carry heavy burdens will need to be provided with breathing-space in the hope that in time commodity prices will rise with a beneficial effect flowing from the devaluation of the Australian dollar.

It would therefore be obvious that the Queensland Industry Development Corporation has a vital role to play. It has already reduced by approximately 1.75 per cent the interest rates on loans in excess of \$100,000 that were previously funded by PIBA. That is certainly a step in the right direction.

The Federal Government must begin to take notice of what is happening in rural Australia. It must accept what industry leaders have been yelling from the rooftops over the past 18 months or so: not only is the economy sick, but the very industries that have the greatest capacity to put this nation back on the road to recovery are being ignored and bled white by cost burdens that cannot continue to be carried.

It is about time that the Prime Minister (Mr Hawke) and the Federal Treasurer (Mr Keating) realised that economic recovery should start in the Federal Government's own back yard. It is about time they told some of their friends in the militant unions

to go to blazes, and it is about time that the Federal Government started to encourage the productive sector to get on with the job. That will not happen until the productive sector is given some incentive. The incentive I refer to is called "profit"—a dirty word in the vocabulary of members of the Australian Labor Party. I go so far as to say that the Prime Minister would regard that word as obscene.

The Federal Government Budget did not provide for cutting back public sector spending. The Federal Government has reduced its deficit by increasing taxation by approximately 11 per cent. It is the increase in tax-gatherings that will be used to finance the reduction of the Federal Budget deficit. The success of the Federal Budget can be measured by its impact on financial circles in Australia and overseas. Until such time as Australia regains its competitive edge, no improvement in the domestic economy can be expected. Until such time as the Federal Government gets off the back of the tax-payers, the expectation of improvement will not be realised.

Many Australians have developed a cargo-cult mentality and have an expectation that they will be cared for as of right. Members of the Australian Labor Party in this Chamber continually call for increased Government spending in all sectors of industry and for the reduction of Government charges, yet they are very careful not to mention where the funds will come from to pay for the extra benefits. The whole system of providing welfare payments needs to be tightened up considerably so that only the deserving members of the community receive benefits.

I refer to a recent *60 Minutes* program that raised the question of working for the dole, which is apparently the case in the United States of America. If the attitude of Australia's unemployed was represented by those who were interviewed, I shudder to think what will happen to Australia's future. The view was expressed that people should not be required to work to earn the entitlement of unemployment benefits. People who were unemployed in the United States were also interviewed, but they expressed the opposite opinion. They felt that it was not unreasonable to be required to work and that one was not entitled to receive something for nothing. That is not the case in this country.

Furthermore, the unions are totally opposed to the concept of working for unemployment benefits. While unions continue to govern this country, there is no chance of having that scheme introduced.

I am reminded of a statement made by the late John F. Kennedy, who said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." Perhaps more to the point in these times of economic hardship is the statement made by his late brother, Senator Robert Kennedy, who said, "If you're not part of the answer, you're part of the problem." It is obvious that members of the Australian Labor Party in this Chamber who continually knock the Government fall into that latter category.

This Government encourages thrift and enterprise. It encourages people to get out and have a go. It seeks to keep off people's backs by keeping State taxes and charges to a minimum.

This Government believes that in letting Government contracts to the private sector it gets better value for its money. This Government has adopted a policy of minimising tax rates and has not utilised some State taxes, the likes of which are used in other States.

There has been a deliberate policy of not fully assessing the full available revenue base. For that reason Queensland has greater financial flexibility than other States.

The Budget introduced by the Premier, again, as it has in the past, supports the principle that a reasonable level of Government services should be provided and no more. It is easy for the Opposition to call for increases in all areas and to condemn the Government for the high number of unemployed—and a high number are unemployed in Queensland. However, what I intend to outline now is simply what the Leader of the Opposition referred to before when he said that Queensland spends \$104 per head of

population less than the other States in providing services such as health, education and police. The facts are clear enough.

As I intimated earlier, I will now outline some of the areas in which the Federal Government has discriminated against this State in its financial dealings. Firstly, there can be absolutely no denying that Queensland gets a raw deal under Medicare. Queenslanders pay 1.25 per cent Medicare tax in the same way as do all Australians, yet Queensland receives only \$30.30 per capita in return compared with \$85.56 in South Australia, \$78.77 in Tasmania, \$75.11 in New South Wales, \$64.49 in Western Australia and \$64.30 in Victoria.

Queensland is underfunded by \$42m in tertiary education assistance compared with the other States. If Queensland received its rightful share, tertiary places for a further 5 000 students would be available.

In housing assistance Queensland is underfunded by \$21m this year compared with the other States. If Queensland received the same per capita amount as the other States received, an additional 1 600 people could be housed each year.

Queensland is underfunded by \$4.8m in Aboriginal housing grants this year, despite the fact that Queensland has 34 per cent of the nation's Aboriginal and Islander population.

Queensland is underfunded by \$30m in the bicentennial road program despite a 3c a litre rise in fuel excise charges.

Queensland receives only a 13.3 per cent share of general purpose capital grants, well below its population share of 16.6 per cent. That adds up to another \$23m. That answers fairly well the claim of the Leader of the Opposition about Queensland spending \$104 per capita less than the other States. If that sort of money was available to this State it could certainly be spent in those areas.

Although this State must expect cut-backs in Federal funding in the present economic circumstances, it has received far harsher treatment than the other States. The Federal carve-up has not been fair. Moneys rightly due to Queensland have been diverted to prop up some of the other States to the tune of approximately \$200m. That is in addition to a revenue shortfall of some \$300m which Queensland suffered as a result of the 1982 changes to the Grants Commission formula. At that time, to the detriment of all States, the rules were changed. State grants are no longer a percentage of tax collections but are now in reality any figure that the Commonwealth desires to nominate. That was stated in last year's Budget. In other words, it is the least amount that the Commonwealth can get away with politically as far as Queensland is concerned.

With that sort of extra funding this State would have the lowest number of unemployed of any State. As it is, the State's labour force is growing above the national average at 4.4 per cent compared with 3.6 per cent for the rest of Australia.

This State has continually been creating considerably more jobs than other States. With only 16.6 per cent of the population, Queensland has between 23 and 25 per cent of the total jobs available in the nation. The State does not see the Federal Government's Community Employment Program as being the answer to the long-term problems; it is merely a bandaid measure that gives short-term relief in the hope that the economic climate will improve. As I stated earlier, because of the deep-seated, long-term nature of the problem, that improvement cannot happen. The only way to make it happen is by being productive and competitive. The Queensland Government has long held that view and has continued to frame its Budget and manage its affairs in order that the private sector has the best environment in which to operate.

The State's unemployment has been affected adversely by the slump in the rural sector, which I have already mentioned, and the strong population growth. It is significant that a Federal Minister has recently detailed teams of officers to some of the more favourable resort areas in this State in an endeavour to minimise dole-cheating. From unemployment benefit transfers, the Queensland Government has long known that many

of Australia's unemployed much prefer to be idle in Queensland than elsewhere in Australia.

The Queensland Government has taken action, as outlined in the Budget documents, to encourage positive economic growth to provide stable, long-term jobs in the private sector. As indicated in the Budget documents, the Government has instituted a task force on employment and implemented its recommendations, maintained its Capital Works Program by heavy supplementation from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and implemented the \$600m Special Major Capital Works Program, which is well and truly a reality, although the Leader of the Opposition said, on its introduction in the 1984-85 year, that it was a sham.

The Government has established the Queensland Industry Development Corporation and, through the Department of Employment and Industrial Affairs, has implemented a range of schemes to assist in both developing the skills of employees and opportunities for employers. The Government has adopted the recommendations of the Savage committee report on deregulation of industry. Of course, they are positive measures to encourage the private sector, on which our economic recovery relies. They are positive measures, not the type of short-term measures introduced by the Federal Government to which I referred earlier.

The Government's policy of nil growth in the public service administrative staff establishment is in keeping with its philosophy of small government. Obviously there has to be an increase in areas such as police, health, education and others to cater for the increasing population. In this regard I am pleased to see the 442 extra teachers, the extra 281 police and the extra 550 nurses. Overall, the increase in the general operating budgets of departments, exclusive of costs, is to be in the order of 7 per cent, which means that there is no enhancement in real money terms. However, the Government has increased spending beyond the inflation rate in some key areas of need such as education, which has an increase of 10.23 per cent, and health, with an increase of 15 per cent.

The initiatives and increases in funding under group apprenticeship, the Australian Traineeship Scheme and block release training are welcome, as is the increase in funding for the final stage of the expansion of the Youth Employment Support Scheme. The special \$2m allocation to complete the equipping of the mine-testing facility at Redbank and the increase by 21.7 per cent to \$1.44m in the grant to the Queensland Road Safety Council are also welcome.

The initiatives in education are also welcomed, particularly by the people in my electorate, and particularly in relation to the completion of the microcomputer program, the re-equipping to modern standards of all typewriters, office machines and other equipment in class-rooms, the increase in per capita grants to non-Government schools, the 11.7 per cent increase in textbook allowances and the 7 per cent increase in allowances paid to students in remote areas. The various allowances paid under the school conveyance schemes will also increase in line with inflation at 7 per cent.

Mr Davis: Is that all?

Mr NEAL: It is keeping pace with inflation.

I am particularly pleased to see the increases in the maximum limits for dollar-for-dollar subsidies under school facility improvement assistance, especially the increase from \$60,000 to \$75,000 for primary school swimming-pool complexes. That is great news for areas where communities are already raising funds to provide school swimming-pools. Without that sort of dollar-for-dollar subsidy, those communities would have no chance of obtaining a school swimming-pool.

The electricity concession for pensioners is most welcome, especially when one considers that the funds have come from consolidated revenue and not from a transference of charges to other electricity-consumers. I am sure that pensioners will appreciate the \$6 per month reduction in their electricity bills.

The Government has extended its commitment to the State's housing needs by providing a further \$100m for housing finance through the Housing Commission as an extension of the existing \$100m Housing Commission home-ownership scheme, which is excellent. It provides many people with the opportunity of owning their own home, and it is in line with the National Party policy of home-ownership. Of course, that is something that the Opposition totally opposes, and has opposed for many years.

In fact, I was surprised that I did not receive interjections from the honourable member for Brisbane Central (Mr Davis) when I was detailing the increases in allowances and so on that are of great assistance to children in isolated areas who attend the private schools, which members of the Opposition dislike so intensely.

I am disappointed that funding for roads has not been increased beyond last year's figures. Owing to the inflationary trend, less work will be carried out. As a result of the economic statement by the Prime Minister that the nation is required to tighten its belt, the State has incurred reductions of approximately \$16.3m in Federal Government allocations.

Included in that \$16.3m reduction is the sum of about \$3.3m which the Treasurer, in his Budget, slashed from the State allocation. The States have to accept these cuts. However, it is hard to bear the blatant and deliberate underfunding under the Australian Bicentennial Road Development program, which was established to provide additional funds for roads. However, a large portion of those funds is being diverted into consolidated revenue and is not being expended for the purposes for which the funds were raised.

In his closing remarks, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Warburton) referred to the Loan Fund. It is quite clear that he has no understanding of how that fund operates. According to the Leader of the Opposition, under a Labor Government, State development would not occur until the necessary funds had been accrued. The State debt is incurred to provide schools, hospitals, police stations and other facilities. Only about 5 per cent of the Consolidated Revenue Fund is required to service that debt. That is a very conservative requirement and, as detailed by the Premier in his Budget Speech, the fund was balanced.

The same principle of funding applies to the State's infrastructure work such as harbours, power stations and rail lines: the costs of loans raised for such development are met by the users of those facilities. I am blown if I can see anything wrong with that. An asset is being paid off. It is absolutely no different from purchasing a car and paying it off. It is absolutely no different from purchasing a machine, putting it out to work on contract to earn money from it and paying it off. I am sure that business people would be only too happy if 5 per cent of their income met their loan commitments. I would be very pleased if I could service my loans with only 5 per cent of my income.

In conclusion, I emphasise that the Premier has again balanced the Budget. Sound financial practices have been continued. Unlike Canberra, Queensland has had no Budget blow-outs. I am confident that, while the National Party Government continues to govern this State, no blow-out of the Budget will occur. I will have an even bet that the estimate of a \$3.5 billion deficit by the Federal Government will blow out to a darned sight more than that within 12 months. The Budget introduced by the Premier addresses the long-term problems. It is not the bandaid Budget that the Leader of the Opposition obviously wants. The Budget will not contribute to the inflationary trend, and I have pleasure in supporting it.

Mr R. J. GIBBS (Wolston) (3.55 p.m.): Mr Fouras, may I say at the outset what presence and dignity you add to the Chair. It is indeed a refreshing sight.

Today in this Chamber I raise a matter of vital importance to the people of Queensland. This morning when I entered this Chamber the Speaker read the prayer to this Parliament, and he said as part of that prayer that peace and happiness, truth and justice should prevail in Queensland. Peace and happiness do not exist in this State in many homes and now the blatant fact has emerged that truth and justice have become second-hand in this State. I refer specifically to the recent case of Judith Callaghan. Here

is a woman who stole in excess of \$42,000 from the Queensland Government and has been sentenced to two and a half years' imprisonment. The Opposition has no qualms with the two and a half year sentence and believes that is probably a fair sentence befitting the crime. As evidenced by a telephone survey conducted during this week, the public themselves were of the opinion that Judith Callaghan was dealt with lightly. This woman is now serving a non-parole period of three months in the women's prison at Boggo Road. She will serve three months' imprisonment there with the best of room service. She will have her bed made up for her in the morning and will be served breakfast in bed if she is unable to get up. At the very worst, breakfast will be provided to her on a tray in her cell. Where is the justice when, on the basis of nothing more than a health problem, a woman who has taken \$42,000 of tax-payers' money faces a non-parole period of only three months?

I refer to a number of recent cases that will illustrate exactly what I am saying. I refer first to Beryl Birch, who has just had to serve 18 months of a prison sentence. She had suffered severe mental trauma and, at the time when she was sentenced to a life sentence of imprisonment in Boggo Road, her physical condition had seriously deteriorated. She had been bashed and mentally abused by her husband for a period of no less than a decade. Her husband had thrown her out of a motor car, kicked her down an embankment, left her to die in the rain, put her under a shower, scalded and burnt her, thrown away the callipers that she used during the day and left her under a fan at home when she was wet. Beryl Birch was detained in prison for a period of 18 months. I ask the Chamber which of the two crimes was the most serious?

I refer next to the case involving a woman in north Queensland who was destitute—had nothing—did not have a roof over her head and had no money to feed her five children. She defrauded the Department of Social Security of the sum of \$2,600. Which crime was the more serious? She received a sentence of nine months' imprisonment, with a non-parole period of six months. Obviously she was not considered to be sick enough to receive a non-parole period of three months.

I refer to a recent case in Cairns, a newspaper article on which, headed "Two loaves bring three months" reads—

"A man, 31, was yesterday jailed for three months for having broken into the Yarrabah nurses' home on Sunday and stolen two loaves of bread.

Walter Nathaniel Miller, from the Aboriginal community at Yarrabah, pleaded guilty in Cairns Magistrates Court to a charge of stealing.

Mr Trevor Pollock, SM, said he had to take into account the prevalence of such serious offences in the far north."

Could it be that that fellow received three months' imprisonment for stealing two loaves of bread because he happened to be an Aboriginal person? Where is the justice?

The general public is highly suspicious of why a three-month non-parole period should apply to Judith Callaghan—a woman who stole \$42,000. Why is it that, because she is an asthmatic, in all probability she will only serve three months' imprisonment?

What about prisoners who are presently serving sentences for possession of a small amount of marijuana for personal use? The Wacol Prison is full of such persons serving terms of imprisonment from six to 12 months. They have not been convicted of growing marijuana or selling it as pushers on the market. Why was Mrs Callaghan given special dispensation under Queensland's Criminal Code? Why is it that people who are very ill and who are serving sentences for less serious offences in one of the many prisons throughout Queensland cannot obtain parole? I cast no aspersions on Judge McGuire when I say that it is becoming increasingly obvious to the people of Queensland that there is one law for members or supporters of the National Party and another law for the rest.

A recent article in the *Daily Sun* stated that Mrs Callaghan—

“... became increasingly involved in arts and politics, working particularly for ballet”—

she certainly could juggle around—

“and helping the National Party on some coalition matters.”

My word she helped the National Party on a lot of coalition matters! It never ceases to amaze me that every time that political scandals erupt in Queensland—honourable members have seen them before—it does not matter what one traces it back to, the smell of involvement of the National Party is always present. The stench fills the air.

Contradictory statements have been made by the Attorney-General (Mr Harper) and the Premier (Sir Johannes Bjelke-Petersen). Last week, Mr Harper was reported in the newspapers as saying that he was not going to be influenced by anything that the Premier of this State said about any applications for an appeal by the Crown. At that stage he said that on no occasion whilst he had been Attorney-General and Minister for Justice did he take before Cabinet any recommendations or even discuss matters such as that. I notice that the member for Nundah (Sir William Knox) got in on the act as well.

The matter to which I have referred appeared in an early edition of *The Courier-Mail*. That afternoon, in the *Telegraph* the Premier is reported as saying that in those sorts of cases applications for parole were in fact frequently discussed at Cabinet level. I believe that the person involved is the Premier. I have no compunction in saying that I cannot help but wonder why people such as Judith Callaghan receive a three month non-parole period, whereas massive fraud and tax cheats such as Lloyd Errol Faint today walk around as free men after robbing Queenslanders of millions of dollars in taxation. Why are people such as Brian Maher looked after, given the best treatment, the best jobs and left alone in prison? Something smells. Something is wrong in this State.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: If there is any justice in the State of Queensland—

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Fouras): Order! The member for Lockyer will cease interjecting.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: If there is any justice at all, it should be obvious that Mrs Callaghan's case should be reviewed and that she should be kept in prison for a period of not less than nine months.

Recently honourable members have seen the emergence of a push by the National Party in Queensland to remove such conditions of employment as penalty rates and the 17.5 per cent loading on holiday pay. So that there is no doubt where National Party members stand, I shall quote the policy of the National Party. It states—

“The National Party recognises that penalty rates have presented cost and staffing problems for many sections of the Tourist industry. To enable Queensland to compete favourably on an international basis the National Party believes that the means should be found in rationalising penalty rates to bring about a ‘seven day forty hour week.’ ”

In other words, the National Party wants employees to work Saturdays and Sundays and all hours of the day and night without any additional payment for the work that is done. To take the matter a step further, it can be seen that the Premier performed a wonderful juggling act on that issue. However, he back-flipped. He knows that neither the voting public nor Queensland public servants will cop it.

Recently, he was confronted with the issue of the 17½ per cent holiday pay loading. Queenslanders should not be deluded by the Premier's statement. All Government

members are in favour of removing advantages for working people. They will say nothing about it until after the State election. They will then join their colleagues of the New Far Right, which has emerged in Australia. I refer to people such as John Hay and John Leard, who holds himself out as a Messiah and a prophet of the financial woes of the community—the very same John Leard who drove ANI-Sargeants at Sherwood broke, put 150 people out of work and sent a profitable engineering company into liquidation. They are the same people as the Katherine Wests whom the Premier and Government members support. If there is any doubt as to whether the Premier does not support these people, it is by no means a coincidence.

Honourable members have recently heard the boloney about the Premier moving to Canberra to head the great emergence of the New Far Right group that is going to lead Australia out of the wilderness and solve all our economic problems.

On issues such as the 17½ per cent holiday pay loading, the Labor Party in Queensland will have no truck with removal of that loading or any other interference with people's wages. The 17½ per cent holiday pay loading is, in fact, consumers' money that is spent on goods and services and goes directly back into the economy, thus creating jobs.

People use the 17½ per cent holiday pay loading for a number of purposes. I am aware of people who use it once a year as an extra contribution towards their housing repayments. Some people use it to buy household goods—for example, a new iron, a new washing machine or a new electric dryer. Some people use it to actually pay a substantial deposit on the rental of a holiday cottage or flat. Others use it as a payment for one week of their holiday rental. There are many other purposes for which the loading can be used.

It cannot be rationally argued—although it is often irrationally argued by the Premier—that the penalty rates issue is applicable only to Queensland. The provision for penalty rates is covered by the International Labour Organisation in conventions 31, 61, 67, 76, 93, 106, 109 and 116. All of those conventions refer to an internationally recognised right of penalty rate provisions.

Similar provisions to those applying in Queensland and Australia are applied in the United Kingdom, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, West Germany, Sweden and the United States of America.

The Queensland Government has attempted to whip up a frenzied campaign on this issue. It has fared badly, particularly following a fairly recent Federal Government investigation.

Two years ago the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs (Mr Lester) sent out more than 5 000 questionnaires to employers. The time for return of those questionnaires was extended following a poor response by 16 January. The Minister described that investigation as “absolutely woeful, with employers not facing up to realities”. Of the more than 5 000 questionnaires that were sent out, only 544 answers were received. Of the 544 answers received, only 451 were able to be used. Despite that, the Minister says that regardless of the results of the questionnaire the Queensland Government will oppose any further claims in the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission seeking unnecessary increases in penalty rates.

The Minister's latest move was to call a meeting of employer groups and unions to discuss the issue. However, he overlooked one very important matter. He forgot to invite the majority of those unions whose members work in the particular industries involved.

One would think that, if there were increased profit to be gained by ridding industries of penalty rates, the industries would jump at the chance of getting rid of them. Following a directive from Cabinet on 13 June 1979, approval was given for the commission to hold a full and open inquiry into penalty rates. The report of the commission comprised 17 pages and revealed some very salient points. At a hearing held at Southport, the

Industrial Commission received one submission; in Toowoomba, one submission; in Townsville, three submissions; and in Rockhampton, 11 submissions.

In the final summing-up, the commissioners said that nothing had been put to them by any party at the inquiry that suggested that any legislative changes were needed in relation to penalty rates. They also commented on an application to vary the Hotel and Liquor Industry Award made by employers in the Barrier Reef islands group. That is very interesting.

In fact, an application was subsequently withdrawn by employers. The commission said—

“It would appear therefore that employers in this area have, for their own reasons, twice chosen not to proceed with applications designed to overcome what they consider are difficulties with week-end penalty rates.”

That brings me to a very important point made by the previous speaker, who read from a brief prepared by a Minister and had absolutely no conception of what he was talking about, because he was talking about the form of taxation in this country.

From first-hand reports given to me, I know that the reason why employers in the tourist industry on the Barrier Reef islands did not proceed on two occasions before the State Industrial Commission was that on both occasions they were asked to produce their books for the last four years for inspection and they were not prepared to do so. They were not prepared to do so because of the black money they receive under the counter, the money they skim off the top and do not declare for tax purposes. They have been in it up to their elbows for years, ripping the Australian public and working people off. They are the very people, the Jim Kennedys of this world and our friend up on Hamilton Island, who love to go round provoking Government members into taking action to take away these hard-won rights from the people of Queensland.

I wish to quote from *The Australian Financial Review* of Tuesday, 12 August 1986. It is a respected financial paper in Australia and one that certainly could not be described as progressive, left wing or in sympathy with the Australian Labor Party. It states—

“The campaign against the fringe benefit tax is typical of much that is wrong with this country. Sure, like all taxes it requires some extra paperwork, and maybe its method of collection—through the companies paying it, instead of employees—could have been better handled, although that is not very certain either.

. . .

But a few things need to be remembered. The fringe benefit tax is a method of reducing tax evasion, as a part of a broad tax reform aimed at producing more equity and fewer rorts, and improving incentive for effort by getting the top marginal income tax rate down below 50 per cent.”

It goes on to say—

“The Liberal Party, in promising to remove this and other taxes, is falling into such hypocrisy. The Opposition is good at saying it will cut taxes, but not so good at talking about cutting spending.”

Isn't that interesting? The Liberal Party in Queensland does not talk about how it will cut spending or what it is prepared to do in monetary or budgetary terms; yet, in his response to the Federal Budget, Mr Howard claimed that that is what he will do in Federal Government if the Liberal Party wins the election.

Mr Howard will institute income-splitting, which will cost the Australian tax-payer \$2.7 billion; he will introduce flat rate tax, which will cost another \$1.6 billion; he will scrap the fringe benefits tax, which will cost another \$325m; he will scrap capital gains tax, \$5m; he will scrap lump-sum tax on superannuation, another \$80m; he will reintroduce the rorts on entertainment—the free-lunch brigade—\$310m; he will reintroduce negative gearing, another \$50m; he will reintroduce a full flow-on of world oil prices, another \$400m; he will introduce the sales tax on oils and lubricants, another \$66m; he

will abolish the tax on new oils, another \$165m; the provision of child care rebates, \$108m; tax-averaging, another \$107m; and wine tax, \$23m.

In other words, the total cost to the Australian tax-payer will be \$5.9 billion—almost \$6 billion, which is \$2 billion above the Federal Budget predictions on deficit by the Federal Treasurer, Mr Keating.

Queensland people in particular should be worried about comments made by the members of the National Party and the Liberal Party on this so-called tax, because those members do not know what they are talking about.

The article in *The Australian Financial Review* goes on to state—

“As its name suggests, the FBT is a fringe issue, generating far more heat than it should, and as often happens in Australia, people are spending more time whingeing about the Government than getting on with the business of producing something.”

I say to all honourable members here today that I support the fringe benefits tax, and I make no apology for doing so. I believe it is an excellent tax, because it is equitable and it affects less than 10 per cent of the Australian population. If one were to analyse incomes earned in this State, it would become obvious that the tax would affect only 7 per cent of Queenslanders.

It is about time that honourable members on the Government side got off their backsides and stopped making the average citizen carry the burden for some of the bludging that is being indulged in by people on the land who have never worked hard in their lives but who keep screaming about how badly off they are.

Government members ought to visit the Housing Commission areas of my electorate and find out how badly off people in those areas are. The people I refer to would not have tuppence to bless themselves with and cannot even afford to buy groceries, let alone pay the electricity costs imposed by this Government.

In contrast to that, what happens very often in the rural sector is that people start screaming about their decreased incomes. What they do not say is that the income has decreased after tax has been taken out. It is an after-tax, decreased income, and expenses involved in the cost of living have already been subtracted from taxable income. It must be remembered that people on the land are able to kill their own stock on the property and are able to obtain their own milk, which could be considered as fringe benefits for them.

Government members should get their priorities right. It is time that the Queensland Government told some of the business people in Queensland to get off their backsides, get overseas and look at the market-place, and start selling their products in a proper manner.

I totally agree with the comments of the Prime Minister (Mr Hawke) and the Federal Treasurer (Mr Keating) about the business sector. I have had personal experience of working in and around Brisbane in factories that contain machinery that dated back to the days of the Industrial Revolution, yet the Government wonders why Queensland cannot compete. The reason is that members of the business community have never had the imagination or the incentive to put some of the profitability that has been gained by the blood and sweat of workers in this State and this country back into capital works programs and up-to-date equipment.

The article in *The Australian Financial Review* further states—

“Like it or not, the fringe benefit tax issue directly concerns only a relatively small number of Australians.

Those who are expending so much energy fighting it should look at the graph on page 1 in today's issue of *The Australian Financial Review*. It shows that our trade with New Zealand has now gone into deficit; that NZ imports to Australia have kept rising strongly since the introduction of Closer Economic Relations, while Australia's exports across the Tasman have fallen.”

The last paragraph of the article sums up exactly what I have been saying, and reads as follows—

“Fringe benefit taxes are now well established in New Zealand. While Australian business people whinge, New Zealanders are getting on with business and taking their markets.”

In my remaining seven minutes I wish to concentrate on another aspect of the Budget. I refer to the senseless and deliberate waste of the tax-payers' money in the production and distribution of propaganda material by the Government. What more scandalous demonstration could there be than this glossy pamphlet that has been distributed throughout the length and breadth of Queensland, titled *Once it was a fight to vote!* Every member of Parliament has received 2 500 copies at his or her electorate office so that it can be distributed throughout electorates. Let me tell the Committee where my 2 500 copies are. They all went onto the rubbish dump at Redbank last Sunday morning. When I read the pamphlet, I simply could not help myself.

The pamphlet states—

“Around the world, gaining the right to vote was a long and often bloody struggle. The Americans fought their War of Independence in 1776, the French stormed the Bastille in 1789.”

Who was it who fought in the American War of Independence, and who stormed the Bastille? It was the working people. People like those on the Government side of the Chamber shot the people in the streets and rode horses over them. It was the conservative elements who did not want them to have the right to vote.

It continues—

“This determination to secure our early freedom was echoed in Australia during the Eureka Stockade in 1854”—

it was the conservatives who wanted to murder them at the Eureka Stockade in 1854, and that is what Government members would have done if they had been there—

“and the Suffragette movements of the 1890's.”

The women were beaten and denied the vote for years. It continues—

“Australian men and women have had the right to vote since 1902—it was 26 years later that all adults in the United Kingdom were granted the right to vote!”

Members on the other side of the House speak about the glories of this wonderful Westminster system, yet women in the United Kingdom were given the right to vote 26 years after Australian women. Conservatives denied women the right to vote in elections.

Between 1972 and 1975 the Australian Labor Party, federally, introduced the vote for 18-year-olds. I have always applauded that. In Queensland people are told, “You can vote as soon as you have turned 18.”

If the days between 1972 and 1975 are recalled, it will be remembered that no group of people opposed the right to vote for 18-year-olds more than Bjelke-Petersen himself, Sir William Knox and the others who sat in the coalition Government in those days.

Sir William Knox interjected.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: The honourable member never supported the vote for 18-year-olds.

The publication, which portrays dreadful, scandalous lies continues—

“In recent years a large number of people have been moving to Queensland and a lot of people have been moving to new addresses within the State.”

Cop this for a lovely little catch-phrase—

“This has meant that the independent Electoral Commission has had to re-draw Queensland’s Electorates to make sure that everyone, no matter where they live, enjoys the same equality of representation from their Member of Parliament.”

It is equality, all right. It is equality when people such as the honourable member for Balonne (Mr Neal) and the Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying (Mr Glasson) have on their rolls something like 8 000 people, yet in my electorate 20 000 people are needed to elect one member of Parliament. In other areas of Queensland it takes 25 000 people in Labor electorates to elect a member of Parliament, yet in National Party electorates it requires in the vicinity of only 8 000 or 9 000.

Mr Innes: I am over quota now straight after a redistribution.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I can understand why the honourable member is over quota. It is quite simple. He should have woken up. His electorate has been surveyed. That is why Tony Philbrick is door-knocking and working very hard. The sad news is that the honourable member is down the chute.

In all the years that the Liberal Party sat in coalition with the National Party, with Sir William Knox as the Deputy Premier, the Liberal Party did not have the political guts to follow up what it believed in and what its policy was. That policy was the same as ours—equal representation no matter where in Queensland a person lives. The policy was for a proper and equitable redistribution of electoral boundaries with an electoral commission that would not be interfered with or swayed by the Premier and his cohorts; a commission that would be independent; a commission that would not be telephoned by Ministers of the Crown and guided on where the boundaries should be drawn; a commission that would consist of people who are honest, who are determined and who are able to bring down a fair and equitable redistribution.

On numerous occasions my party has made the offer to Sir William Knox’s party to join together to bring electoral justice into this State. He has rejected those offers. He will continue to reject them, simply because he has still not got out of the habit of kowtowing and toadying to the National Party and licking its boots. He will do anything that he possibly can to get back into coalition with the National Party. That will not work, however, because the Liberal Party will be decimated at the coming State poll.

The statement made by the Leader of the Opposition today is totally correct: this will be the Premier’s last Budget. At long last the people of this State are starting to see through the scandals of this Government, its dishonesty, the rorts, the favours for friends, the knee-jerk reactions to people’s democratic rights in this State and, what is more important, the vileness, the evil and the corruption that has permeated through the ranks of the National Party, particularly in the last decade.

Mr RANDELL (Mirani) (4.25 p.m.): I have great pleasure in rising to speak in this debate. I am amazed at the vitriolic hatred that has just come from the member for Wolston. There is no doubt that he sees himself as one of the leading members of an alternative Government, but today he let the people of Queensland know exactly what he thinks.

Mr Innes: He is another old union hack disparaging hard-working Queenslanders.

Mr RANDELL: That is right.

The member for Wolston mentioned something about the fringe benefits tax. He said that he is not concerned about it and that he hopes that it becomes law. The reason he thinks like that is that he will not pay it. However, it is all right by him if everyone else in Australia pays it.

The honourable member also said that Australian producers are to blame for not being able to compete on overseas markets. Australian producers can compete with anyone in the world if costs in Australia can be reduced. That is exactly what the Hawke

Government is not doing. The Federal Government is doing nothing about reducing costs.

The member for Wolston is not speaking for the workers; he is speaking for union-leaders—there is no doubt about that! He spoke about democratic rights and democratic votes. What about letting the workers of this State have secret ballots? What about honourable members opposite supporting secret ballots for unionists? Let them have a secret ballot to decide whether they want secret ballots. Honourable members opposite would not be game to introduce secret ballots. If they were introduced, half of them would not be members of this Chamber. There is no doubt that most of them are simply stooges for the unions.

I do not accept statements on taxation made by honourable members opposite, nor do I accept their statements that next year they will be on the Treasury benches. They will not be here next year, in three years' time or in 23 years' time.

Mr Davis: What do you pay?

Mr RANDELL: I pay my taxes. For all of my years I have paid my taxes. I have paid for my right to work in this country and I intend to keep paying, which is more than honourable members opposite do. Half of them have not worked in their lives.

I have great pleasure in supporting this well-balanced Budget, which recognises the economic situation Australia is in today, a situation caused by the ALP/ACTU coalition and the Hawke/Keating policies. Honourable members opposite can put that in their pipes and smoke it, because that is what has happened!

The National Party will run the State of Queensland and will finish the year with a budgetary surplus. I intend to compare Queensland's Budget with the Federal Budget, which is designed to finish with a deficit of \$3.5 billion, which will be achieved only by taxing all Australians to the hilt. One has to think only of the fringe benefits tax—

Mr Lee: You know they have renamed the fringe benefits tax the "farewell Bob tax"?

Mr RANDELL: That is very apt. That is a great name. I must remember it.

The capital gains tax will also help to keep the deficit down. The Federal Government intends to contain the deficit by taxing. I will contrast that with what happens in Queensland—no new taxes!

Mr Vaughan: That is what you are worried about—the capital gains tax.

Mr RANDELL: Because I pay my taxes, I do not have to worry about any taxes.

As I just said, Queensland has no new taxes. The Premier and Treasurer brought down a Budget under which the State will be run on its income and will finish the year with a small surplus.

The Opposition has tried to make much of the Government's loan borrowings.

Mr Davis: You pay less tax and you are a millionaire.

Mr RANDELL: I pay as much tax as anyone else in Australia. I pay my fair share of tax. I do not try to get out of paying tax. I work, and I pay tax.

The Opposition has claimed that the Government is responsible for the semi-Government authority debts that it guarantees. If the semi-Government authorities did not borrow, the State would have no ports, no railway electrification and no sewerage or water reticulation in shires. Is the Opposition proposing that such things should not be provided? If that is so, Opposition members should come out and say it so that the people know where they stand. I am sure they would not receive the support of the Labor-dominated shires throughout Queensland, which are the biggest borrowers. In fact, the Opposition would not get the support of any council in Queensland.

One honourable member has already said, "Do we save up until we have enough money to pay for such works?" In Queensland, by borrowing, many assets have been created. Queensland has assets for the future, assets for our children and assets our children will help to pay for. That has been done on 5 per cent of the State's income. The difference between the Federal and State Budgets is that Queensland is run on its income. I would like to parallel that with a man who receives \$400 a week. If that man spends more than \$400 a week, he will certainly run into trouble. That is exactly what the Federal Government does. It borrows to keep Australia afloat. It borrows money just to keep Australia going.

Hawke and Keating will go down as the biggest borrowers in the history of this country. In the first 82 years of the life of the Commonwealth, all previous Governments of all political persuasions allowed this country to accumulate a debt of \$23 billion. After only three years of the policies of the present Federal Labor Government, another \$42 billion has been added to that debt, almost trebling it. So much for the great Treasurer. If that does not ring alarm bells about the state of the Australian economy under this incompetent Hawke Government in Canberra, something is drastically wrong.

The Federal Labor Government has been borrowing from the rest of the world to support a standard of living that Australians have not been prepared to work for. That Government is mortgaging the future to pay for the present. As I have said, our children will be left with a terrible burden of debt as a result of the selfish prosperity of today that has been fostered by the Hawke Government.

It must be understood that wealth has to be worked for and created and that this nation is not made more prosperous by excessive borrowing. There is no way in the world one can borrow one's way out of trouble, although that is what Hawke and Keating are trying to do. It cannot be done. In fact, the reverse is the case.

In a prosperous country such as Australia, no problem should arise in producing and creating our own wealth without resort to excessive borrowing. In other words, the people of this nation should be capable of working for a living and paying their own way, as I have done all my life. Regardless of what the honourable member for Brisbane Central (Mr Davis) says, I have paid my way, and I have no need to apologise to him.

Mr Milliner: Where do you stand on penalty rates and holiday pay?

Mr RANDELL: Honourable members should stick to the matter under discussion.

The Federal Government has squandered millions of dollars in duplicating State functions. I refer to the 16 000 public servants employed by the Federal Government to police business regulations at a cost of \$1.4 billion. I repeat—\$1.4 billion! It has spent \$60m on duplication of the education system which, under the Constitution, is the province of the States. The Federal Government is duplicating everything.

The expenditure of \$100m in the area of health is, once again, a duplication of the States' role. It is ironic that none of the people employed by the Commonwealth treats one patient. Not one person employed by the Federal Department of Education is responsible for the teaching of one student in Queensland. The same duplication of service can be seen in the area of Aboriginal and Islander Affairs.

The Federal Government wastes millions of dollars of tax-payers' money without even trying. It wastes money that Queenslanders sweat and toil for. I will cite some examples. Recently, in an address to the nation, the Prime Minister called on all Australians to tighten their belts because of the difficult times being faced.

I will cite some examples of how the Prime Minister tightens his belt. \$123,280 was given to the Gay Publications Co-operative and its affiliates to produce the homosexual magazines *Outrage* and *Gay Community News*. No doubt they are worthwhile publications. \$78,482 was granted to the People for Nuclear Disarmament in Sydney to implement a peace bus project. The bus was equipped with all sorts of propaganda aids. \$52,130 was given to the Builders Labourers Federation, which included payment for a muralist-in-residence. I do not know what that is.

The Arts Council of the Australian Council of Trade Unions—the ACTU again—received \$31,563 to employ four people for 18 weeks to train and work with a professional clown. I wonder how much training would be needed to make the members of that body bigger clowns than they already are. Its members are being paid in excess of \$31,000 to become clowns. All honourable members know what clowns they are.

The Victorian Trades Hall Council received \$133,200 to fund its artistic endeavours. I wonder what they are? \$320,000 was granted to the Trades and Labor Council of South Australia to fund, among other things, a storyteller-in-community, an art-and-working-life banner and a play on working class organisations and to pay for musicians-in-residence as part of the Trades and Labor Council's centenary. That is money that Australians have sweated for.

Just over \$35,000 was granted to the Sydney City Council to research the needs of the gay community. I wonder why the Federal Government wants to research the needs of the gay community. \$24,800 was allocated to the Hobart City Council to paint murals on three corner city sites.

I could go on and on. That is money that Australians have earned. It is money that is paid to Canberra. It should be coming back to the states to provide jobs for people. It is money that could be used for building roads and dams and put into other worthwhile projects in order to produce something for Australia and for Queensland.

Mr Davis: Do not forget about some of the local authorities that got grants out of the Arts Council.

Mr RANDELL: I will talk to the honourable member for Brisbane Central about local authorities. That is my pet subject. The honourable member would not know a thing about local authorities. He should learn how hard it is for local authorities to get money. They get their money from tax-paying rate-payers, and the honourable member wants the local authorities to tax a bit more. Shame on him! But that is typical of the kind of people who would like to sit on his side of the Chamber. There is no way in the world that that will happen.

As for the response by the Leader of the Opposition—I have never seen more mud and dirt-slinging and character assassination than I saw during his speech. I know the Leader of the Opposition is a decent fellow, but he was handed a brief and it set out to continue what the Opposition embarked upon in earlier sittings of Parliament this year.

Mr Borbidge: They are desperate. They are on the skids.

Mr RANDELL: That is right; the Opposition is desperate and can find nothing else. I, together with the people of Queensland, have found great difficulty in believing that the Opposition could be an alternative Government. Heaven forbid!

I heard the Leader of the Opposition state that Queensland has received an increase in funding for Medicare, roads and combating unemployment, as in Western Australia. Let us look at the facts.

Mr Davis: There is no way we need be on corruption all the time, because our polls show that you people are crooks.

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member for Brisbane Central speaks such inane rubbish that I will not bother to reply to him.

In regard to Medicare funding—Queensland is to receive \$30.30 per capita; South Australia will receive \$85.56; Tasmania, \$78.77; New South Wales, \$75.11; Western Australia, \$64.49; and Victoria, \$64.30.

Mr Vaughan: The Premier agreed to that.

Mr RANDELL: He had to agree to it. He had no alternative. That is the sort of thing that is happening, and Opposition members agree with it. I will tell this Chamber where some of that money has gone.

In regard to roads—last year the Hawke Labor Government allocated \$257.6m to Queensland for roads. In the coming financial year Queensland will be receiving \$260.9m, or a miserable increase of \$3m in dollar terms. It will be a reduction of \$13m when compared with the amount that should have been passed on to Queensland under the Federal Government legislation.

Mr Vaughan: That is what Joh asked for.

Mr RANDELL: No, he did not. The Premier did not say that at all. The honourable member for Nudgee must be truthful about this matter. I know the honourable member to be a fairly truthful man and one of the best Opposition members, but he must not tell lies.

Mr Morris made all kinds of promises a year ago when the Labor Government introduced the Australian Land Transport Program. He said that each year Queensland would receive an assured sum that would be indexed. This agreement, which is just over one year old, has already been broken. As Mr Morris has broken that agreement, he will have to introduce new legislation.

Mr VAUGHAN: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member for Mirani said that I tell lies. I was referring to the Queensland Government tax reform package presented by the Premier last year to the tax summit. In the summary he states—

“A 7.5 per cent across-the-board reduction in Commonwealth Government spending, other than on social welfare and interest payments.”

So the Premier went down to Canberra last year to the tax summit and asked for an across-the-board 7.5 per cent reduction in Commonwealth Government spending.

Mr RANDELL: I did not say that at all. I said that the Federal Government introduced the Australian Land Transport Program and said that Queensland would receive an assured amount every year and that the amount would be indexed. That is what was said.

Mr Vaughan: You were asking for a reduction.

Mr RANDELL: This promise has been broken.

Mr Davis: You can't have it both ways.

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member for Brisbane Central cannot have it both ways, either.

The Federal Minister for Transport will have to bring in new legislation because the agreement has been broken. Instead of indexing the Queensland grants for road-funding, the Federal Government has reduced Queensland's grant by \$13m. Mr Morris is reducing the Australian Bicentennial Road Development Fund by \$3.2m this financial year, yet the Federal Government is still collecting 2c a litre from every Queensland motorist and every motorist throughout Australia in order to fund roads under this scheme. He has seen fit to hit Queensland again.

What did Queensland receive in the Federal Budget, but an additional 3c a litre on the price of petrol? A further \$10m has been sliced off Queensland's entitlement under the Australian Land Transport Program.

Mr Vaughan: You have been advocating a reduction in Federal Government spending. They have done it, and now you are whinging.

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member for Nudgee knows what I am talking about, and he will have his chance later on. He should remember that in 1985 in fuel tax the Federal Government collected \$5.9 billion. It returned \$1.25 billion, or 20.8 per cent, to Queensland roads. The honourable member should look at that. Perhaps he can tell me why that is so.

Last year, despite the Federal Government's collecting in Queensland an estimated \$1,014.5m in fuel taxes, Queensland received only \$257.6m in road-funding. It is about time that the honourable member stood up and fought for Queensland. The honourable member knows that the remainder went into consolidated revenue. However, he will not admit that.

For the year ended December 1985, Queensland created more jobs than any other State in Australia. A total of 70 300 jobs were created, or 28 per cent of all jobs created in Australia. The increase in Victoria was 58 000. Queensland had the highest employment growth of all the Australian States for the year ended December 1985.

Mr Henderson: Highest for a decade.

Mr RANDELL: As my friend says, the highest for a decade.

Employment growth in Queensland was 7 per cent, compared with a national growth rate of 3.8 per cent. Queensland's growth rate was 2.8 times the employment growth rate in New South Wales and 2.1 times the employment growth rate in Victoria.

For the year ended December 1985, Queensland had the fastest annual labour force growth of all the Australian States, 5.7 per cent. National labour force growth was 3 per cent. The rate of growth in Queensland was 2.7 times the labour force growth in New South Wales, 2.5 times the labour force growth in Victoria and 7.1 times the labour force growth in South Australia.

Queensland recorded the highest employment growth rate of any mainland State for the past decade. Between 1976 and 1986, employment growth in Queensland was almost 30 per cent, compared with the average for Australia as a whole of 18 per cent. Although I could continue at length, I will return to the Queensland Budget.

Would honourable members like to hear about the national debt?

Mr Lee: I would.

Mr RANDELL: In 1980, the nation's gross external debt was \$13,904m, or 64.4 per cent of exports. In 1981, gross external debt was \$15,796m, or 71.8 per cent of exports. In 1982, gross external debt was \$24,903m, or 109.9 per cent of exports. In 1983, the gross external debt was \$36,493m, or 149.1 per cent of exports. In 1984, the gross external debt had gathered momentum. In that year it was \$44,992m, or 161.8 per cent.

These figures are too much for the honourable member for Brisbane Central (Mr Davis). He is leaving the Chamber. He cannot cop it. In 1985, the external debt was \$68,700m, or 199.5 per cent of exports. For 1986, the estimate of the gross external debt is \$86,000m.

Mr Vaughan: Is that the national debt?

Mr RANDELL: That is Australia's gross external debt. The honourable member may examine my documents later.

The following table represents the total interest payments on the external debt—

Period	Amount \$m	Total Interest Payment as a Percentage of Exports
1980-81	1 074	4.9
1981-82	1 661	7.3
1982-83	2 630	10.7
1983-84	3 441	12.4
1984-85	4 815	14

I ask honourable members to note how it climbed under Hawke in 1983-84 and gained momentum in 1984-85.

I turn now to the Department of Health. The Budget allocation this year for the Department of Health is \$281.4m, an increase of 16 per cent on the previous year's allocation of \$241.7m. In addition, \$811.8m is provided from the Consolidated Revenue Fund as a contribution towards total hospital operational expenditures of \$947.8m. The department also has a total capital works budget of \$48.1m.

Mr Vaughan: Is this a prepared brief?

Mr RANDELL: I have taken the figures out of the Budget papers. They are there for everyone to see. If the honourable member can read and if he does not receive a brief from the union-leaders—that would be different because it would falsify the figures—he will see that what I am saying is correct. The honourable member can find the figures in the Budget papers as well as I can. If he thinks that I am telling fibs, he can study his Budget papers.

Mr Lee: You will have to show him the page.

Mr RANDELL: The information can be found on page 86.

As I said previously, the Budget provides for a Consolidated Revenue Fund contribution of \$811.8m this year towards total hospital operational expenditures of \$947.8m.

The Budget papers state—

“Expenditure on recurrent hospital services from the Hospital Administration Trust Fund over the past five years has been:—

1981/82	\$562.0 million
1982/83	\$661.5 million
1983/84	\$743.1 million
1984/85	\$813.9 million
1985/86	\$882.6 million
1986/87	\$947.8 million”.

The cost of hospital services has increased significantly over the years. The Budget provides for an increase of 550 nurses and other hospital staff.

Australian Labor Party members are never satisfied. They are constantly criticising and knocking the Government. However, they have not compared the nursing situation in Queensland with that in Victoria. Would honourable members like to hear what is occurring in Victoria?

Mr Lee: I would like to hear it.

Mr RANDELL: Some of my colleagues at the back of the Chamber would like to hear about what is occurring in Victoria.

People are dying in Victoria because nurses are going on strike. That is not happening in Queensland. Queensland has a stable nursing service, and the Government intends to maintain that.

In relation to ambulance services, the Budget provides an amount of \$21.963m for the current year. This amount compares with an endowment of \$11.3m in 1981-82, and represents a growth of 90 per cent over the past five years.

I turn now to funding in the Federal sphere. During the past six years there have been some dramatic and unfavourable changes in the Commonwealth's funding support for Queensland's health services. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in 1980-81 the Commonwealth and State Governments contributed approximately equal shares of 40 per cent to the overall costs relating to hospital services in Queensland. At the present time the situation is vastly different. The State Government now carries more than 60 per cent of the burden relating to hospital services and the Commonwealth Government contributes less than 20 per cent. That means that for every additional

hospital constructed in Queensland a substantial cost burden will be imposed upon every Queensland tax-payer. Queensland is required to pay not only the entire capital cost of constructing new hospital facilities but also the lion's share of the operating costs. That is an example of the treatment that Queensland receives from the Federal Government.

The imbalance between the Commonwealth and the State contributions to funding for hospital services is certain to deteriorate further. Subsidies for private hospitals were abolished in the recent Federal Budget. As a result, the cost of private hospital care will rise. There will, therefore, be a further influx of patients seeking public hospital care.

State Governments cannot continue to be saddled with Canberra's abandoned commitments in relation to hospital services, community health, nursing homes and care for the aged. However, the Federal Government could not care less. All it can think of is the almighty dollar going to sectors that are of no use to Australia.

This year, Queensland should be receiving an additional \$350m from the Commonwealth Government for health-funding to bring it into line with the average funding provided to Labor States. However, that is not the case. It is a pity that Opposition members did not use their energies to obtain a fair go for Queensland. If they do not take the opportunity of doing that now, they will not be here to argue the health-funding matter after the next election.

Mr Littleproud: They are not here now; they are all outside.

Mr RANDELL: There are not many Opposition members on the other side of the Chamber. I think they have been stunned into silence.

Queensland will be further victimised under the new Commonwealth health-funding arrangements that were announced in the recent Federal Budget.

Mr Davis: I am back.

Mr RANDELL: I am not sure whether the honourable member for Brisbane Central will understand what I am saying. I will provide him with a copy of my speech later in order that he may study it.

During the current financial year, Queenslanders will receive only \$81 per head in Commonwealth health-funding, compared with an average of \$219.87 received by people in the other five States.

The position in Queensland has worsened considerably during the last financial year. Queenslanders received \$73 per head, compared with an average of \$173 per head in other States. The health-funding arrangements are a public scandal. They are totally unjustified and completely unacceptable to the people of Queensland. The health-funding figures make a complete mockery of the Canberra catchcry of restraint with equity. There is no equity in an arrangement whereby one State receives \$140 less per head of population than the other States. No-one could convince me of that.

In effect, Queenslanders will be more heavily subsidising the free health care that is provided in other States. The 25 per cent increase in the Medicare levy will virtually disappear to the southern States to help prop up their hospital systems. To make matters worse, the scrapping of the subsidies for private hospitals will force up the costs of providing private hospital care and will force increasing numbers of people into the public hospitals sector.

Not only is Queensland being slowly bled dry by decreasing funding from Canberra, but it is also being expected to shoulder the extra burden imposed by the Federal Government's abandoned commitments. Because Queensland is not a socialist State, the Federal Government continually abandons this State.

It is about time that the Federal Government admitted that Medicare is sending Australia broke and had the guts to take the tough decision to dump it.

I am running out of the time I am allowed for this debate. I could speak on the Department of Education, but I will leave that until another time.

The Budget provision of an electricity rebate for pensioners of \$6 a month is the most generous scheme in Australia. There is no doubt about that. The rebate will help pensioners who are in need. They need help because they are being bashed by the Federal Government.

The police have received an increased allocation of 9 per cent and an additional 281 police. I will be endeavouring to obtain a fair share of them in my electorate.

One great aspect of the Budget is that there is nil growth in the public service. Queenslanders have to pay for what is happening in the public service in Canberra.

Other facets of the Budget are that the allocation for regional tourist organisations has doubled to \$70,000. Of course, Queensland is leading Australia in the tourist industry. The Mackay region is on the move and it will receive its share. The Eton irrigation scheme will be completed this year. Facilities at the Eungella National Park will be improved and continued. Electrification of the Coppabella-Hay Point railway line will continue. I hope to address that subject in the Estimates of the Department of Transport.

The Hawke Government is already the biggest spending and the biggest borrowing Government in Australia's history. It is likely that, in the four years to June 1986, the Federal Government's deficit will have been many billions of dollars.

However, the biggest drawback faced by the present Federal Government is that it is shackled to the Prices and Income Accord and is controlled by the trade union leadership. Today in Australia there is a Federal coalition government formed by the ALP and the ACTU. This is the first time in Australia's history that one of the coalition partners in a Government has not been elected by the people. Anyone who believes that the ACTU does not see itself as an equal partner with the ALP in the running of Australia still believes in fairy stories. There is little doubt that today the trade union leadership is running Australia and ruining it. Over the past 15 years it has amassed enormous political and economic power. It has neither the ability nor the training to handle such power.

Because trade unions have been above the law for the past 15 years in Australia, they have not been subjected to the disciplines and controls which are essential ingredients for leadership training. The standard of trade union leadership has deteriorated over the years, basically as a result of that lack of discipline. Also, many in the trade union leadership today are fundamentally academics who have had little experience in the work-force and therefore have little in common with many in their membership. That is what I said earlier. They are academics, who have never worked in their lives. They do not know what it is all about.

The unions are showing us almost every day that they do not understand our problems and that they lack the leadership qualities and basic ability to run Australia. I have the highest respect for the rank and file in Australia's trade unions—the vast majority of whom are thoroughly decent and hard-working Australians. The problem for Australia is not with the rank and file but with the trade union leadership, a proportion of whom seems hell-bent on destroying Australia. It is frequently overlooked that many rank and file trade unionists do not support their leadership. The fact that 35 per cent to 40 per cent of trade unionists do not vote for the ALP at Federal elections proves that trade union support for the accord is by no means unanimous.

It is, of course, absolutely ridiculous that a country with Australia's enormous potential, vast resources and well-educated population should be approaching bankruptcy. If we concentrate on our real strengths and utilise our resources, there is no reason at all why Australia cannot once again be a proud and prosperous nation. I believe that the Australian people have a pride in their country and want to pay their way and work for their own prosperity. I am confident that, if they are told the truth, shown the real problems, challenged about the future and given incentive, they will respond positively.

Frankly, I am absolutely terrified for the future of this great country of ours. I am terrified about the way we are going down the chute. I am concerned about the future of my children and the future of my children's children. Unless the Hawke Government

takes the trade unions on and gets Australia back into a position in which people can earn a decent living and make sure that the money comes into this country to pay for the standard of living, Australians will have a very hard time in the future.

It is with pleasure that I support the Budget.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah) (4.55 p.m.): The Liberal Party supports the Budget and takes up this opportunity of debating its contents. Among a number of matters that are of significance, I should point out something that has saddened me a little. The Treasurer is not in the Chamber and is not listening to the debate.

According to the records, it has been the practice of this Parliament ever since it was constituted that the Treasurer should pay his respects to the Parliament by listening to the full debate on the Budget. Having said that, I should add that I understand that the Premier and Treasurer is a very busy person, and for that reason I would not expect him to be present in the Parliament every minute of the day. However, because there is a Minister Assisting the Treasurer, I would have thought that the Minister Assisting the Treasurer should certainly be present throughout the whole debate.

Mr Davis: It has also been the procedure in the past for the Ministers to take notes and not rely on people such as public service advisers.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: When the honourable member for Brisbane Central speaks, the Ministers would have to take notes because it is quite impossible to understand what he is saying.

Over the period of the presentation of three Budgets, the Minister in charge of the Budget has not provided the necessary continuity, and that is regrettable. It must be remembered that presentation of the Budget and the ensuing debate is the one occasion of the year on which the Government is examined, and when leaders of the Government should be prepared to answer questions face to face in the Parliament about the affairs of the Government.

I wish to comment on the notion of a balanced Budget. As all State Budgets are, the Queensland Budget is a balanced Budget.

Mr Veivers: All State Budgets have to be balanced.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: That is so; there is no alternative. There is no other way in which a State Government can provide a Budget other than in the form of a balanced Budget. No special merit attaches to presenting a balanced Budget. The test of this Budget is the way in which it is balanced and the manner in which the financial matters are arranged, the indications of where the funds emanate from and how they are spent. Those factors determine the quality of the Budget. I reiterate that all States are obliged to present balanced Budgets.

As I have said on previous occasions, the State of Queensland is very fortunate indeed to have competent officers who ensure that an examination of the Budget will demonstrate very clearly that there are no hollow logs, as has been the case in some of the other States. It is possible that funds can be milked, and it is possible for Governments to get into difficulties in financial operations and resort to raiding funds. Such practices occurred in this State prior to 1957 and, approximately two or three years ago, the same thing occurred in New South Wales. When trust funds were investigated, it was found that IOUs had been left all over the place. I confirm that it is technically possible for funds to be raided, and it has been done. In Queensland, that was done by Labor Governments and it has been done in other States by Labor Governments. It can be said that Labor Governments are notorious for spending public funds with reckless abandon. Socialist Labor Governments engage in the expenditure of public funds with alacrity and with a degree of recklessness.

When the Premier and Treasurer (Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen) replies to the speeches made in this debate, I am confident that he will be able to say that at the end of the

current financial year, the State of Queensland will present another balanced Budget, and will continue to do so—year in, year out—without any trouble at all.

Mr McPhie: The Government will stay in office for a while.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Whoever the Treasurer may be, he will have to provide a balanced Budget to this Parliament. The notion of Queensland having a balanced Budget is spoken of as if it connotes some particular virtue, and it is time that Queensland was rid of such nonsense.

Not only does Queensland have a balanced Budget but it also has a Budget that is capable of standing close examination and testing. The Auditor-General's report will attest to and support that contention and will reveal all the necessary information. In fact, since the Financial Administration and Audit Act was passed by this Parliament, Queensland has probably the most open financial arrangements of any State of the Commonwealth. Is it any wonder that other States have seen fit to emulate Queensland's legislation in the control and monitoring of their Budgets? This State has a very satisfactory accounting and monitoring arrangement for the Budget. The only deficiency in the whole of the arrangements regarding this State's Budget control is the absence of a parliamentary public accounts committee. Queensland is the only State that does not have a parliamentary public accounts committee. A parliamentary public accounts committee means accountability to this Parliament on a continuing basis. It is nothing to be frightened of. Such committees operate very successfully in other States. Parliamentary public accounts committees exist to stop the sort of nonsense that has been seen in recent weeks, which has been revealed in the courts of this State, of public servants getting involved in dipping into the till. That is just one of the reasons why a parliamentary public accounts committee is needed, but it is a very powerful reason. The Financial Administration and Audit Act provides for a parliamentary public accounts committee, in the event of one being established. That Act in itself does not create the parliamentary public accounts committee, but the wording of the Act is such that, should this Parliament establish a parliamentary public accounts committee, it can be accommodated by the Financial Administration and Audit Act.

Mr Innes: On a number of occasions the previous Auditor-General recommended setting one up.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Several Auditors-General have done so. In fact, the last three have recommended that a parliamentary public accounts committee be established.

Mr Davis: It is a pity that you did not do something when you were in office.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I did a great deal. Obviously the honourable member has a very short memory. It was during my term as Treasurer that the Financial Administration and Audit Act was introduced. It is the Act that has put the control, the arrangements, the examination and the monitoring of Queensland's Budget well ahead of that of any other State in the Commonwealth. I do not claim the credit for drafting that Act. The credit for drafting that legislation goes to Sir Allan Sewell.

Mr Fouras interjected.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Is the honourable member going to talk about it? Is he going to be a reborn member and come good again? I thought he had gone to the Greek islands to find himself another seat.

I have outlined that history for the benefit of the honourable member for Brisbane Central (Mr Davis). There is room for a parliamentary public accounts committee. A parliamentary public accounts committee, together with the controls provided by the Financial Administration and Audit Act and the responsibility placed on the shoulders of the accountable officers nominated in that Act, would ensure that Queensland would certainly have one of the tightest and most comprehensive pieces of legislation for the administration of public accounts in this nation.

In what has been achieved so far, Queensland has a lot to be proud of. More has to be done. The Government should not be frightened. This Parliament should not resile from providing the ultimate controls by presenting to the people of Queensland a parliamentary public accounts committee, which would involve members from both sides of the Assembly, and which, by its very existence, would be a check and balance on the expenditure of public funds.

Mr Innes: In the face of such detailed information, why do you think the Budget is so little understood by the majority of members?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: It depends on how much homework members are prepared to do. Some do a lot of homework, some do none at all and some prefer to read briefs prepared by others.

On the question of the revenue raised in the Budget, I regret that the Premier and Treasurer feels that he should speak only about expenditure. Of course, the facts are all in the Budget papers and they can be extracted. However, in the verbal presentation to the Parliament, I think it is worthy, and it has always been the practice, for the Treasurer not only to mention how the money is spent and on what it is spent but also to indicate from where the money is to be raised.

There is no shame in that. People expect the money to be raised. The people expect taxes to be raised to provide for the services that they want. They obviously want those services, otherwise they would protest. Indeed, there are some that they do protest about. So it is beholden on the Government to present to the Parliament the methods by which the extra revenue is raised.

In this Budget the extra revenue is \$368m. That is not small change! As \$368m more than last year has to be raised, it is appropriate that the Parliament be informed from where the funds are to come. There is no disgrace in revealing it. To find that information, one has to do one's own research. When that is done one finds from the Budget papers that on 210 individual occasions the revenue of this State was increased by individual charges as published in the *Government Gazette*. In the previous year it was about 123 occasions. That may be a convenient device for not bringing to public attention the accumulation of increases in revenue, but sooner or later people will discover it, so why not tell the Parliament at the time the Budget is presented how these funds are raised?

I will now look at the increases in charges. In the last three years licence and permit fees in this State have increased by 52.2 per cent—by half! Land tax has increased by 48 per cent. Pay-roll tax has increased by 30.6 per cent, stamp duty by 36 per cent and gambling taxes by 100 per cent in the same period.

Mr Vaughan: Not in this State!

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Yes, in this State.

In the same period, revenue from taxes on mining has increased by 110 per cent and from railways by 80 per cent. When one looks at the individual charges, one sees some very interesting facts. For instance, in that period the cost of registering a business name has increased by 35.7 per cent. The fee for a search in the Titles Office has increased by 33.3 per cent. Electricity charges increased by 28 per cent and registration of a four-cylinder passenger vehicle by 27 per cent. The cost of an A-class driver's licence has increased by 135 per cent.

There are good reasons why those charges have to be increased. The cost of providing those services has increased. However, the cry about having to increase charges by the Consumer Price Index is just a lot of nonsense, because many of the Government costs have increased by less than the CPI. When a charge increases to an amount greater than the cost of providing the service, it is a tax—an outright tax—on what are normal Government services.

So I agree with some other speakers who have said, "Where are we going with regard to taxes in this State?" It is all very well for the Government to say that Queensland is a low-tax State. It used to be a low-tax State. Although that was the case, it is no longer so. Some of the taxes and charges in this State are the highest or the second-highest in the Commonwealth. On average, Queensland has gone from having the lowest taxes in Australia to being third from the bottom.

If it is necessary to increase taxes and charges to provide services, why not say so and explain it? There is nothing to be ashamed of in saying that, if the community wants service X, it has to pay for it and the charge for the service, in order to cover the cost, will be such-and-such. There is nothing wrong with that at all. The public expects to pay for those services. However, the public does not want the cost of services increased automatically in accordance with the Consumer Price Index, which is not directly related to the cost of those services.

The CPI is determined by all the costs in the community. It is not related to the clerical costs of administering a service that may require only clerical services to administer it. It is not about a service that is now done on a computer, but was once done by 20 people.

Many of the costs and charges of Government have actually been reduced, yet they have been increased automatically in accordance with the CPI, which is completely unrelated to the increase or decrease in the cost of providing that service.

I guarantee that, if many of those services were examined, it would be found that their cost could be reduced because the cost of providing them has been reduced. Certainly, many of them have not increased in cost in line with the CPI.

So, that differential becomes a tax. The extra \$368m comes substantially from the increase in many of those charges and taxes during the year that have been promulgated through the *Queensland Government Gazette*. Those charges and taxes should be accounted, listed and examined to find out whether they are in fact justified.

I turn to some of the matters that are causing concern among the public. I will begin with pay-roll tax. I forecast last year that the amount to be gathered by way of pay-roll tax in the last financial year would exceed the Budget estimate by many millions of dollars. In fact, I said it would be \$6m. I was wrong; it was \$5m—\$5m more than was estimated would be collected.

I recommended then that the threshold for pay-roll tax be raised to \$600,000. I still hold to that figure. It has only been raised to \$324,000 which, in the last few years, has meant that people who did not pay pay-roll tax, and who are employing the same number of people as in the previous year, are now paying pay-roll tax.

Small-business people in this State who have never heard of pay-roll tax will be paying pay-roll tax this financial year because the threshold level is not sufficient to cover the increase in the wages that those people have had to pay in that time interval.

Pay-roll tax is an iniquitous and anti-social tax. It is a tax on employment. It is in the same category as window taxes, chimney taxes and hearth taxes. Those taxes were abolished last century because they were anti-social. This century, in this country, pay-roll tax is an anti-social tax. Believe it or not, of the \$482m collected last year, more than \$150m was collected from Government agencies and statutory authorities.

The Education Department provided \$36m in pay-roll tax. Where did it get it from? It got it from Treasury. The Police Department paid \$14m in pay-roll tax. Where did it get it from? It got it from Treasury.

Mr Innes: Where did it go to?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: It goes back to Treasury. It is laundered through the various departments and sent back to Treasury. The cost of administration of pay-roll tax is in the middle as an additional cost of administration.

The great burden of pay-roll tax is on the small employer in the community. If the threshold were raised to \$600,000 right now, it would provide by Christmas between 8 000 to 10 000 jobs in this State. Thousands of small businesses in the community would dearly love to employ another person but are prohibited or inhibited from doing so because of the existence of pay-roll tax.

Mr Lee: They employ more than one in many cases.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: That could well be the case.

The State's revenues would not be prejudiced by being generous regarding the threshold. It is true that Queensland used to be the most generous in regard to pay-roll tax in Australia, but that is not the case today. Queensland is now second from the bottom. It does not matter. I do not mind how generous Queensland is and what form its generosity takes. Pay-roll tax is an anti-social tax that is definitely keeping people out of work, particularly in this State where there is such a large proportion of service industries.

Over some years land tax in this State has progressively been reduced to the irreducible minimum. On 23 November 1961 the Liberal Treasurer, Mr Hiley, said in this Parliament—

“The Government do not wish land tax to operate as a general tax against land-holders—it must be a tax on aggregation.”

On 13 March 1962, Mr Hiley said—

“In explaining the background of that, and the history of it, may I state that the Government have always been concerned that land tax had drifted from what had been its fundamental basic purpose? It was never intended, I think, by any Government in the history of this State that land tax should be a pure revenue measure. Rather, its purpose was a social purpose, to discourage large aggregations of freehold land held by one individual.”

Progressively, year after year, the level of land tax paid in this State has been reduced so that fewer people were paying land tax. Yet in the last two Budgets there has been no relief for the people of Queensland in regard to land tax—none whatsoever. Thousands of people in Queensland who have never heard of it before are paying land tax this year. Those people who were paying hundreds of dollars in land tax a year are now paying thousands of dollars a year. There has been a great change of policy by the Government regarding land tax in this State.

Mr Innes: There is enormous discontent up and down the Queensland coast.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: And right throughout the State. In many provincial cities and small towns people are paying land tax. It was the ambition of the Government of the day, certainly during the time that I was Treasurer and when former Liberal Treasurers were in office, to see if the land tax could be reduced to its irreducible minimum, and each year there were fewer people in the State paying land tax. In the last two years more people than ever have been paying land tax and the numbers continue to increase. At the present time \$37m in revenue comes from land tax and the figure is increasing.

An anomalous situation exists in this State with regard to stamp duty, where many individuals, because of changes to legislation, are now facing bankruptcy in order to meet their commitments to stamp duty. This situation has arisen because of what I believe is a very serious anomaly in the legislation, making it possible for stamp duty to be levied on the total value of the property transferred and not on the price of the transfer. It is a complicated process and I am simplifying it.

In the past, when a transfer was involved, the value of the transfer was subject to stamp duty. At the present time the value of the total property is subject to stamp duty and that stamp duty has to be paid by the person making the transfer. That is affecting families right throughout the State, private companies whose shares are transferred, many small individuals, in terms of their economic stature in the community, and families.

I know that the Government has had these matters referred to it by individuals, by accountants and by lawyers throughout the State. Serious hardship has been imposed on many people in this State because of this anomaly. It has crippled family businesses.

People have not known about it until they have checked the matter with their accountants or lawyers. That problem ought to be corrected. I am sure that Government members must have had examples of that problem placed on their tables in the last year or so. It is very disadvantageous to young people, to a person who wants to build a house and in other areas in which transactions attracting stamp duty take place. It is an anomaly that does not exist in any other State. It is highly prejudicial to individuals in this State and it should be corrected.

I deal now with mining revenue. Last year, mining revenue in Queensland increased by 16.8 per cent. It increased because the taxes, charges and royalties on mining in this State are very heavy. In fact, they are so heavy that they are preventing many of Queensland's mining companies from obtaining new orders. Try as they might, they are competing against South Africa, Poland, Canada, the United States of America and other sources round the world in a highly competitive market. Queensland seems to have an unco-operative Government that does not help those mining companies with its high taxes and charges.

For years, the Government's policy was to work hand in hand with mining companies to obtain orders. However, the Government is missing out on new developments. Mining revenue is very deceptive because the contracts that are now being fulfilled were made some time ago. The income from that source is very good for Government revenue. As I said, the increase last year was 16.8 per cent.

Far from being the lowest taxed State in the Commonwealth, Queensland's taxes are starting to go through the roof in some areas. It is important to bring attention to that matter and to discuss it in this debate.

Unemployment is a matter of concern. I have been concerned about Government statements that the high level of unemployment in this State is due to people coming across the border. It is true that some people are coming across the border. I assure the Committee that the 3 500 people registered as unemployed in my electorate did not come across the border. Approximately 90 per cent of the unemployed in my electorate come from families who have been established there for a considerable time. Most of the unemployed are young people. They are not itinerant workers, people who have arrived recently from New Zealand or suddenly come across the border. Some of those people have been out of work for more than six months. They are not dole bludgers or layabouts. Some of them occasionally obtain work. I am sure that every member of this Chamber has had a similar experience in his or her electorate. To make generalised statements that all unemployed persons are dole bludgers and do not try hard enough is an insult to very respectable young people who are trying very hard to obtain work. The families of those unemployed provide a lot of the resources that enable those people to survive in very difficult circumstances.

The unemployment problem in this State can be reduced dramatically in a number of ways. Unless the suggestions I have made are implemented, Queensland will have for 12 months, and possibly 18 months, the highest unemployment levels in the nation. Increasing the pay-roll tax threshold is one of the ways of overcoming the problem by a stroke of the pen.

A number of nurses wish to return to employment. Nearly 2 000 of the 12 000 registered nurses in this State want to return to nursing. Because they have been out of practice for some time, a crash course to allow them to be retrained would allow them to return to the work-force very quickly.

The unemployment problem can be relieved in a number of other ways. As the media has stated, the Budget is a responsible one. It is a great pity that it contained no innovative suggestions that would push the State along and cushion some of the difficulties through which the State economy is passing at the moment.

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (5.25 p.m.): I support the Government in its presentation of the Budget. Many comments have been made about the Budget. Most of those comments have described the Budget as being a responsible document and one that is able to cope with the situation that presently exists in Queensland.

After listening to some of the speeches made by Opposition members, I wonder what they are looking for. I refer in particular to comments made by the honourable member for Wolston (Mr R. J. Gibbs) in relation to the fringe benefits tax. The honourable member stated that he was not concerned about the fringe benefits tax and would be quite willing to support and promulgate it wherever possible. That is mainly because he does not know any better.

Mr Vaughan: It had to come.

Mr STEPHAN: The honourable member for Nudgee says that it had to come. However, he says that because he is not worried about the payment of the fringe benefits tax. Does he realise the costs to the community of the fringe benefits tax? Does he realise that the bulk of the revenue from the fringe benefits tax will go to Canberra? The majority of jobs that will be created through the increased revenue will be created in Canberra and not here in Queensland. Does the honourable member realise how many jobs will be lost?

Mr Vaughan: You know the Premier advocated that at the summit. You know the Premier advocated a fringe benefits tax last year.

Mr STEPHAN: The Premier advocated a fringe benefits tax, but not one to the extent to which the honourable member for Nudgee refers. The Premier did not advocate a fringe benefits tax on mining companies that encourage people to work for them by supplying housing at a reduced rate. How much will that cost? In the words of Mr Bruce Watson, it is expected to cost \$40m a year. The mining companies cannot afford that. Of that figure, \$5m will come from MIM Holdings. However, it does not make sufficient profit to be able to pay \$5m in additional taxes.

Additional bookwork will be involved in many of the smaller industries. For example, in my own electorate of Gympie an additional person will be required to keep the books relating to the machinery necessary for the timber industry. The Premier did not mention that.

Mr Vaughan: Have you seen this document?

Mr STEPHAN: What I am speaking about now was never mentioned in that particular document. The Premier may have referred to a fringe benefits tax of some description.

The Prime Minister has referred to "this mad fringe benefits tax". It was a slip of the tongue and he was sorry he said it. In fact, he denied saying that, but the statement does appear in television replays of his speech.

Does the Prime Minister realise the hassle that he has created within the community? Does he realise what he has done? Can he take the responsibility for his actions and accept the flak from the community? The Prime Minister has suddenly realised what the fringe benefits tax will take away from the community and from the employers. Many jobs are being lost.

Mr Davis: Tell me where the jobs are lost.

Mr STEPHAN: Every \$10,000 that is taken from an industry represents a job that is lost to that particular industry.

Mr Davis: Oh!

Mr STEPHAN: That is an example of the attitude of the honourable member for Brisbane Central. He has the idea that great profits can be made within industry. He

has the idea that industry has the ability to store great amounts of money. Little does he know what industry is about.

I suggest that the honourable member go out into the field and look at the problems that are occurring in the small-business sector and the rural community. If the honourable member for Brisbane Central did that, he would see how people in those sectors are riding by the seat of their pants in trying to make a living. Those people support townships, industries and communities by their hard work. They do not work a 40 or 50-hour week; they work a 70-hour week.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr STEPHAN: The honourable member for Brisbane Central carries on like an idiot and thinks that that does not happen. However, I assure him that it does. It happens to the extent that if a person gets milk from a cow that he owns and runs in a paddock, or veal from an animal that is killed, he certainly pays for that by the amount of work that he has done and the contributions he is making to the community. If that person was able to earn as much as he pays his employees, things would not be quite so bad. However, in most instances his take-home pay is much less than what he pays his employees. Honourable members should not lose sight of the fact that the rural community is not riding on the pig's back.

Mr Davis interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Randell): Order! The honourable member for Brisbane Central may interject, but not persistently. I ask the honourable member for Gympie to return to the matter under debate.

Mr STEPHAN: The honourable member's interjections were not very sensible, anyway; but thank you for your comments, Mr Randell.

I took note of the comments of the honourable member for Nundah (Sir William Knox) about the Government's levy on mining companies. The levies go back beyond the life of this Government. They were imposed by a previous, coalition Government, of which the honourable member was a member and for which he was responsible.

I will compare the Federal Budget with the responsible State Budget that was presented. I have not heard many complimentary comments about the Federal Budget that was brought down a few weeks ago. In fact, the Federal Budget has pushed farmers backwards in their efforts to compete on the difficult world commodity market. Honourable members do not realise how farmers are being hindered and incentives are being taken away. The Federal Budget has gone soft on wages. Wage increases of 6 per cent, after discounting for devaluation, are expected this financial year.

Although the Federal Treasurer has indicated that a discount of 2 per cent will be sought, the projected inflation rate of 8 per cent indicates that wage increases will be hopelessly out of kilter with world trends. Australia's inflation rate is still higher than the world trend and our production costs and on-farm costs generally are not allowing us to be competitive on overseas markets.

The Australian Labor Party has again broken faith with the wine industry. The decision to increase tax on wine totally ignores the findings of the Federal Government's Mackie inquiry, which, in 1985, recommended that no sales tax increase should be imposed for at least two to three years. Yet the Federal Government ignored that recommendation and increased tax in that industry.

The new tax slug by the Federal Government on fruit juice products, flavoured milk, non-alcoholic wine and cider is completely outrageous and totally unjustified. It could send many producers to the wall. It is economic idiocy. The Labor Party does not appreciate the problems faced by those industries and the self-employed producer. It offers little hope and has little thought for them.

The Budget papers reveal that the recession is far deeper than anyone thought. Because the Federal Government has failed to bite the wages bullet and failed to reduce

direct production costs, which moves are necessary to allow Australia to meet heavily subsidised competition from overseas producers, the average farmer will be worse off. The unsubsidised Australian farmers not only are competing with the foreign Treasuries, but also are battling with their own Federal Treasurer, and they have little hope of getting any support or encouragement from him.

In June 1983, following the election of the present Federal Government, Australia's gross indebtedness abroad amounted to \$35.6 billion. After deduction of the Reserve Bank's foreign assets and some foreign debts to Australians, the net indebtedness at that time was \$23 billion. I do not yet have figures for 30 June last, but all the signs are that Australia's gross indebtedness at that time amounted to around \$85 billion and the net indebtedness to around \$65 billion.

I will look at those figures in a different way. In the first 82 years of the life of the Commonwealth of Australia, all previous Governments of all political persuasions allowed Australia to accumulate a net debt of only \$23 billion. In the last three years, the Federal Government has almost trebled the net debt by adding no less than another \$42 billion or so. In three years, the Federal Government trebled the amount that had taken 82 years to accumulate.

How did that happen? That occurred because of the silly attitude of the Federal Government to expenditure. The sum of \$20,000 is being allocated to the Administrative and Clerical Officers Association for its members to write a play depicting the highs and lows of life in the Department of Social Security—a reflection of its demoralised staff. As much as \$1.2m has been allocated to employee participation in industrial democracy program grants—whatever that may be. Another \$1.2m was spent on the Bilateral Non-Government Organisation (BINGO) co-operation program. One might well ask what that program is supposed to achieve. Where do those organisations find financial support?

Mr Vaughan: Bingo is where the State Government collects its taxes.

Mr STEPHAN: That is where taxation revenue is being spent, and the interjection of the honourable member for Nudgee demonstrates one of the silly attitudes of the Australian Labor Party.

I remind honourable members that \$700,000 was contributed to a collective housing scheme known as WITCH. Financial support is offered also to similar groups. The sum of \$35,000 was given to the communist-sponsored Union of Australian Women for plastic shopping bags advertising peace. In addition, the sum of \$57,000 was given to *Anarchist Centennial*, a publication distributed by the Mardi Gras Association for gays. I hope that the information I have furnished provides honourable members with an indication of how the Federal Government spends its funds, and an explanation of why the country's indebtedness and taxation have increased to such a large extent.

Mr Davis: How pathetic can one get!

Mr STEPHAN: I accept the interjection made by the honourable member for Brisbane Central, and I agree with his comment.

In Queensland, the attitude adopted by the State Government helps to keep people employed and provides expanded employment opportunities and facilities for training the work-force. Moreover, the Queensland Government has assisted all sectors of industry to expand with a view to enhancing communal infrastructure. It also provides support for the needy and educates the State's young people. Perhaps some of the older members of the community, such as the honourable member for Brisbane Central, would benefit from increased support in obtaining a higher degree of education.

The Queensland Government has ensured that demands made by the community for health services and the maintenance of law and order are adequately addressed. It will serve to highlight the points I make if I provide the Committee with a comparison of what occurs in some of the other States. In the year ended December 1985, Queensland had the second highest annual population growth rate of 1.26 per cent. Western Australia

had the highest rate, 1.9 per cent whereas Australia averaged 1.3 per cent. As at December 1985, the population of Queensland was 2.5 million.

In the year ended December 1985, Queensland created more jobs than any other State in Australia. Whereas Victoria recorded an increase of 58 000 new jobs, 75 000 new jobs were created in Queensland, which represents 28 per cent of all employment opportunities created in Australia. Those figures demonstrate that Queensland has the highest rate of employment growth of all the Australian States. Honourable members opposite ought to adopt a positive attitude to the opportunities being provided in Queensland instead of complaining about what has not eventuated.

For the year ended December 1985, Queensland recorded the highest growth in the work-force of all the Australian States. The national average growth in employment was 3.8 per cent, whereas Queensland's recorded 7 per cent. Queensland increased labour force was 2.8 times that of New South Wales and 2.1 times that of the Victorian growth rate. In addition, Queensland has the fastest annual growth rate in labour force of all the States.

Whereas the national growth average was 3 per cent, Queensland recorded a growth rate of 5.7 per cent, which was 2.7 times the growth rate of the labour force in Victoria and 7.1 times greater than South Australia's labour force growth rate. Of all jobs created in Australia, Queensland created 51 000, or 16.9 per cent, for the period to June 1986.

Queensland was the leading export State in Australia. For the 12-month period ended June 1985, Queensland produced \$572m in exports. The value of exports from Queensland increased by 16.7 per cent, compared to a national increase of 10.1 per cent.

It is noticeable that members of the Opposition cannot bear to listen to this type of information. They have disappeared from the Chamber. Obviously they do not wish to know what is occurring in Queensland, and they do not wish to know about growth rates or positive initiatives taken by a Government that sets Queensland apart from the other States.

Later, I will refer to the effects of migration; but now I inform honourable members of an interstate productivity comparison. Queensland produced 21 per cent of the gross value of agricultural commodities produced in Australia during 1984-85. During 1985-86, the gross value of rural production in Queensland amounted to \$3,110m. In addition, in 1984-85, Queensland contributed 22 per cent of Australia's value-added mining operations.

I now examine the effect of interstate migration on the performance of the Queensland economy. During the 12-month period till December 1985, Queensland gained 10 835 migrants, whereas New South Wales lost 10 400 of its inhabitants, Victoria lost 9 233, South Australia lost 4 000, Western Australia gained 4 000 and Tasmania gained 300. The trend of migration to Queensland is still strong. People are still flocking to Queensland in droves. Is it any wonder that at times increased population causes problems in the provision of services and the transfer of unemployment benefits and social security benefits. Interstate migration has caused unemployment in Queensland to increase. If those people had stayed in their own States, how much better Queensland's employment would be.

If Australia is to become competitive, Governments have to get off the tax-payer's back. The tax-payer has to be left alone and given a bit of incentive. Appropriate priority must be given through the private sector to those trying to generate economic growth and job creation. Only then will Australia's economic ills be overcome. That will not be popular or easy because the electorate has been discouraged from supporting the private sector.

Australia cannot continue to close down its major industries, run a huge trade deficit and build an unprecedented foreign debt while still trying to support a growing population and minor secondary industries with heavy overheads. Australia is in danger of becoming a place where goods are bought, not made. If that happens, it will herald

an economic dead-end for the Australian people. Unless Australians have an important role as producers, they cannot continue to be consumers.

The Government has always believed that a reasonable level of Government services should be provided. When it has argued that services should be that level and no more, the Labor Party has complained and wailed, comparing Queensland's performance with that of other States. Three-quarters of the speeches of ALP members in this debate have contained arguments for greater Government expenditure on welfare, education, health, consumer affairs, Aborigines and whatever else can be thought of. Queensland's long-term economic strategy has aimed for a reasonable range and level of Government services appropriate to the paying capacity of a wealth-producing community.

I now turn to the State's overall economy and how it is faring at the moment. Despite massive structural change, the State generated, as I said before, 50 000 new jobs in the last 12 months. That is not a bad achievement at all when it is compared with what is happening in other States.

I spoke before about Australia's export markets and how it needs to rely on exports to be able to become competitive and to maintain its balance of trade. A nation whose trade profile is so completely dominated by primary exports should have, as a national priority, the maintenance of international competitiveness for those exports. Australia will rely heavily on mineral and rural exports for its foreign exchange earnings and its standard of living well into the twenty-first century. It is therefore essential to eliminate those forces that adversely affect Australia's competitiveness.

A problem that I encounter regularly is in transportation. It is important that produce is placed onto the market and available to the customer at the time when he is told it will arrive. Only a couple of weeks ago in the Chamber I highlighted the problems of the horticultural industry and the export risk that occurs with its products. I refer to the time when the Waterside Workers Federation went on strike and 12 containers of Chinese cabbage sat on the wharf at Fisherman Islands from 24 June until 4 July awaiting loading onto the *Oriental Expert*. Chinese cabbage is a product that is very fragile. It cannot be allowed to lie on the wharf, for any reason at all, even in a refrigerated container, for any length of time—let alone a week. Imagine what that is doing to the product. Imagine what that is doing to the confidence of the consumer at the other end. He is waiting for his product to arrive.

Mr Yewdale: Tell the Minister.

Mr STEPHAN: I am telling the Minister, but I am also telling the Waterside Workers Federation of the consequences of their actions in those circumstances. I am sure that even the honourable member for Rockhampton North would agree that it is not a responsible action to hold up the loading of perishables onto ships.

Mr Yewdale: Don't you like wharfies?

Mr STEPHAN: I like wharfies—I like everybody else—as long as they carry out their responsibilities and realise that any action they take causes a reaction to it. In the instance that I have referred to, the reaction is that caused by the failure of the product—in this case the Chinese cabbages—to arrive in the Hong Kong markets on time in an edible condition.

Mr FitzGerald: Most of it came out of the Lockyer Valley.

Mr STEPHAN: It could have come from out of the Lockyer Valley. Many other products that are exported come from other parts of Queensland. For example, broccoli is produced in the Lockyer Valley and also around Gympie. A fellow up there produces it very satisfactorily and competitively.

Also tied up in that matter is the current need for the implementation of an irradiation program. I know this is a very emotional subject.

Mr FitzGerald: There was supposed to be a demonstration on that outside Parliament House at 11 o'clock today.

Mr STEPHAN: There could have been. However, those people do not know what they are talking about.

Dr Allan Holmes, the Director of the British Food Manufacturers Research Association at Leatherhead, Surrey, said that the irradiation technique came into the same category as canning, freezing, drying or pasteurisation. I suppose one can say that those processes affect the quality of fresh goods. Of course they do but, when compared with the fresh product, only to a very limited extent. The Fresh is Best campaign of the fresh fruit and vegetable industry is certainly accurate. Fresh food is certainly better, but irradiation does a tremendous amount to help to maintain quality, to eradicate diseases and pests and to present on shelves products in a far better condition.

Local industry representatives have recently spent some time inspecting irradiation installations in Europe and Canada to endeavour to determine the suitability of the technology for Queensland's primary produce. They also sampled both irradiated and untreated foodstuffs, including Dutch cabbage, Canary Island tomatoes, Kenyan strawberries, Brazilian grapes, South African peaches, mangoes and English cheese. That is quite a diversified range of foodstuffs. The irradiation technique is presently in a similar situation to that of the freezing process in the 1950s. People are now reacting to food irradiation in the same way as people in the 1950s reacted to the freezing of food.

The United States Food and Drug Administration has approved a final rule that now permits the use of low-level irradiation to kill insects in harvested fresh fruits and vegetables. Low-level irradiation of foodstuffs has been approved previously in the United States for applications such as exterminating insects in wheat, retarding sprouting in potatoes, and treating herbs and spices and pork. The process has been endorsed by the American Medical Association.

Another interesting fact is that support for the irradiation program comes not only from the National Party but also from the Federal and State arms of the Labor Party. The irradiation investigation to be carried out by the Australian Consumers Association is a total waste of money and time. The announcement by the Federal Minister for Health (Dr Blewett) that the Federal Government has granted \$90,000 to the Australian Consumers Association to conduct its own inquiry over a period of six months will mean a duplication of what has already been done. It is a waste of money. The safety of food irradiation has been proven over and over again in exhaustive overseas studies. Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council, which reports to the Federal Minister for Health, has approved a model food standards regulation for the irradiation of foods. It is particularly strange that the Government is not even accepting the advice of its own expert advisory body. I am also amazed that the Government can afford to waste sums of money such as that at the drop of a hat.

There seems to be a difference of opinion within the Federal Government's own ranks over the issue of irradiation. Earlier this year, in letters to the Committee of Direction of Fruit Marketing, a number of Ministers of the Federal Government indicated their support for the use of irradiation to develop new markets for primary produce. For example, in August the Minister for Trade (John Dawkins) wrote to the COD in the following terms—

"I understand that irradiation is now being used in over 20 countries on a range of food products, and that it is successful as a means of extending shelf life, inhibiting sprouting in vegetables and as an improved technique which could replace certain chemicals in the disinfestation and disinfection of animal and plant products.

I agree that Australian industry should not be hindered from applying technological advances which enhance its international competitiveness if they are proven to be safe and acceptable."

Even the Labor Party spokesman for primary industries in this place, the member for Cairns (Mr De Lacy), who at times has made some irrelevant statements, said—

“... I think that irradiation has been reviewed and researched sufficiently by reputable bodies overseas and in Australia.

Opening it up to another inquiry may not make the debate more rational, but may introduce more emotionalism.”

The honourable member for Cairns cannot always be wrong.

While I am on the topic of fruit and vegetables, I mention the lack of plant variety rights legislation. That legislation has been needed for years. Australia does not seem to be any further down the track in that regard than it was seven or eight years ago. That is causing Australia to fall further behind in competitiveness on the world export market.

Australia is well placed to continue expansion of its horticultural export market, provided that its producers are able to compete under fair and equitable conditions. That means equal access to new overseas varieties.

It is very important to have an end product that is presentable and of top quality. That means starting with a top-quality product. At present, the growers of these varieties are tying them up with plant variety rights, and Australian producers are being denied them to a very large extent. Steps should be taken as soon as possible to implement plant variety rights legislation.

Mr Miller: Why can't the Australian growers obtain these varieties?

Mr STEPHAN: Australia has not been a signatory to the plant variety rights program. Although Australian growers are gaining access to some of the varieties from overseas markets, it is not the top-quality variety that most overseas producers are using. Unless a grower is prepared to pay for plant variety rights, he will not gain access to these varieties.

Mr Miller: What do you have to pay to get the rights?

Mr STEPHAN: I am not sure what the actual amount will be. That is still to be determined.

Mr Miller: It is more than monetary, isn't it?

Mr STEPHAN: It is a monetary agreement.

Mr Miller: Isn't it more than just a monetary agreement?

Mr STEPHAN: Of course, if a variety is tied up by way of plant variety rights, nobody else will have access to that particular variety, whether it be a vegetable, wheat or something else. Unless a grower is a signatory to that agreement, he cannot gain access to, grow or reproduce that variety in Australia.

Mr Simpson: It's like a copyright.

Mr STEPHAN: Yes, it is a copyright.

A bit closer to home is the enormous value of the forestry industry to Queensland and, in particular, to my own electorate of Gympie.

As at 30 June 1986, the area of land reserved as State forest totalled almost 4 000 ha. In broad terms, the forest estate can be categorised into native forests and plantation forests for forest management purposes.

In regard to native forests—within the multiple-use concept there are a number of different activities that are undertaken. These include harvesting of the timber resource, watershed protection, conservation of soil and the environment, recreation, protection from wildfires and grazing.

Plantation forests cover quite a large area. Most of these forests are softwood plantations. The area of Crown softwood plantations established is 150 000 ha. Compared

with native forests, these plantations have a greatly superior wood production capacity, ranging from 9 to 13 cubic metres per hectare per year for slash pine in south Queensland to an average of 15 cubic metres for Caribbean pine in north Queensland. Production from native forests is generally less than 1 cubic metre per hectare per year. There is a big difference in production capacity between native forests and plantation forests.

I mention also how forestry areas are utilised for recreation purposes. In fact, last week-end a country music muster was held in the Amamoor State Forest. As many as 35 000 people enjoyed country music to its fullest. With the co-operation and co-ordination of the Forestry Department, some land was made available for the people to camp on site in tents. Despite a storm, people were able to enjoy the forest for that purpose. Slim Dusty, John Williamson, Lucky Starr and Normie Rowe contributed to the enjoyment of a great number of country and western music fans on that occasion.

The Gympie Museum has been a great success. In all, 32 000 people have visited it since it opened in March 1984.

The construction of a steam-driven sawmill is well advanced, and \$60,000 has been budgeted for that work for the 1986-87 financial year.

Sitting suspended from 5.55 to 7.15 p.m.

Mr VEIVERS (Ashgrove) (7.15 p.m.): I am delighted to have an opportunity to make some comments on the State Budget and to reinforce some of the comments made this afternoon by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Warburton). I wish to make some general and specific comments on the Budget brought down by the Premier and Treasurer, and then speak about a specific issue regarding the management of the State's economy by this Government.

Much has been said about this Budget being a balanced Budget. The simple fact of the matter is that the State Budget has to be balanced, has to come to a bottom line, with an equalisation of expenditure and revenue. That has been so for many years and it must continue that way. What the Budget does not reveal, and what many people in this State do not know, is that Queensland has a massive debt that has to be repaid in some form or another at some time or another.

Opposition members have frequently made reference to the national situation and the national debt that exists in this country. There is no point in me, or any honourable member on either side of the Chamber, trying to deny that that is a fact of life. Much has been said, and will continue to be said, about the state of the national economy.

It is one thing to say that this State is going particularly well with a balanced budget and another to ignore the state of the national economy. The fact quite simply is that Queensland and Queenslanders owe in the vicinity of \$1.3 billion. That is a larger debt per capita than exists in most of the other States in this country. To begin with, Queensland must nail that political situation. A problem that this government is frequently happy to completely ignore exists. No doubt many other Government members will continue to overlook the problem.

In my three years in this Chamber I have reached the conclusion that this is not a Government of the people, it is not a Government for the people and on many issues it is government versus the people. This Government seems to be endeavouring to perpetuate itself and to ignore many of the problems that arise. It has the attitude that it is in office and is ignoring the purpose for which it was elected and the real problems faced by this State.

As an example, this is a Budget that is anti-growth, anti-jobs, anti-economic development and, in particular, anti-future. There is nothing in the Budget for young people. There is nothing in it to give the young people in this State a future that has dignity and self-respect. That is a critical factor in whatever decisions are made by this Government, because Queensland's future depends on how its young people will perform, what sort of opportunities they will have for employment in the future, and whether they can operate with dignity and self-respect.

In the final analysis, Queensland's future depends very much on the quality of its young people who will perform for us in the State economy. I am very disappointed that the Budget falls short of any positive initiatives for the future of the young people of this State.

The Government Whip (Mr Neal) said that the Government encourages thrift. I shall put forward some of the Government's activities that do not encourage thrift. What about the expenditure of \$8m on an aircraft that is used in this State for purely political purposes? The number of quangos in this State has multiplied. The total budget for the quangos in Queensland almost equals the total estimate of State expenditure. The number of Government advisory bodies and boards that have developed in this State has got completely out of hand. Is that thrift?

What about the wastage in political pork-barrelling with Government advertisements? Is that thrift? What about the \$100,000 that was virtually spent on a party to celebrate the stabilisation of the Southport bar? Is that indicative of a Government that believes in thrift? What about the rumours that are circulating throughout this State about the amount spent on legal fees incurred in issuing writs on members of Parliament and on other legal challenges through the courts? I have heard that \$3m has been paid in legal fees by the tax-payers of this State. Is that thrift?

Today, honourable members heard a figure of almost \$500,000 that is referred to in the Auditor-General's report as ministerial expenses. That is the amount that has been spent by Ministers. The report does not provide to this Assembly the expenses that have been buried in a Minister's departmental expenses. Some Ministers are proud that they have reduced their expenses. I would like to know by how much their expenses have increased in their departments. Is that thrift? What about the cost of the TV program *Queensland Unlimited* paid for out of the public purse?

Why do Ministers in the State of Queensland use luxury imported cars, such as Mercedes Benzes, Jaguars, Volvos and Rovers, in many cases costing up to \$100,000, rather than Australian-made cars? Fortunately, the honourable member for Balonne is not in the Chamber. I wonder on what basis he made his comment that the Government encourages thrift. What a lot of nonsense it was!

I refer again to and reinforce some of the comments made this afternoon by the Leader of the Opposition. He said that there is an overwhelming amount of evidence to support the contention that there is gross waste, extravagance and mismanagement in Queensland's public sector. That is very true. As he said, in Government, Labor will establish a parliamentary public accounts committee, something that all honourable members know the Nationals and the Liberals have failed to do in the last three decades. Auditors-General have recommended that the Parliament and this State should have a public accounts committee so that there is at least a degree of public scrutiny over the way in which money is being spent. Why does Queensland not have a public accounts committee? Every other Parliament in Australia has a public accounts committee. Labor will establish one.

The Leader of the Opposition referred also to the number of quangos that multiplied in Queensland between 1957 and 1983. I remind honourable members that that occurred when the Liberals were part of the coalition. Many comments have been made by members of the Liberal Party, both in this Assembly and outside, about their high principles and what they intend to do.

I remind honourable members that for 26 out of the past 29 years the Liberals were part of the State Government. They held portfolios very important to the economy of Queensland such as the Treasury and Industry and Employment. However, they now have the hypocrisy to turn around after 26 years of committed involvement in the management of this State and say that they think there is a lot of wastage.

Mr Palaszczuk: Where are the Liberals in this Budget debate tonight?

Mr VEIVERS: I notice that they are not here tonight. How can the Liberals wipe their hands clean of the problems they helped create? I do not know who they are trying to fool.

The Leader of the Opposition went on to say that it is a pity that the Liberals did not put those ideas into practice while they were in Government instead of putting them forward now and expecting this Committee to believe that they are genuine. The Liberal Party has been part of the scene for 26 of the past 29 years. It has been responsible for the majority of the economic management of Queensland.

A Labor Government will introduce what I believe is a long overdue change in Queensland's system of taxation and charges. It is ridiculous for Government members to claim that Queensland is a low-tax State. I am not sure what Government members regard as taxes. To me, taxes mean charges, service charges, or whatever revenue is raised by whatever method. However, they are taxes. Time and time again increased charges are introduced through regulation in this State.

The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that a complete review of State taxes, fees and charges will be undertaken with a view to lessening their impact on Queensland families. Most importantly, the contribution of those taxes and charges will no longer be hidden from the public. Those taxes and charges should be put forward so that the people of Queensland can see clearly what they are paying and when and how those charges are increased. Those taxes and charges should and will be identified clearly in State Budgets.

In relation to public accountability, the National Party Government thinks it is a law unto itself. No other Government in this nation is so arrogant, selfish and reckless in the spending of public funds. A Government should be of the people and for the people; it should not be against the people.

I now refer to a few specific items that were mentioned in the Budget. I also wish to refer to a degree of propaganda that is continually put forward by the State Government.

The Premier and Treasurer, in his Budget Speech, spoke about some of the major achievements and important issues—as he and Government members see them. He said—

“The indicators I quote are critical ones in the measuring of a State's relative economic performance. They are the latest figures available. Each of them shows Queensland in a positive position compared with the rest of Australia. It is the story of the Queensland economy that should be told. It is positive and it is correct.”

The Premier went on to say—

“In the same period, the State recorded the highest growth of any State from interstate migration.”

The Premier was incorrect in his statement that the increase in migration to Queensland has provided a positive contribution to this State's economy. I wish to point out that in the 20 to 35-year age group Queensland has suffered a net loss when compared with the other States.

The important factor that should be remembered is that the 20 to 35-year age group is the critical economic age group for the State's development. I do not criticise the number of elderly people who choose to come to Queensland to live on the Gold Coast, the north coast or anywhere else in the State in their retirement years. They come here because they enjoy the climate and the environment. It is great to see that; but bear in mind that their children have grown up and have been educated. Elderly people tend to buy less food, fewer clothes and probably keep the car that the husband purchased when he retired. In economic value to the State, those people create less turnover than people in the 20 to 35-year age group. This State wants people from the 20 to 35-year age group who are educating children and have initiative, drive and can make this State's economy viable and effective.

It is bending the truth for the Premier to say that Queensland has the highest migration from interstate. I am interested in who those people are, what their ages are and what they can do for the economy of Queensland. In the 20 to 35-year age group, Queensland is suffering a net loss to the other States.

Mr Henderson: Rubbish.

Mr VEIVERS: What does the honourable member for Mount Gravatt mean by "rubbish"? That is fact.

Mr Henderson: I have figures from the Parliamentary Library. You are wrong.

Mr VEIVERS: That is fact. I refer to the State Capital Works Program in the Budget, specifically to the establishment of police stations in this State. In 1983, in my electorate of Ashgrove, 5 000 residents in The Gap area signed a petition requesting the establishment of a police station. The petition was well founded, because the area has grown very quickly. It is a nice area in a good suburb. I recognise that there would be other areas in the State that could substantiate claims for the establishment of a police station, but I believe that The Gap certainly meets the criteria for the establishment of a police station.

There are police stations at Ashgrove, Red Hill, Newmarket and Torwood, all within a reasonable proximity of each other. If a criterion for the establishment of a police station is proximity to another station, that is no excuse for not putting one at The Gap. Honourable members will find that the Minister for Police has erected in his own electorate three of the four police stations allocated in the Budget. Those stations are at Esk, Forest Hill and Rosewood. So much for the 5 000 residents who signed, quite genuinely, that petition in The Gap area!

My colleague the honourable member for Ithaca (Mr Miller) would be very well aware of the petition because probably he presented it; I am not absolutely sure of that. I know that I did not, but I do know the facts and I think they were well founded. They highlight a good example of the pork-barrelling that occurs in this State.

How can the Minister for Police justify the establishment of three of those stations in his own electorate? What statistics would substantiate their establishment?

I refer honourable members to a specific issue that I have raised here previously. It reflects the sort of attitude that this Government adopts towards the people and to the way in which certain decisions are made.

On the evening of 21 December 1983, the Nerang River Entrance Development Bill was rushed through this House. The Bill authorised the carrying-out by, or on behalf of, the Gold Coast Waterways Authority of works in connection with the relocation of the Nerang River entrance, namely, the construction of rock walls to seaward, replacing the dangerous old Southport bar.

Mr Campbell: It is still dangerous.

Mr VEIVERS: Indeed it is, and I will refer to that matter shortly.

The Bill also provided for the vesting of certain lands in the Crown for connected purposes. At the time the Bill was rushed through the House, most honourable members would not have been aware of the controversial aspects of this piece of legislation.

Several honourable members on this side of the House expressed concern about the real motives behind the Bill, but because the old Southport bar had such a notorious reputation, by and large it was felt by honourable members that an all-weather entrance for safe navigation would be a good thing for the Gold Coast. Ever since then, the project has been the subject of continued controversy. It has claimed the life of an experienced boatman. It has proved to be a financial octopus. Costs have escalated from the contract tender price of \$22m to a figure in excess of \$40m.

In the opinion of many local fishermen, it is proving to be more dangerous than the old bar crossing. By its action in presenting the Bill, this Government has broken one of our society's basic tenets—the payment of compensation to holders of freehold land taken over by Government or a statutory authority. A basic principle of our democratic institutions is the payment of compensation to land-owners for taking over freehold land.

Subsequent to the passing of the Bill, Mr Pat Tuesley, one of the Gold Coast's pioneers, contacted me about titles he held to land on The Spit, which he claimed to be above high-water mark. I do not intend going over that again, because I spoke at length in this House on 3 April 1984 about Mr Tuesley's efforts to obtain some compensation for his land.

In the context of new information which I shall be tabling in this House tonight, it is important to say that Mr Tuesley has been consistently ignored in spite of the fact that a private survey he recently commissioned of the area indicated that six to seven acres of land to which he holds title is above high-water mark.

Mr Ahern: How much did he pay in rates?

Mr VEIVERS: For many, many years either he or his family paid rates on that land.

Mr Ahern: But not lately.

Mr VEIVERS: That is true in respect of the last few years, and I accept that, but we are talking about the principle of being in possession of freehold title and deeds.

The Government has ignored his pleas. Section 9 of the Nerang River Entrance Development Act divests land-owners of their land without the payment of any compensation. The Government has attempted to justify this action by saying that since the old town of Moondarewa was lost when the sea broke through in the 1940s, the lands were not included for local authority rating purposes. The Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology (Mr Ahern) has already made that point. The Government's attitude to the matter was that the owners had, to all intents and purposes, vacated any interest they may have had, and that any development was right out of the question. That attitude adopted by the Government is indeed very questionable.

This position was made clear by the then Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Affairs, the late Mr John Goleby, in his speech on 21 December 1983. The Minister made the following statement reflecting the Government's position—

“Taking all these matters into consideration, including the fact that the lands were lost by a natural process, it is considered this is a situation where there is no case for the payment of any compensation to the remaining registered proprietors and where, in any case, the difficulty of tracing registered proprietors or their successors would make normal procedures for the taking of land of the Crown impossible to follow. Accordingly, the Bill provides for the lands concerned to revert to the Crown without payment of any compensation therefor.”

I had, and still have, a lot of respect for the late Mr John Goleby, but I believe he was snowed, for reasons only known to others, because his statement concerning the difficulty in tracing registered proprietors was simply not true.

I shall now prove by documents I have in my possession that the late Minister appeared not to been given all the information about registered proprietors of the land or their successors. To say that there was difficulty in tracing registered proprietors is just not to state the truth of the matter. Mr Tuesley claims to have approached the Government before the Bill's introduction, expressing his concern—all in vain.

I now have correspondence, involving another person, that clearly indicates that the Government either was not interested or did not want to find any title-holders to the land in question.

On 28 March 1982 the late Mr Stanley Wood of Bulimba wrote to the Land Administration Commission referring to the land on The Spit, making his claim and seeking advice on the matter. His letter was ignored. On 21 December 1983 the Bill resuming his land was introduced and passed.

On 22 March 1984 Mr Wood phoned the Land Administration Commission and on 23 March 1984 wrote to it enclosing a copy of his letter of March 1982, wishing to establish beyond doubt his title to the land.

On 23 March, no doubt in response to the telephone call, the Land Administration Commission dispatched a letter to Mr Wood attaching a photocopy of the recent legislation vesting the lands in the Crown without payment of compensation.

On 30 March 1984, Mr Wood wrote to the Premier expressing his shock at what had occurred. I will seek leave to table that letter soon. I now quote from that letter—

“To be so divested by your Government was the greatest shock to my democratic beliefs and accordingly this personal appeal to you is made to consider some compensation including its substitution with land on Stradbroke Island.”

On 24 May 1984 a strange thing happened. Mr Wood received another letter from the Land Administration Commission saying that the matter was receiving the department's attention and that he would be further advised as soon as possible.

Mr Menzel: That is the normal letter.

Mr VEIVERS: I do not think it is normal. Surely that is not normal. Because the department's previous letter of 23 March seemed to indicate that the matter was closed, it seemed a strange procedure. Was the Government, or someone, having second thoughts, or perhaps even a guilty conscience about how sacrosanct freehold ownership rights should be?

No! In reply to his letter to the Premier, Mr Wood received a letter dated 4 July from Sir Sydney Schubert, the Co-ordinator General. It stated that the land had been divested from the owners pursuant to the Act without the making of any compensation. Mr Wood, who passed away in September 1985, realised that he had lost any chance of claiming, or being paid, compensation for his land.

I seek leave to table those letters and also the title.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents on the table.

Mr Wood's family claims that the 2 acres 30¾ perches—I have not been able to convert it to hectares—is above high-water mark.

Only recently his family decided to make all those documents available to me as they saw and heard that Mr Tuesley was also trying in vain to establish his claims. Their concern relates to the very important principles involved. The documents certainly appear to indicate that the Government ignored Mr Wood's claims. Why was his first letter of March 1982 completely ignored? Is it not odd that subsequent to that—in December 1983—the legislation divesting the owners of their land was rushed through this Chamber?

I am now demanding an explanation from the Premier and the Co-ordinator General as to, firstly, why Mr Wood's original correspondence was ignored; secondly, why little or no effort was made to locate and contact possible registered owners of the land; and, thirdly, why the well-established policy, embodied in statute law, that compensation be paid to freehold land-owners if the Crown makes resumptions, was ignored in this case.

Finally, I demand from the Premier that he give an assurance that this land, now acquired by the Crown, will not be sold off to private developers to help finance the escalating costs of developing the Southport bar.

Need I remind the Committee that there is a similar "smell" about this deal to what the Government had in mind, but failed, with its land acquisitions at Kangaroo Point. I draw that parallel.

This Government, which continually espouses its support for the principles of free enterprise, frequently treats its citizens with contempt and makes a mockery of the principles of democratic government.

Mr MENZEL (Mulgrave) (7.45 p.m.): First I commend the Premier and Treasurer on presenting a good and sound State Budget, one which is balanced and responsible, yet allows for moderate growth. It allows for an increase of 281 police, 442 teachers and 550 nurses.

The Federal Budget increased the price of petrol by 3c a litre. A week after its introduction—in fact, only the other day—the price of petrol was increased by another 2c a litre. That brings the total increase to 5c a litre. However, last year when the world price of oil dropped considerably, the Federal Labor Government passed on only half the reduction. Now that the world price has gone up, the Federal Government has immediately increased the price of fuel by the full amount. The Labor Party will certainly go down in history as the greatest taxer of all time.

That compares with the performance of the State Government, which has imposed the lowest taxes of any State in Australia. Queensland is the only State not to have a petrol tax, a tobacco tax or a financial institutions tax. All the Labor and Liberal States have such taxes. The National Party Government in Queensland is the only Government in Australia to present a balanced Budget. Our Budget has no deficit. The Labor Government in New South Wales imposes an additional petrol tax of 3.53c a litre. Under the Victorian Labor Government the additional petrol tax is 3.66c a litre.

The National Party Government in Queensland has given a greater concession on electricity tariffs to pensioners than any other State. Queensland pensioners will receive an electricity tariff concession of \$72 a year. I have been fighting for that for some time and I am certainly pleased about it.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr MENZEL: Members of the Labor Party laugh at that. They do not take seriously that pensioners should receive a rebate on their electricity tariffs.

I am pleased that the Queensland Government will construct between the Queerah meatworks and the Cairns drive-in a four-lane highway. As everyone knows, from the time I was first elected I fought to have that road built. I am delighted that the State Government will construct that road to relieve the traffic congestion south of Cairns. I hope that the road eventually will be extended to Gordonvale. The time is fast approaching when the extra lanes will be needed. This year has been a delightful one for tourists to come to north Queensland, which is the best part of the State and the best part of Australia. At times, because of the increased tourist traffic to Cairns, the roads have been quite congested. The construction of a four-lane highway is a positive move by the Queensland National Party Government.

The new passing lanes on the Gillies Highway, which the Government agreed to have built following my representations, will assist the traffic flow. Anyone who has driven up the Gillies Highway will have seen the new passing lanes that were recently completed at the bottom of the range.

A disappointment, however, is that the Labor Government in Canberra has cut back road-funding to Queensland for the coming year by about \$13m. It collects \$5.7 billion from the fuel levy, yet it distributes only \$1.25 billion back to the States for roads. In fact, for every dollar a motorist spends on petrol, 61.5c goes directly to Canberra. Perhaps some of that money will be used to build the new embassy in Peking which, I understand, will cost \$48.5m.

Honourable members opposite frequently speak about public accountability and about a parliamentary public accounts committee. The Federal Government has a public

accounts committee, yet the new Parliament House in Canberra is being constructed at a cost of \$1 billion and may even escalate to \$1.5 billion. Where is the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee? What hypocrisy that is! I wonder if the Federal Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee will investigate the construction of a new embassy in Peking at a cost of \$48.5m. I wonder if some Labor Party crony is getting a pay-off from that.

The Federal Government has not given the State one cent for the new southern access route into Cairns. I ask the Labor member for Cairns (Mr De Lacy), who is presently occupying the chair, what steps he is taking to have his Canberra colleagues provide a decent road into Cairns. I also call upon the Federal Labor member for Leichhardt (Mr John Gayler) to do something to have some of the money that Queenslanders pay in fuel tax put towards building the southern access route.

It is a disgrace. The Federal Government refuses to declare the southern access route into Cairns a national developmental road, similar to the four-lane highway between the Cairns Airport and Cairns city that the former Federal National Party member for Leichhardt (Mr David Thomson) had built. However, the present Federal member refuses to do anything to have the southern access route into Cairns built.

National developmental roads are roads that are built to service a port. Clearly, the road to the Cairns airport is classified as servicing a port. David Thomson persuaded the Federal Government to build that road. Similarly, the southern access route into Cairns would service a port and should be classified as a developmental road.

I have made many representations to the State Minister for Main Roads (Mr Hinze); yet the Canberra Labor Government refuses to agree.

As I have said, the Federal Labor Government is building an embassy—or should I say a palace—in Peking. That cannot be denied. Hayden admitted that in Cairns when he was questioned about it. That embassy will cost \$48.5m. Perhaps when he is kicked out at the next election, Bob Hawke plans to retire as ambassador to Peking and live in luxury, forgetting all about roads in Cairns.

As I said, the Hawke Government is continuing with the construction of the new Parliament House in Canberra, which has been estimated to cost more than \$1 billion. Where is the public accountability in that? If ever there was a need for public accountability, it is certainly in Canberra, not in the State. Queensland has accountability, and it has a tight Budget. Perhaps some of that \$1 billion could be used to build the southern access route into Cairns.

Honourable members often hear members of the Labor Party knocking primary industries. The present-day Liberals are no better because the policies of the Liberal Party, when it was in Government in Canberra, milked the rural sector for years.

Years ago when Artie Fadden was National Party Treasurer, all schoolchildren received free milk at school every day. However, the Labor Government in Canberra refused to reintroduce that scheme. If schoolchildren received milk every day, it would serve the purpose of ensuring that all Australian children received the health food of the nation. It would also assist the ailing dairy industry.

Mr Campbell: Why don't you provide it?

Mr MENZEL: I wish that I could organise the dairy industry and stop Kerin making a mess of it.

The provision of free milk to schoolchildren would be a very good investment for the nation. I am serious about that. I am not trying to spread propaganda. It is a serious matter. When I went to school, the children were given free milk every year, and I have not turned out too badly. Today's children should receive the same benefit.

I will tell honourable members about ventures on which the Federal Government spends money. As I said, the Labor Government in Canberra is short-changing the States in tax reimbursements, which makes budgeting difficult. However, it is wasting money

on providing grants to various radical groups such as the Office of the Status of Women at a cost of \$1.2m.

Mr Yewdale: Name the groups.

Mr MENZEL: I will name them.

The Gay Publications Co-operative has been granted \$123,280; the People for Nuclear Disarmament in Sydney, \$78,482; the Builders Labourers Federation, \$52,130; and the Trades and Labor Council of South Australia, \$320,000. Those are a few examples of how the Federal Labor Government is spending money. Its priorities are wrong. Would that money not be better used to subsidise first-home-owners and the high interest charged on home-loan repayments because of the high-interest-rate policy of the Federal Labor Government?

Mr Prest: What about your own Government?

Mr MENZEL: I will answer that. What about the \$120m grant that the Federal Government gave to the banks—after the banks had made record profits—while people were being thrown out onto the streets?

In the last Budget the Federal Government imposed a 10 per cent sales tax on flavoured milk. What a disgrace! That tax will cost the Queensland dairy-farmers about \$3.5m in extra tax. That tax will go into the Canberra coffers. In Malanda, which is in my electorate, the tax will cost the dairy industry at least \$500,000. However, the Labor Party seems to be happy about that.

I want the Queensland Government to know the reason why the 10 per cent tax was imposed. It was not because the Federal Government was interested in obtaining the extra tax in this case, but in order to raise the price of flavoured milk, making Coca Cola and other beverages more competitive, because the manufacturers of Coca Cola gave the Labor Party a massive donation to its last Federal election campaign.

Mr Yewdale: How much was it?

Mr MENZEL: That comment about raising the price of flavoured milk was made by a Federal public servant to someone in the dairy industry.

I turn now to the sugar industry. The Federal Government has been attempting to con the general public about what it is doing for the sugar industry. In reality the Federal Government has done very little. Since 1982 the State National Party Government has given \$44.46m to the sugar industry compared to \$15m by the Federal Labor Government. That figure comes out of the Budget papers. The Federal Government collects the major portion of the taxes in the community and therefore has the greatest ability to pay. The Federal Labor Government demanded that the State legislature deregulate the sugar industry and take away some of the powers of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board. It demanded that assurance——

Mr Campbell: They did not.

Mr MENZEL: The honourable member for Bundaberg should wait. I will quote his leader, Bob Hawke. The Federal Labor Government demanded that assurance before it would put any money into the sugar industry. Only last week did the Federal Government provide the money that had been promised as a price support for the 1985 crop. That was two months overdue. That occurred only when the State Government agreed to take away some of the powers from the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board.

In answer to the honourable member for Bundaberg, I will quote Bob Hawke as reported in *The Cairns Post* of Tuesday, 26 August 1986—

“Massive regulations behind which the industry had been protected for too long and elements within the industry resisting change also had contributed to delays in the flow of assistance.

Other more progressive and broadly visioned industry people had understood that a three-pronged process dealing with sugar industry price support, adjustment assistance, and gradual deregulation was necessary so that the sugar industry could get on its feet in a long-term, viable way, Mr Hawke said."

Mr Prest: Stick to sugar.

Mr MENZEL: Is the honourable member for Port Curtis not interested in the sugar industry?

The Federal Government policy of floating the Australian dollar has created a crisis by forcing up interest rates throughout Australia. The high-interest-rate policy of the Federal Labor Government is causing home-owners to lose their homes because they cannot afford the high interest rates. The high interest rates are crippling home-owners and forcing people out into the streets, into caravan parks and the like. The Federal Government has to borrow money at high interest rates to help prop up the Australian dollar.

The day after the Federal Budget was delivered by Paul Keating, Telecom issued bonds at 15½ per cent, thus providing gilt-edged security at a high interest rate. The Labor Party talks about reducing interest rates. What hypocrites! Some months ago the Federal Government provided \$120m in grants to the banks, yet last year the banks made record profits.

Why did the Federal Government not give a subsidy on interest rates to the home-owners instead of to the banks? The money should have gone to the home-owners, not to the banks. Whether I am a socialist and some of the Opposition's colleagues are capitalists, I do not know; but my suggestion makes more sense. The banks received a Government grant, yet other people were thrown out.

I notice that the State Budget provides money to run the Parliament and to pay the wages of politicians, and so on. The allocation to run the Parliament supports the political system. The people of the north must fight for adequate representation. However, as everyone knows and as was pointed out in an earlier speech, the Labor and Liberal Parties believe in the policy of one vote, one value, which would mean fewer seats in north Queensland. The National Party believes that the north needs more representation, not less. It is a disgrace that the Labor and Liberal Parties would do away with at least four seats in north Queensland.

The members of the Liberal Party are not in the Chamber. However, I point out that they are conspiring with the Labor Party to defeat a number of National Party members. I am one of them. A Labor front-bencher was overheard by a Minister's campaign director at the send-off to Bruce Siebenhausen of the Confederation of Industry. The seat of Mulgrave was being discussed with the leader of the Liberal Party (Sir William Knox). There is no doubt that the Liberal Party is conspiring with the Labor Party to help the Labor Party win some National Party seats and to force the National Party into coalition. The Mulgrave seat is one such seat; Tablelands is another.

Mr Stephan: They'll never get you.

Mr MENZEL: Of course they will not get me. The Labor Party will be annihilated. Bob Hawke and Paul Keating are doing an excellent job to annihilate the State Labor Party at the next election. I will win the seat of Mulgrave with an absolute majority.

At tax-payers' expense, the Government provides the leader of the Liberal Party six-pack with a car and a driver. If the Liberal Party is going to be in coalition with the Labor Party, I do not know why he does not use the car and the driver provided for the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Vaughan: You hate the Libs, do you?

Mr MENZEL: I do not hate anyone, but I think that the matter ought to be brought to everyone's notice.

The Liberal Party has voted against the National Party Government on 121 occasions in 343 divisions. As well, the Liberals have abstained from voting on 30 occasions in the past three years—a great record for the hypocrites who claim that they are fighting the ALP! In fact, the members of the Liberal Party were in bed with the members of the Labor Party on most divisions.

Mr Innes: That's a lie.

Mr MENZEL: That information was provided to me by the Parliamentary Library, so the library must be telling lies.

Everyone knows that Liberals cannot be relied upon if they vote against the National Party or abstain 152 times in 343 divisions.

The member for Nundah (Sir William Knox) talks about being tough with the unions, yet the Liberal Party voted against the National Party 11 times on divisions connected with the SEQEB legislation. I want the people of Queensland to know that the Liberals do not fully support the Government on pulling irresponsible unions into gear.

The State Budget provides money for local authorities. As everyone knows, I recently exposed in this Chamber the gross misappropriation of funds by Labor members of the Johnstone Shire Council. In that instance, the funds were State disaster relief funds. However, I was criticised by a councillor of the Mulgrave Shire Council who said that I had no right to make such allegations in Parliament.

I wish to quote from the allegations made outside Parliament by a non-Labor councillor of the Johnstone Shire Council about the Labor council. His allegations cannot be substantiated. They show that my allegations are true. The actions of Labor councillor George Pervan in using tax-payers' money, both State and Federal, to feather his own nest are far more serious than the Callaghan affair and involve the misappropriation of far larger amounts of Government funds. I can only say that I have been proved right by comments and questions by Councillor Herb Collins at the council meeting held on Thursday, 28 August.

I call upon the Government to take action to recover funds that the Labor Party in the Johnstone shire has misappropriated, or the State Government will be seen as covering up for them. I am certain that it does not want that.

The corrupt Labor majority on the Johnstone Shire Council are acting like lunatics. They will not allow any discussions on the misappropriation of funds. As soon as a non-Labor councillor moves for discussion on the matter, the Labor Party councillors—like dingoes and cowards—move to go into committee so that the press and gallery are cleared in order to hide any discussion on the misappropriation of funds.

I call upon the Government to take immediate action. Before the council went into committee Councillor Collins asked where the money came from for the sports complex and Labor Councillor Pervan's little possie beside his industrial complex, where he feathered his own nest.

When in committee, the shire clerk, who no doubt is scared for his job at the hands of his Labor stand-over bosses, pointed to the disaster relief money accounts book and said, "It is in there." That is the book in which the State and Federal Government funds are recorded. That was stated before the council went into committee and is a clear admission that the funds were misused by the Labor Johnstone Shire Council. It has been admitted by the council that the funds have been misappropriated. I again call upon the Government and the Parliament to do something about the Johnstone Shire Council in Innisfail.

I now wish to talk about taxes. The one tax that has attracted the most attention has been the fringe benefits tax, known as the FBT or the "farewell Bob tax". When Mr Hawke came into power in 1980 he said, "I will reduce the price of fuel." However, he increased the price of petrol by 3c per litre and, subsequently, a good deal more.

The Labor Party imposed a 30 per cent tax on superannuants, yet people who have superannuation should be given incentives by the Government because they will not be a burden on tax-payers when they retire. However, it is counter-productive. The Federal Government wants people to be a burden on the tax-payer.

At the last Federal election the Prime Minister said the famous words—"There will be no capital gains tax." However, after the election the Federal Labor Government introduced a capital gains tax. The credibility of the ALP is certainly in question.

The Labor Party—especially Bob Hawke—tells us that we have the world's greatest treasurer in Paul Keating. I point out that the Labor Party's world's greatest treasurer is building the world's greatest embassy in Peking for \$48.5m and the world's greatest Parliament House in Canberra for \$1 billion.

The world's greatest treasurer has created the highest interest rates in the world; the highest inflation in the world; the highest unemployment in the world; the highest taxes in the world, which are increasing every day with petrol up 5c per litre in two weeks; and the highest national debt in the world.

The only thing that is down is the Australian dollar—the lowest in the world!

Yes, Australia has the world's greatest, but nothing to be proud of.

Mr VAUGHAN (Nudgee) (8.8 p.m.): I refer to comments made by the honourable member for Mulgrave (Mr Menzel) and several of the previous speakers on the Government side. The Premier has either kept those honourable members in the dark like mushrooms or they are failing to recognise reality,

The previous speakers from the National Party referred to the fringe benefits tax. For the last few weeks, Opposition members have been trying to convince the people of this State, including Government members, what occurred in July 1985. The document that I am now holding up has been shown to the Premier, who shook his head in disbelief because he probably did not realise that copies had been distributed. The document is titled "Queensland's taxation reform package including single rate tax proposal". The front page states—

"As presented to the National Taxation Summit in Canberra, from 1-4 July, 1985 by the Honourable Sir Joh. Bjelke-Petersen, Premier and Treasurer of Queensland."

Mr Prest: And Beryl.

Mr VAUGHAN: I think Beryl was down there too, yes.

In the summary, the document outlines the main elements of the proposal and refers to personal income tax. It says that the Government seeks a single-rate tax of 25 per cent on all income. Of course, that would mean that the Premier and his good wife, the senator, pay much less tax and that anyone earning up to \$25,750 pays more tax. However, hidden in the personal income tax proposals is none other than a fringe benefits tax on the beneficiary.

In July last year, at the tax summit, the Premier proposed a fringe benefits tax on the beneficiary, with a requirement that employers be required to record such benefits on group certificates.

Government members have spoken of the FBT—the "farewell Bob tax", and that type of thing. The Premier has said that the fringe benefits tax would be like an albatross hanging around the Prime Minister's neck; but the fact of life is that in July 1985 the Premier of this State proposed that there be a fringe benefits tax on the beneficiary. I am sure that the honourable member for Peak Downs (Mr Lester) will be pleased to go back and tell all the coal-miners in his electorate that the Premier wants a fringe benefits tax on the beneficiary; that he wants a fringe benefits tax paid by the miners on their housing; and that he also wants the employers, who have been screaming, whinging and yelling, to be required to record such benefits on group certificates. In other words, he

wants the employers to keep all the records. Who has been screaming and whinging about having to keep records? None other than the employers!

In his submission to the tax summit in July 1985, the Premier of this State proposed a 7.5 per cent across-the-board reduction in Commonwealth Government spending. How many times have honourable members heard a speaker from the National Party talk about how much the funds from the Commonwealth have been cut? Members have said, "They have cut our road funds, our health funds and our tertiary education funds." Government members have been critical about the alleged big-spending Commonwealth Government, yet the Premier went to Canberra in July 1985 asking for a 7.5 per cent across-the-board reduction in Commonwealth Government spending. Well, the Premier has got an across-the-board cut in Commonwealth Government spending. I will deal at more length with that at a later date.

One other point I make before I commence my main theme relates to statements by Government members about the national debt. One said that the national debt had increased from \$23 billion to \$80-odd billion. I challenge honourable members on the Government side of the Chamber to spell out what the national debt comprises. A sizeable component of the national debt is the State debt. For instance, part of the \$3.4 billion owed by the State's electricity industry is included in the national debt. In total, many billions of dollars are owed by the State.

The gross national debt as at December 1985, which is the latest figure that I could obtain, was \$74.6 billion. National Party member after National Party member has spoken about the national debt. I have no doubt that they quoted figures that have been given to them by the State Treasury or some other body; but either they were not told the whole facts or they did not want them spelt out. I will analyse the composition of the \$74.6 billion national debt. The private sector was responsible for \$43.3 billion; the public sector—that is the State Government and statutory authorities—\$16.1 billion; and the Commonwealth \$15.2 billion. Out of \$74.6 billion, therefore the Commonwealth was responsible for \$15.2 billion. It should be remembered, however, that the Federal Government holds in assets overseas reserves worth \$12 billion, which should be subtracted from that amount. The net result is that the Federal Government has a public debt of \$3.2 billion out of a total of \$74.6 billion.

Mr Booth: You don't believe that, do you?

Mr VAUGHAN: If the honourable member for Warwick wishes to challenge my figures, he has the opportunity to do so during this debate or at some later time during the Matters of Public Interest or Adjournments debates. If he believes I am wrong, he can take the opportunity of quoting the correct figures at a later date.

I now turn my attention to the net national debt, which amounts to \$56.7 billion. I point out that 95 per cent of that amount is attributable to private and statutory authorities. As at December last year, the amount involved was \$57.3 billion. As I said previously, the Federal Government deficit is \$3.3 billion. So much for the claims made about the national debt!

A document in my possession lists Australian companies that contribute to the level of Australia's national debt. For the sake of relevance, I refer to the Queensland companies only—

MIM Holdings—Collinsville, Newlands, Abbott Point, \$A680m;

MIM Holdings—general finance, Sfr 100m;

MIM Holdings—general finance, dm 100m;

MIM Holdings—general finance, Sfr 100m;

MIM Holdings—general finance, dm 100m;

MIM Holdings—Oak Creek mine, \$A237m;

CRA—Blair Athol mine, \$US300m;

BHP—Utah take-over, \$A765m.

Queensland Alumina—\$US250m;

ACI—Curragh, German Creek, Blair Athol, \$US360m;

Comalco—Boyne Island smelters, \$US120m; and

SEC (Qld)—\$A494m.

All of those companies have contributed to the national debt.

When Government members talk about the national debt, they should get their facts right. They should not ramble on in the Parliament, quoting figures that cannot be substantiated. If Government members want to quote figures, they should get accurate figures and quote the facts.

The next topic I wish to refer to is the part of the Budget that dealt with an electricity concession for pensioners. Government members who preceded me were beating their chests, taking credit for the concession's being made for pensioners. I must point out that the concession was wrenched from the Government of this State by the Australian Labor Party, because concessions for pensioners were made part of the Labor Party's policy on 6 May 1986.

The previous speaker, the honourable member for Mulgrave (Mr Menzel), said that he had been fighting for years for the concession. It is appropriate to examine the attitude of this National Party Government and the coalition Government that preceded it prior to 1983. On 12 October 1978, a question asked by the honourable member for Chatsworth (Mr Mackenroth) of the then Minister for Mines, Energy and Police, was answered in the following way—

“As many pensioners can no longer afford to pay their electricity accounts, will he investigate the introduction of a system of rebate for pensioners?

Answer:—

This matter has been considered by the State Electricity Commission of Queensland on a number of occasions. However, the position in Queensland is that the relevant legislation does not allow discrimination in electricity charges to consumers whose usage falls into the same tariff classification. Whilst I am most sympathetic to the difficulties experienced by pensioners and will always do what I can to improve their conditions, I suggest that the granting of concessions in electricity charges, which involves electricity authorities in discrimination between consumers according to their means, does not appear to offer a practicable way of achieving this.”

On 19 October 1978, the following week, the honourable member for Chatsworth (Mr Mackenroth) again asked a question on the same subject—

“As he stated that the relevant legislation in Queensland does not allow discrimination in electricity charges to consumers whose usage falls into the same tariff classification, will he, in order to introduce a system of rebates for pensioners, introduce immediately the necessary amendment to the Act to enable cheaper electricity tariffs for pensioners?”

The Minister answered—

“Only last week I told the honourable member that, whilst I am most sympathetic to the difficulties experienced by pensioners, the granting of concessions in electricity charges (which involves electricity authorities in discrimination between consumers according to their means) does not appear to offer a practicable way of achieving this. The financing of social services is a matter for the Commonwealth.”

That extract from *Hansard* demonstrates clearly the attitude adopted by the Government at that time. The Government said that, because it was restricted by the provisions of the Electricity Act, it could not discriminate against consumers covered by the same category. The honourable member for Chatsworth suggested that the Government ought to amend the provisions of the Electricity Act, but the Minister at the time went off on a tangent and said that the Government did not think it was a good idea and, further, that it was a matter for the Federal Government.

I have here numerous copies of letters from the present Minister for Mines and Energy (Mr I. J. Gibbs) in which he fobs it off again and says that, because of the provisions of the Electricity Act, the Government cannot discriminate against consumers. Of course, he also says it means that if one category of consumers, such as pensioners, is to receive subsidised electricity, other consumers will have to pay higher tariffs. As I say, I have numerous copies of letters from the Minister.

For as long as I can remember, the Government, through the Minister for Mines and Energy, has said that it was not prepared to grant pensioners an electricity rebate. On 29 August last year, in an endeavour to try to force the Government's hand, particularly when the Minister for Mines and Energy was strutting round this House and out in the community talking about how much the Government was saving by what it had done to the SEQEB workers, I gave notice of a certain motion. The Minister stated that the Government was saving \$17m a year by closing down the Tennyson A and Bulimba B power stations—that was after it had already spent \$30m on refurbishing them—and that it would save \$550m over the next four years through deferment of the construction of the Stanwell power station. At the same time, the general manager of SEQEB, Mr Wayne Gilbert, was strutting round saying that SEQEB would save \$30m a year. It was in view of all the statements and comments by the Minister for Mines and Energy and by the general manager of SEQEB about how much was being saved in the power industry, that I thought that something should be done about it.

If \$550m will be saved over the next four years, it is about time something was passed on to the electricity-consumers. Since the reorganisation of the State power industry in 1977, all that electricity-consumers have copped is an increase in power charges year after year after year—to such an extent that up till this year, the increases have always been well in excess of increases in the Consumer Price Index.

On 29 August last year, I proposed that this Parliament instruct the Government to cancel the increase in electricity charges which applied from 15 June last year and also to undertake an immediate review of electricity tariffs with a view to (a) further reducing electricity charges to the level required to meet generation and distribution costs, and (b) introducing a pensioner rebate scheme.

My notice of motion remained on the Business Paper; it was not brought on for debate. The Government, of course, controls the House.

This year, the pensioners marched on this place and I thought it was an opportune time to test the Government out and see how it felt in relation to a pensioner electricity rebate.

On 18 March this year, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Warburton) tried to move my motion. What happened, of course, was that it was opposed, with the Liberal Party, which has also claimed credit for the pensioner electricity rebate, voting with the Government to prevent any debate that would have forced the Government's hand or at least shown it up for what it is in relation to a pensioner electricity rebate scheme.

However, back in May, the Labor Party took it upon itself to do something positive, particularly as it was an election year, to try to force the Government to see the error of its ways.

On 6 May, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Warburton) and I launched the Labor Party's electricity pricing policy. The Labor Party had been working on it for quite some time. That electricity pricing policy set out to do something positive in relation to this State's electricity charges, which for Brisbane consumers have increased by 199 per cent since July 1977, when the State's power industry was reorganised. The Labor Party proposed to change existing tariffs for domestic consumers and proposed to introduce a restructured tariff. The Labor Party proposed to introduce a service charge of \$12 per quarter with a charge of 8.14c a unit for the first 1 050 units per quarter, with a following charge of 10.27c a unit for the remaining units per quarter consumed. The Labor Party also said it would introduce a special hot-water tariff for those electricity-consumers who were waiting to be changed over to the controlled hot-water tariff from the continuous hot-water tariff. An interim tariff of 5.95c a unit was proposed.

The Labor Party's proposal would have given to the average domestic consumer a reduction in electricity charges of approximately \$11 per quarter, or \$44 per year. In addition to that, the Labor Party said that it would introduce a pensioner electricity rebate of \$12 per quarter, or \$48 per year. That would have given pensioners a total rebate of \$92 per year.

In its Budget, somewhat reluctantly, the Government has been forced to introduce a pensioner electricity rebate scheme. However, the problem is that not all pensioners will benefit from it. The Premier and Treasurer has spelt out the eligibility criteria for pensioners to be able to avail themselves of the scheme, as a result of which thousands of pensioners out in the community will not be able to avail themselves of the pensioner rebate scheme.

As I pointed out in the Chamber in a speech I made during a recent Adjournment debate, the problem is that thousands of pensioners who live in caravan parks are supplied with electricity by the caravan park proprietor who, under the provisions of section 160 of the Electricity Act, is supplied in bulk and in turn resells or retails that electricity to the consumers in the caravan park. Many caravan parks have meters. Each week they are read by the caravan park tenants, who pay the caravan park proprietor according to the meter reading at the rate of about 15c a unit at present, or sometimes even more. That is much more than the amount of slightly more than 8c paid by the ordinary domestic consumer.

Mr Yewdale: What is the Government doing about that?

Mr VAUGHAN: It is doing absolutely nothing about it, and it has refused to do anything about it. The Government has turned a deaf ear to this problem.

Pensioners in caravan parks are not the only ones who will not be able to avail themselves of a pensioner electricity rebate. Recently in the press the Minister admitted that some pensioners would not get the rebate. It is more than "some pensioners"; thousands of pensioners who live in flats are in the same position. If the owner of flats is supplied with electricity and in turn retails it to the occupants, pensioners will not benefit from the concession. Some flats have meters, but others do not. The majority of flats with meters are registered by the electricity authority in the name of the owner or proprietor. Because they are not in the name of the occupant of the flat, pensioners will not be able to avail themselves of the electricity rebate.

In addition to those problems, there are also pensioners such as those on the Merrimac estate on the Gold Coast, where a developer has been allowed to construct 20 houses and 10 duplex units. By virtue of section 160 of the Electricity Act, which was amended in this Chamber in November 1984 when what I pointed out would happen fell on deaf ears, the occupants on that estate are supplied with electricity by the developer of the estate and they pay the developer for the electricity they consume. Meters are certainly installed but, if any one of the occupants on that estate is a pensioner, he will not be able to avail himself of the pensioner electricity rebate.

Consequently, thousands of pensioners throughout the length and breadth of the State, living in caravan parks, flats and units, the proprietors of which, by virtue of the provisions of section 160 of the Electricity Act, are able to retail electricity, will not be able to avail themselves of the provisions of the pensioner electricity rebate scheme. I reiterate that the Minister said that "some pensioners" would miss out. Thousands will miss out.

I now touch upon the Premier and Treasurer's Budget Speech in which he stated—

"The framing of the Budget has also been made difficult by the continued inequitable treatment of Queensland by the Commonwealth . . ."

Honourable members have heard with monotonous regularity speaker after speaker on the Government side make that comment.

If one analyses the contents of the Budget, one finds that what is being said is not completely true. As a matter of fact, it is grossly untrue. As I pointed out earlier, it was members of this Government who, with monotonous regularity, criticised the Federal Government for being a big spender, for not cutting its cloth in accordance with its income. Last year at the tax summit held in Canberra the Premier called for a 7.5 per cent across-the-board cut in Commonwealth Government spending. That is what has

happened. Now, of course, the whingers and whiners on the Government side are running round saying, "We are not getting a fair go."

To illustrate his point—as he did last year in his Budget Speech—the Premier claimed that Queensland was not receiving as much per capita from Medicare as the other States. Government members should make up their minds. What do they want? Do they want per capita funding?

Mr Littleproud: Our fair share.

Mr VAUGHAN: The honourable member for Condamine says that his Government wants its fair share. If Government members want per capita funding, I will examine what the Budget papers contain.

In a roundabout way the Premier claimed also that Queensland is not getting its fair share of road funding. If I have sufficient time, I will deal with that matter also.

I believe that the people of Queensland are a wake-up to the whinging and whining of the Premier and other members of the National Party. I take this opportunity to challenge the statements made by the Premier and refer to the factual position as set out in the Budget papers.

I turn to the *Summary Tables Relating to the Public Accounts*. Page 3 of that document contains the Consolidated Revenue Fund table. I will examine where this State's money comes from in the Budget. Forty-seven per cent of the Consolidated Revenue Fund—a total of \$5,557.9m estimated expenditure—comes from the Commonwealth.

Government Members interjected.

Mr VAUGHAN: Listen to the Government members cackling like gaggles of geese. I have not finished with the gentlemen opposite yet.

I turn to the financial assistance grant. Government members say, "We have not done well this year. We have been robbed." The financial assistance grant has increased by 10.8 per cent. Last year, Queensland received \$1,974.9m; this year, it received \$2,188.7m. Government members try to put it over members on this side of the Chamber.

I will examine what Queensland receives from the Commonwealth. I will pick out a few matters that I want to emphasise from Table 131 of the Commonwealth Budget papers. Financial assistance grants total \$2,188.7m; Medicare, \$79.7m—up on last year; Rural Adjustment Scheme—which Government members manipulate to their own advantage—\$5.8m; sugar industry, \$21.8m and Community Employment Program, \$29.1m. I point out that in his Budget Speech the Premier was critical about the Commonwealth Employment Program. However, that did not stop his Government from using Commonwealth Employment Program funds for State works, hospitals and schools. The Queensland Government had no qualms whatsoever about misusing CEP funds.

Government Members interjected.

Mr VAUGHAN: Listen to the rabble.

The table shows legal aid of \$12.6m. The Premier mentioned roads. The speaker who preceded me spoke about Queensland being short-changed in regard to the road program. Honourable members must remember that this Government asked for a 7.5 per cent across-the-board cut in Commonwealth Government funding. So, it has got that.

However, what did Queensland receive under the Australian Land Transport Program? It received \$162.9m. However, if one examines the Budget, one will not find any mention of \$162.9m. If one examines the State Capital Works Program, in which the Premier spelt out how much Queensland receives for capital works, a much lower figure will be found.

The Australian Bicentennial Road Development Program funding is \$94.7m and for the construction of the Burdekin Falls Dam, \$29m. Neither the Premier nor any other Government member will talk about those figures. They are silent. Photographs can be seen in Government documents of the Burdekin Falls Dam under construction, but no mention is made of who is putting up the \$29m.

I refer to the way in which the Federal National Party views the situation. In an article on page 1 of *The Courier-Mail* of Friday, 8 August 1986, the National Party Leader, Mr Sinclair, urges State income tax. I would like to hear what Government members think about that. If the Government does not think it is getting a fair share from the Commonwealth Government, the ball is in its court. All the Government has to do is tell the Commonwealth how much it wants back and the income tax will be levied accordingly.

The article states—

“The Federal Opposition is considering a tax policy forcing the States to levy their own personal income tax.”

That will be the day when the Queensland Government has to front up and take credit or discredit for the taxes it levies. The article continues—

“In a speech in Sydney last night the National Party Leader, Mr Sinclair said the States should levy their own income tax or tell the Commonwealth how much they wanted so that existing tax scales could be changed to reflecting their needs.”

As the Premier says, it is as simple as that. If the Queensland Government does not believe it is getting a fair share from the Commonwealth and wants more money, all it has to do—as its leader in the Federal sphere has said—is just tell the Commonwealth how much it wants and the taxes will be levied accordingly. The alternative is for the Queensland Government to levy its own taxes.

I refer to the State Budget *Summary Tables Relating to The Public Accounts* to show how much Queensland is actually receiving. Government members say that Queensland is not getting its fair share. I refer to page 6, table 4, headed “Estimated General Revenue Payments to the States in 1986-87”. It should be remembered that down south there is an independent Commonwealth Grants Commission that assesses the needs of the various States. The Premier attended the Premiers Conference and was supposed to put up an argument on behalf of this State, but when he returned to Queensland—notwithstanding the fact that he had attended the conference and agreed to what was carried—he whinged that he was not getting enough money. The table shows that for every \$1.008 that New South Wales receives, Queensland receives \$1.416. For every \$1 that Victoria receives, Queensland receives \$1.416. Although Queensland has 16.7 per cent of the population it receives 20.3 per cent of the financial revenue assistance.

If the Queensland Government wants to get a per capita share of the Federal tax cake, all it has to do is say so. It is spelt out in the Budget papers. The people of this State are sick and tired of the Premier's whinging and whining about not getting a fair share. If the people of Queensland do not believe that they are getting a fair share from the Commonwealth, and that the Premier has attended the Premiers Conference and has not done his job, then they should change their representative. I hope that the representation is changed after this State election. If the Queensland Government does not believe in doing that, it must do what Mr Sinclair says and levy its own taxes.

Time expired.

Mr HENDERSON (Mount Gravatt) (8.39 p.m.): I want to look at the problem of unemployment in Queensland and its economic problem. I readily admit that Queensland does have Australia's highest unemployment rate. For some years Queensland has led Australia in the number of jobs created, but the economic climate created throughout the whole of Australia has been such that the very high levels of development achieved in the late 1970s and early 1980s cannot be maintained. Consequently, unemployment

levels throughout the whole of Australia, especially in Queensland, have been much higher than anybody likes to see.

This week, the Federal Treasurer (Mr Keating) stated that unemployment levels will rise still further as a result of the Federal Budget. Let us be honest and straightforward. Queensland has Australia's highest unemployment level. However, there are two sides to a coin, the head and the tail. When one looks at unemployment, one also has a duty to look at employment.

In the 12 months to 30 June 1986, Queensland had an employment growth rate of 4.9 per cent, compared with a growth rate of 4.5 per cent nationally. That represented 51 200 new jobs in Queensland. Queensland continues to account for a proportion of employment growth that far exceeds the State's proportion of Australia's total population; thus Queensland is clearly way ahead of the rest of Australia in terms of employment growth. Queensland's employment growth rate of 4.9 per cent was not only the highest of any State but also higher than that achieved by any mainland State in any financial year during the past decade. I emphasise that point.

There appears to be a contradiction. On the one hand, Queensland has Australia's highest unemployment rate; on the other, Queensland has the highest employment creation rate for any mainland State in any financial year over the past decade.

How does one account for that? It surely demands a close analysis and cannot be dismissed superficially. One cannot simply look at a statistic and say, "Queensland has Australia's highest unemployment rate," without looking closely and asking, "Why? Where is it? How does it come about?", and so on. Queensland is clearly doing an excellent job creating employment—in fact, it has the best record over the last decade—but unemployment is still high. How does that happen? The position is clouded by the fact that Brisbane has the third-highest rate of employment in metropolitan areas in Australia. I emphasise that matter. Where are the unemployed in Queensland? Where do they live? I will examine that question later.

A table in *The Courier-Mail* of last Saturday, 30 August 1986, is most interesting. It shows that the unemployment figures for the key non-metropolitan areas of unemployment are: Bundaberg, 4 262; Cairns city, 6 154; Coolangatta, 3 722; Mackay, which includes the Whitsunday resorts and Airlie Beach, 6 037; Maroochydore, which includes all of the Sunshine Coast resorts, and especially Noosa, 7 041; Mermaid Beach, 6 775; Rockhampton, 4 043; Southport/Surfers Paradise, 9 819; and Toowoomba, 5 193. It should be noted that the Gold Coast total is 20 316, of whom almost 50 per cent are under 24 years of age.

Of considerable interest is the fact that, in winter, unemployment in the Mackay region, which includes Airlie Beach and the Whitsunday resorts, increases by 33.74 per cent when compared with summer. I emphasise that point.

The figures for the Gold Coast are also interesting. In winter, the Gold Coast unemployment rate jumps by 17 per cent. In Cairns, it also jumps by about 17 per cent. Why is that? Why is there such a startling increase in unemployment in those holiday resorts?

The first possible explanation is that the kids are leaving school and entering the work-force. I have always been mindful of the fact that that occurs at the end of the year when students finish Year 12 or Year 10. That is not the explanation at all. The explanation is one to which I will return and examine in a moment.

It is most interesting to read the headlines that appeared recently in *The Courier-Mail* and demanded that attention be directed to a contradiction that appears to be arising.

Recently I noticed a rather interesting letter to the editor from a gentleman in Murgon. The letter was headed "Coincidental" and was as follows—

"The recent headlines, 'Jobless jump in Queensland equals 5-State total'; 'Australia pays dole to 13,000 Kiwis—NZ pays 19 Aussies' and 'Achievers agree: it's a State of Success' have a strikingly coincidental link.

How many of the 13,000 Kiwis are in Queensland? Is the Sunshine State also a success as a Sustenance Shangri-La for sun-seeking southerners?"

A most interesting article appeared in *The Sunday Mail* of 24 August of this year. That article dealt with employment and was headed "Mining jobs jump 26.7 per cent". It stated—

"Queensland's mining and manufacturing industries have shown a surprisingly healthy employment growth in the past year, according to figures due to be released officially next month.

Despite depressed commodity prices and trade problems, mining employment grew by 26.7 percent to total 22,300 in the 12 months to May, according to figures compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

In the same period, manufacturing employment grew by 10.3 percent to total 138,900.

Other industries to show employment growth in the 12-month period were agriculture, forestry and fishing, up 14.9 percent to 88,000; wholesale and retail trade, up 7.7 percent to 220,700; finance, property and business services, up 7.8 percent to 97,800; transport and storage, up 7 percent to 63,300; and recreational and personal services (including tourism), rose only 3.3 percent to 77,300."

The next part is interesting. It says—

"Areas which recorded employment decreases were: construction down 2.2 percent to 87,100; public administration down 6.1 percent to 47,700; electricity gas and water down 3.6 percent to 16,800 and communication down 6.9 percent to 21,600."

I was most interested in one of the statistics that were quoted there. I refer to the statistic relating to the decrease in public administration, which was down by 6.1 per cent.

I was also interested in some statistics that I came across in another article relating to the growth of the public service. Here are some interesting figures—

"The Federal Government's commitment to big Government is reflected in the Commonwealth Government's employment growth of 3.5 percent to the end of 1985, including 4.8 percent in Canberra compared with private sector employment growth of 4 percent in the capital. The ACT was the only area where public sector growth exceeded private sector growth. Private sector growth in N.S.W. was the lowest of all States—and of course, that's A.L.P. Federal President Neville Wran's State;"—

as he was at the time—

"public sector employment growth in N.S.W., however, was double that of Queensland; In Victoria public sector growth was a staggering 8½ times that in Queensland. The picture is markedly different in regard to private enterprise based job growth and development. In Queensland during 1984/85, private sector jobs grew by 7.5 percent while Government sector growth was only 0.3 percent. Comparative national figures were 6.2 percent and 1.7 percent respectively."

That is interesting because the Government has argued repeatedly that one of the ways in which the Labor States are padding their unemployment figures is by creating public sector jobs.

An interesting article also appeared in *The Courier-Mail* of 30 August this year. That article, headed "Many prefer dole to jobs—mayor", stated as follows—

"Most people living on the dole in the Cairns area did not want to work, the Cairns Mayor, Alderman Davis, said yesterday."

Mr Tenni: They couldn't get them in Cairns to go out and plant cane. Mum and dad and the kids had to plant cane, and there are 6 000 on the dole.

Mr HENDERSON: I do not doubt that for one moment.

The article went on to say—

“‘I think there are people unemployed who are keen to work but I think they are in the minority,’ he said. ‘The majority have got into the habit (of being unemployed). By living in groups, they have found they can get by.’”

Mr Row, have you ever heard such an understatement? “By living in groups, they have found that they can get by.” Do you know that a group of six unemployed people living in a house on the Gold Coast have a tax-free income of over \$600 a week? What man with a wife and four children would love a tax-free income of \$600 a week to keep his family?

Mr Tenni: The honourable member for Cairns supports these people.

Mr HENDERSON: That is right. It would be the worst thing in the world if ever they moved out of Cairns, because if they did, the honourable member would lose their votes.

This is how the honourable member's Federal colleagues are facing up to this problem. The article states—

“The Federal Government next month will send special teams to target areas to crack down on dole cheats. A spokesman for the Social Security Minister, Mr Howe, said yesterday the targets had yet to be selected but would be areas where widespread abuse of unemployment benefits was suspected.”

Incidentally, some time ago, the house over the road from me was rented and I noticed that in it were three young fellows with their girlfriends. Each morning as I went to work, I would wave goodbye to them and they would wave goodbye to me, and they would jump in their three cars and go down to the Gold Coast. But one of them said something to me one day that I will always remember. We were talking about employment and I said, “What type of work do you do?” He said, “Only fools and mules work, and I am neither.” That was his statement to me, yet he did not hesitate to hold out his hand each week to take my tax money to keep himself.

On 30 August 1986, in *The Courier-Mail* Peter Morley, in one of his usually intelligent articles—and most of them are really quite good—commented on unemployment in Queensland. He stated—

“ . . . there is a high internal migration to Queensland which, as well as retirees, brings southerners looking for temporary work.

The climate and lifestyle which attracts the latter also encourages the dole bludgers to head north.”

I do not think Peter Morley said that lightly, and in view of an increase of 33.7 per cent in employment in the Mackay region, which includes Airlie Beach, in summer and winter, his statement is spot on. He goes on to point out something that I would remind honourable members and the people of Queensland of, which is that over recent times 14 000 people have transferred their unemployment from down south to Queensland.

Neither Peter Morley nor I am saying that all of those people are dole bludgers, but it is time that the Commonwealth Government set up a task force to investigate some of these people.

What causes unemployment? I will discuss six major causes and apply them to Queensland. First of all, a major cause of unemployment is the collapse or stagnation of job opportunities; but, clearly, Queensland is creating jobs. Brisbane has the third-highest metropolitan employment rate in Australia, and Queensland in the last 12 months has had the highest job-creation rate of any financial year over the last decade. So the metropolitan area and its environs have an excellent employment record.

Where is the collapse? Perhaps part of the clue can be found in an article on 21 August 1986 in the *Daily Sun*. Very few writers in Brisbane ever produce articles like this. It is headed "State caught in big dry" and reads—

"The past 12 months have been the fifth-driest on record in Queensland since 1899.

A Queensland Agricultural College lecturer in agronomy yesterday revealed the harsh figures for farmers and council water supplies.

Dr Len Bahnisch said the generally dry conditions experienced to the end of July this year were the worst since 1943."

That is hitting the pastoral industry and the wheat industry very hard indeed.

The unemployment figures are very interesting. In the Dalby/Charleville area, 2 083 people are unemployed. In the small area of Longreach, 407 people are unemployed. In Toowoomba, which is consistently rated as the best place in Australia in which to live and is also the most prosperous community of Australia, 5 193 people are unemployed. Clearly, the Toowoomba figure must represent the Darling Downs area in general, but, no matter how it is looked at, the fact is that there is an unemployment problem in rural areas. The farms can no longer support the families, and the wives and children of farmers, because of the poverty levels on which they live, are now applying for the dole.

How does one go about creating industry in these areas? A large number of people have blabbed in this Parliament day after day saying that the industrial base of this State should be broadened. How is that achieved in Longreach? How is it achieved in Charleville? How does a Government broaden the industrial base or attract industry to those areas? The fact of the matter is that it does not; it cannot be done. Members of the Opposition have been unable to come up with a consistent policy that will achieve those objectives. The Opposition merely intends to move the unemployed out of those rural areas, which will result in the greatest movement of people since the holocaust when the Germans moved the Jews out of Germany. That is what the Australian Labor Party wants to do. It wants to take all the people off the farms and move them into the cities in an effort to create employment for them.

I challenge members of the Opposition and members of the Liberal Party to state what those parties will do about unemployment in rural areas. I ask members of those parties what reductions in pay-roll tax will do to help farmers and their families? Will it help them to obtain a job? I think not, and I believe that it is a cosmetic solution if ever there was one.

Mr De Lacy: Don't you believe in reductions in pay-roll tax?

Mr HENDERSON: The honourable member for Cairns rarely knows what he is talking about, and he certainly does not know what he is talking about now.

The sugar-cane region of Queensland has a significant unemployment problem as the following figures indicate: Ayr, 2 043; Bundaberg, 4 262; Cairns and Westcourt, 9 700; Ingham-Innisfail, 3 905; and Mackay, 6 037.

The central Brisbane section of the metropolitan employment districts has 930 unemployed. The comparison indicates that, clearly, the sugar belt has a major unemployment problem. The collapse of sugar prices over recent years has extracted approximately \$1 billion from the rural coastal economy of Queensland.

The family farm can no longer support the family members. Wives and children of farmers are applying for the dole. Will the Australian Labor Party be able to transport such people to the cities and provide them with jobs by virtue of this great plan for expanding the economic base, reducing pay-roll tax and so on? It will not be able to do any of that, and the only way it will be able to help the people I have referred to is by supporting them on the farms. In that way, when the recovery occurs ultimately, at least they will be able to obtain a worthwhile income in a worthwhile occupation.

Thousands of farmers today exist at a level below the poverty line and many rural industries are in a state of collapse. The most that a Government can do is assist them in whatever way is possible. When the farm economy improves, perhaps the people I have referred to will be able to return to their farms. The suggestion of simply moving them and broadening the economic base is not a concrete solution to the unemployment problem, and not a single member of the Liberal Party or the Labor Party in Opposition has been able to substantiate that suggestion.

The second cause of the problem is the stagnation of industry. As I pointed out earlier, stagnation is not really occurring in Queensland. The statistics I cited previously demonstrate that the manufacturing retail industries in Queensland, especially in Brisbane, are growing. I will concede that a problem exists in rural areas, but leaving aside the sugar, wheat and cotton industries, stagnation is not really a cause of unemployment in the rural areas.

The third cause is the arrival of interstate and overseas migrants. During the calendar year 1985, interstate migration to Queensland was 10 835 and overseas migration was 8 229, which made a total of 19 064. In 1984, 9 037 people came from interstate and 4 709 came from overseas, which resulted in a total of 13 746. In 1983, interstate migrants totalled 11 671 and 4 581 people came from overseas to make a total of 16 252.

Two interesting statements have been made by Labor members in this Assembly. The first interesting statement was that all of the young people are leaving Queensland and moving interstate. When I heard that, I wrote to the Australian Bureau of Statistics in Brisbane and asked them for figures that related to the composition of Queensland's population relative to youth. I did exactly the same thing in a request to the Parliamentary Library, but I worded the question in a slightly different way so that I could cross-check the statistics. The results are very interesting. For example, in the age group 16 to 23, on an average 13.55 per cent of the Australian population fit in that age group. In New South Wales, the average is 13.20 per cent. In short, that means that there are fewer younger people in New South Wales than there are in terms of the national average. In Queensland, the average is 13.63 per cent which is above the national average in terms of the 16 to 23 years age group.

I heard the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr Burns) say that Queensland is the geriatric State. By way of interest, 14.48 per cent of the Australian population is aged 60 or over. In New South Wales, the percentage is 15.08, which is above the national average. In Queensland, the figure is 14.16 per cent, which is below the national average. Clearly, Queensland is not the geriatric State that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would have us believe.

Another cause of unemployment is the number of school-leavers who are available for the work-force in Queensland but who are unable to secure jobs. Consequently they add to the number of unemployed. Another cause could be Government policy. In that vein, I refer to an interesting article that appeared in *The Courier-Mail* which is headed, "Queensland Behind in Tertiary Places." I would like to read the following section from it—

"The Federal Education Minister, Senator Ryan, yesterday admitted Queensland was behind other States in the number of its tertiary places.

She said the Government would narrow the gap by giving Queensland preferential treatment next year.

Queensland would get about 22 per cent of new higher education places compared with an average national increase of 14 per cent."

The Federal Government allowed the stage to be reached at which, if Queensland raised its tertiary education participation up to a national average, 5 000 new places would be created. It is not the Hawke Government's fault, because before Hawke came to power that situation existed and it was under a Liberal Prime Minister and a Liberal Federal Education Minister that Queensland education was allowed to run down. I heard the drivel spoken by the honourable member for Sherwood (Mr Innes) about TAFE. I

intend responding to his speech in the near future. Queensland has the highest retention rate in Year 12.

Another way in which Queensland is discriminated against is in tax support for its industry. The total extent of tax support for the States was gauged some time ago by the Industries Assistance Commission. One area about which Mr Cain and all the socialists and so on do not like to be reminded is the level of support given by Australian tax-payers who prop up industry and employment.

Information relating to the extent of Commonwealth funds made available to industry in the form of tariffs, subsidies, bonuses, etc, is not readily available. However, the Industries Assistance Commission carried out a comprehensive survey for the 1977-78 financial year. No survey appears to have been done since then, mainly, we suspect, because the socialist Governments in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia are desperately trying to cover up the extent of tax-payer support for their State economies. Canberra seems to be playing the same game.

The Industries Assistance Commission indicated the 1977-78 net equivalent of assistance, which is defined as the amount that would have to be paid by way of annual subsidies out of tax-payers' funds to provide the same amount of assistance as is provided by tariffs, subsidies, quantitative import restrictions and export incentives.

In Victoria, the total was \$1,635m or \$430 per person. In other words, a man supporting a wife and three children in Victoria had his annual income supplemented in 1977-78 to the tune of \$2,150 a year by the tax-payers of Australia. In New South Wales it was \$1,465m or \$294 per capita. In other words, for a man supporting a wife and three children, \$1,470 of his annual income was provided in direct assistance from the tax-payers of Australia.

Let me refer to Queensland, where the total was \$265m or \$123 per person. In short, \$615 of the wage taken home by a man supporting a wife and three children in Queensland comes from the Australian tax-payer. What that proves is that Victoria and New South Wales are giant parasites living off States such as Queensland. They are obtaining vast amounts of money from the Australian tax-payers to prop up their economies.

I stress that those figures are for 1977-78. Imagine what they would be today, for there is nothing at all to suggest that the relative positions have not been maintained. I remind the Chamber that each year, above and beyond the annual grants made to the States, Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia—but especially Victoria—continue to suck billions of dollars out of the Australian tax-payers to prop up their State economies.

The Premiers of New South Wales and Victoria maintain that they are not getting their fair share of the national cake. Heaven forbid! Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia are giant leeches sucking the blood out of Australian tax-payers to prop up their inefficient State economies. They are parasites living off States such as Queensland.

Imagine what would happen in Queensland if, instead of \$123 per person, our State was to be funded at the same level as the socialists in Victoria—that is, \$430 per person or an additional \$307 per person per year. Queensland would have an extra \$750m to spend, and one can imagine the impact that that would have on employment in this State.

I have listened with considerable interest to a number of Opposition members who have spoken about the high rate of taxes and charges in Queensland, but not one of them has looked at the figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The most recent figures I have were released in Canberra on Tuesday, 8 April 1986. They show quite clearly and without doubt that Queenslanders pay the lowest taxes of those imposed in all the mainland States.

The figures compiled and released by the Federal Government in Canberra show that, in the last financial year, Queenslanders paid \$697.75 per person in State and local

government taxes and charges. That compares with the amount in the Labor State of Victoria of \$978.19 per person per year, followed by the Labor State of New South Wales, with \$949.14 per person per year; Western Australia, which also has a Labor Government, with \$803.26 per person per year; South Australia, which also has a Labor Government, with \$761.80 per person per year; and Tasmania with \$657.22 per person per year. The difference between Queensland and Victoria is a staggering \$280.44 per person per year, or a massive yearly difference—honourable members should listen to this—of \$1,402.20 for a family group of a husband, wife and three children. That is a difference of \$26.97 per week.

An analysis of the figures shows that the State Government component of the tax is \$539.11 per person per year in Queensland, compared with the Victorian Labor Government taxes of \$796.58 per person per year. That is a difference of \$257.47 per person per year. Were the Queensland Government to introduce taxes at the same level as the ALP tax-gatherers in Victoria, Queensland's 2 546 000 citizens would pay a whopping extra \$655,622,000 per year to the State Government in taxes and charges. Yet honourable members opposite say that the Queensland Government has the highest taxes and charges in Australia! That is utter hypocrisy.

I was rather interested to read an article attributed to the Victorian Premier, Mr Cain, who warned that compulsory third-party insurance premiums may rise in Victoria to \$500 a year. The premium is currently about \$200, but the State insurance office in Victoria is facing an estimated \$1 billion pay-out over the next two years. That company is already \$1.3 billion in debt.

I also point out to this Chamber that Queensland, with 16 per cent of Australia's population, accounts for 24 per cent of Australia's exports. If there is a crisis in export industries, it will clearly hit Queensland the hardest.

I also wish to comment on the reduce impaired driving (RID) campaign and quote from an article in the *Telegraph* of 26 August 1986, which states—

“The number of people dying on Australia's roads is still on the increase.

The number of fatalities for the first seven months of 1986 stands at 1700.

According to Australian Bureau of Statistics figures, this is a 4.7 percent increase compared with the same period for 1985.

The Bureau said the increase was reflected in all states except Tasmania.

Significant increases occurred in New South Wales and West Australia.

In Queensland 287 people were killed in the first seven months of last year compared with 297 in the same period this year.

For the whole of 1985 in Queensland 502 people were killed.”

That article points out that Queensland, with 16.7 per cent of Australia's population, had 17 per cent of the nation's road fatalities.

If one was to believe the press, Queensland is way above the national average. This article proves beyond all doubt that, when the death rate on the State's roads is compared with the population, the road toll in this State is not significantly higher than that in other States. The road toll in Queensland is not as bad as most of the fear-brokers try to make out. In fact, it is almost a campaign of defamation against the Queensland Government to try to make it introduce random breath-testing. However, Queensland already has RBT in the form of the RID campaign.

I commend to this Chamber the excellent editorial in last week-end's *Sunday Mail*. I suggest that honourable members read that. Ric Allen did an excellent job in writing it.

Finally, I support the Budget. The Queensland Government has a record of which it can feel justifiably proud.

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (9.9 p.m.): Honourable members have just heard the National Party's resident academic bamboozle the Chamber with statistics. There is no doubt that

the National Party is good with statistics. It fiddles them; it uses them selectively; it can make them say that black is white and that white is black. When Government members speak about unemployment, I like to quote one statistic for them: Queensland has the highest percentage of unemployed people of any State in Australia. It is a simple statistic; it is an irrefutable statistic; and it tells the story. What tells the story better still is that at last count Queensland had 2.5 million people and Victoria had 4.1 million people; yet Queensland has more people unemployed than has Victoria. This is one statement that Government members cannot refute.

The member who preceded me presented a very sorry indictment on the unemployment position in Queensland. He spent a large portion of his time reading unemployment figures for various areas of Queensland. It certainly was distressing to listen to him. It was an indictment of his own Government, which has been in power for 29 years. He has no solution; his Government has no solution. The Budget does not hold out any hope at all. He asked what the Federal Government could do.

I have said—and I will continue to say—that the Labor Government in Victoria has tackled the problem. Its performance in the relief of unemployment, in comparison with that of Queensland, has been incredibly successful.

I repeat that National Party members use statistics selectively. The honourable member for Mount Gravatt (Mr Henderson) said that Queensland has 16.7 per cent—I think that that is the figure that Government members continue to use—of Australia's population and it produces 24 per cent of Australia's exports. What a useless, silly, unimportant, inane statistic that is. All that means is that most of this State's industries are export oriented. It is another way of saying that Queensland produces less than the national average of domestic product. What is the difference?

Even when it comes to solving the trade deficit, there is absolutely no difference between producing exports and producing import substitution products. They have exactly the same effect in helping Australia to overcome its trade deficit, or balance of trade problem. It is a stupid statistic, which says nothing. It really says that Queensland has a very narrow base. This State is based on primary production, whether it be mining or farming. That is one of the reasons—and most people are beginning to recognise it—why Queensland is suffering more than the rest of Australia in the present difficult times.

The honourable member for Mulgrave (Mr Menzel) raised a few points about the area in which he and I live. Some of his remarks were misleading, and I will address myself to them. It is passing strange to hear a National Party member say that he has supported and always worked hard to get electricity concessions for pensioners. If all members of the National Party supported that policy, why did they not introduce them a long time ago when other States in Australia did so?

It has become clear that members of the National Party will say and do anything, particularly when an election is in the offing. Recently I obtained an election dodger for the National Party candidate for Auburn, Neville John Harper. It states—

“Neville Harper is prepared to work for results.”

The dodger states also that he will ensure adequate staff for all public hospitals—what a joke that is—and provide improved representation for nurses. It states further—

“Neville Harper is prepared to work for results. He supports National Party policy for the registration of foreign ownership of land.”

That just goes to show that, particularly at election-time, Government members can say anything at all.

When he was talking about the Budget, the honourable member for Mulgrave (Mr Menzel) said that he has worked very hard to get a four-lane highway on the south side of Cairns, from Queerah meatworks to the golf course. He said that he is pleased that the State Government is building it. What the honourable member does not know is that it is being financed totally by the Commonwealth Government. It is a national highway. It is the Bruce Highway. It is being built and funded by the Commonwealth.

It reminds me that, after the Budget, the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services (Mr Tenni) released a lengthy press statement about north Queensland. He said that the Queensland Government would spend \$30m in north Queensland. I wish I had more time to analyse this. The first \$14m was to be spent on the Bruce Highway and the Peninsula developmental road, both of which are Commonwealth Government projects. He said that \$800,000 would be spent on developmental work at the Cairns Airport. That \$800,000 is made up as follows: the Cairns port authority is permitted to raise \$400,000 in debenture bonds and \$400,000 has been provided by the Commonwealth. This is the \$800,000. The Commonwealth has provided half, and the other half is permission to borrow money to develop the Cairns Airport. That is what the Budget says.

The member for Mulgrave has singled out the Federal member, John Gayler, and me, saying that, in regard to the southern access road into Cairns, we should contact the Federal Minister for Transport, Mr Morris. The fact of the matter is that the Federal Government funds all national highways. Last year it provided Queensland with approximately \$90m for arterial roads. The Queensland State Government now says, "Fund the national highways and then, when we want to build an arterial road, why don't you re-gazette it and call it a national road? Then you fund that also and we can keep our \$90m for arterial roads so that we can do a bit of pork-barrelling in our own electorates."

The State Government has plenty of money to spend on that Cairns access road. If the Government was fair dinkum, it would allocate the money. It is all a matter of priorities and political will. The Queensland Government is proving to the people of Cairns and to those who live in the electorate of Mulgrave that it does not care about them. It is being said in some circles in Cairns that the reason that the money has not been provided is that Cairns is a Labor electorate, not a National Party electorate. But, if that is so, it proves—and proves conclusively—my contention that the reason that the road is not being built is not a lack of money, but a lack of political will and priority. I am certain that the people will make their judgment on that basis at the next election.

The honourable member for Mulgrave then distinguished himself by advocating the return of the free milk system. Queensland obviously has a progressive National Party if it is considering the return of free milk for schoolchildren.

I do not have time to talk about the changes to the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board, except to mention that the honourable member for Mulgrave stated that only when the State Government agreed to take away some of the powers of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board did the Federal Government make available the adjustment assistance money and the price support money. That statement is simply not true. The Commonwealth Government placed no pre-conditions on that money. The money was not held up for that reason at all. I know that the State Government, the Minister and the Director-General of the Department of Primary Industries have been saying that, but they have been left with a lot of egg on their faces. Last week they were very embarrassed when the Prime Minister made the money available without any pre-conditions.

If ever a Government has been in disarray on an issue, it has been the Queensland Government on the sugar industry. The Queensland Government does not know what it is doing. One day it intends to introduce changes to the Sugar Cane Prices Act, and the next day it does not. One day it is being threatened by Soper, and the next day it overturns its decision and says that the changes will not be introduced. How would anybody know what the Queensland Government is doing?

In the Budget Speech the Premier, when he adopted his positive face—he always has a positive face when he is talking about Queensland, but a very negative face when he is talking about the Commonwealth—stated—

"Down-grading the performance of the Queensland economy has become almost an obsession with some people in the community. It is these same people who are

at the forefront of those who pursue, with vigour, the art of being negative all the time.

I do not accept this philosophy and attitude. I do not intend to stand by and see the people of Queensland hoodwinked by these people."

That is the positive Premier.

Last Sunday in *The Sunday Mail* the Premier spoke about no longer growing grain; that he was going broke by growing grain. The Premier has become negative. The article states—

"He vowed not to begin grain farming again until the ALP Federal Government was removed from office."

How is that for a positive statement from a community leader?

Mr Prest: What is he going in for—marijuana?

Mr De LACY: Marijuana?

Mr Prest: On the Ten Mile he knows how to grow it.

Mr De LACY: Some people would say that is probably a more lucrative industry.

The Premier, still showing his negative face, began to talk about the future of the grain industry. The article states—

"The Premier blamed the Federal Government and fuel and labor costs for his decisions. He would not blame unfair trade practices by the United States and Europeans who have dumped subsidised grain on world markets, depressing prices."

It was all the Federal Government!

Back to the Budget, with the positive Premier—

"Our rural industries, especially sugar and, more lately, wheat and cotton, have been affected by the world trade situation. . ."

When the Premier is talking about the problems in this State, they are all caused by the world's problems, which are beyond the State's control. However, when the problem is Australia-wide, it is all the fault of the Federal Government; it is Bob Hawke and Paul Keating. The Premier is the most negative person in Australia when it comes to discussing the Australian economy. It is all wishful thinking. The Premier is hoping all the time that the Australian dollar will drop and that the Australian economy will go bad. When he is overseas talking to the Japanese, he says, "Don't trade with Australia. They are all socialists." That is close to being treasonable. Government members support that attitude. We are supposed to be all Australians together. We should be all hoping together and working together for the betterment of our country.

With the exception of the Queensland Premier, everyone knows that the reason that the Australian economy is in such a difficult position is the deterioration in Australia's terms of trade. Australia has long waxed fat on a ready world market for its primary products. That includes its farming primary products as well as its minerals. However, the market no longer exists. Australia is selling its products, particularly its farm products, very often at prices below the cost of production. Another point that needs to be understood is that it is not that other nations are able to produce those products more cheaply.

I heard the Premier say that Australia cannot sell its products overseas because of our high cost structure. That is not so. Australia can compete in a free market or a fair market with any country in the world. Australian farmers are very competitive. The trouble is that there is no such thing as a free market any more. The markets of the world have been corrupted by the trade policies of the two large trading blocs, the European Community and the United States of America.

Australia has been caught up in the battle of the giants and is being trampled underfoot. It is not just the farmers but the whole Australian economy that is paying

for the consequences. As Australia's exports return less and less, so the country becomes poorer and everybody suffers a decline in living standards as a consequence. Most people, except National Party politicians, are prepared to accept that. As Australia's trade has deteriorated, the currency has devalued. However, even the devaluation of the Australian dollar has not been able to increase returns to Australian farmers simply because commodity prices have reduced as quickly as the Australian dollar.

The determination of the United States to engage in a subsidy battle with the European Community has ensured that that trend will continue. However, that attitude is just plain stupid. Americans will achieve nothing for their farmers except perhaps delay the moment of truth. For years the American Government has been subsidising farmers under the auspices of the US Farm Bill and the export enhancement program, subsidising them to produce more and more surpluses. What has been the outcome? The industries are sinking deeper into the mire. If anyone thinks that problems exist in Australia's agricultural sector, he should have a look at the American scene. Can Hawke and Keating be blamed for the American problems?

Americans are shooting bank-managers, their own families, and committing suicide in plague proportions. Foreclosures and bankruptcies have devastated the morale of many lifetime farmers. Last year, more than 50 000 of the country's 2.3 million farmers hung up their tractor keys for good. The subsidies have become capitalised into land prices and reduced the American farmers' equity in their own farms and at the same time encouraged the production of incredible surpluses. America has almost 50 million tonnes of wheat in storage—three times the entire Australian crop.

The subsidy system is imposing an astronomical cost on the American tax-payer. Most of it is going to rich farmers. Some individual farmers receive a Government payment of several million dollars each. A large number will be subsidised at around the \$1m mark, and payments of \$200,000 per farmer will be relatively commonplace. The American Department of Agriculture calculated last December that the Bill would cost US tax-payers US\$17.5 billion for the 1986 fiscal year. That estimate has just been upgraded to an official \$US26 billion and an unofficial \$US30-35 billion. The net result of all of those subsidies is that America has not increased its exports.

The United States had an agricultural trade deficit in May and June of this year for the first time since 1959. Its whole trade deficit could widen to \$170 billion this year. That represents 4 per cent of its gross domestic product. The subsidy has resulted in sales abroad that are similar in volume but cheaper. That has depressed commodity markets and impinged upon other exporting countries like Australia.

Not content with that, the United States is muscling in on traditional Australian markets. The inescapable truth is what many Australians have suspected for a long time, that in a crisis the United States and Ronald Reagan has only one priority—the United States. Australia simply cannot trust the US no matter how many treaties, agreements, pacts, visits and back slaps the two countries exchange. Australia's great and powerful friends are really fair-weather friends.

To compound the felony, the real beneficiaries of the American food exports subsidy scheme are the communist countries of the Soviet Union and China, who have been America's traditional enemies. Six years ago the US boycotted the Moscow Olympic Games because of the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Those troops are still there, and if their presence six years ago was considered evil enough to prevent the Americans playing sport with the Soviet athletes, surely it should be enough to stop the sale of subsidised grain, some of which could even go to feed the troops in Afghanistan. The Russian housewife is buying American wheat at half the price her United States counterpart is. As Lawrie Kavanagh said in *The Courier-Mail* of 4 August, "The Commies were getting the cookies and the mates the rough end of the pineapple."

In the midst of all of that the Queensland Premier has gone in to bat for the Americans. He says our defence treaties with the United States are much more important than our export markets. Well, if the Americans honour their defence treaties like they honour their other promises, particularly in relation to trade, the defence treaties are

not worth two bob. The honourable member for Cunningham, who represents one of Queensland's most productive wheat areas, adopted the same peculiar position. I wonder what motivates him and the Premier? It cannot even be their pathological anti-communism because it is the communists in Russia and China who are the chief beneficiaries of the United States subsidised food export program. Perhaps it is the result of the Premier's friendship with American Secretary of State George Shultz. I can remember the Premier saying in this Chamber that George Shultz rings him often. I wonder whether he told Mr Shultz the last time he telephoned him, "Don't worry about the Australian farmer, it's only the left wing of the Labor party that's starting to question the value of the US alliance." I have news for the Premier. Virtually every rural leader in Australia has done so in the last month, including Mr Charles, President of the Grains Council of Australia, Rod McLeod, President of the Queensland Graingrowers Council, Ian McLachlan, Ralph Hunt, Australian Wheat Board Chairman Clinton Condon, and a host of others.

The fact is that the US has broken its own ideological rules to satisfy its trade needs. The imperatives of capitalism, money and trade, win every time over friendship and treaties.

Mr Casey: The Premier said the Americans were quite entitled to do what they did and had every right to. He thanked them, in other words.

Mr De LACY: Exactly. One must question where the Premier's allegiances lie; whether they lie with the Australian farmer or whether they lie with the United States of America. In fact, I think I could go so far as to say that he is acting as the American Ambassador in Australia. By going in to bat for the Americans the Premier is doing so at the expense of Australian farmers. America's self-interest and political expediency are doing irreparable damage to the Australian alliance with the United States.

The Premier's refusal to stand behind Australian farmers calls into question the real commitment that the Bjelke-Petersen Government has for the farming community in Queensland. The Government does a lot of breast-beating and says how it supports the agricultural sector; but, when honourable members have a look, they will see that the Government has precious few runs on the board. No matter how much I rack my brains, it is very hard to come up with a major contribution that the Government has made to primary industries during its 29 years in office. As I said previously, I will concede one—the abolition of death duties. But my word, the Government has been dining out on this one for a long time! As it turns out, it was an emerging trend and it very quickly happened everywhere else also.

I will look at a few issues. All of the farming industries in Queensland are still surviving, largely unaltered under the orderly marketing and organisational structures set up by the Labor Party over half a century ago. The only real change the Government has made in the structural base of Queensland agriculture is to interfere with the workings of marketing boards for political reasons. Marketing boards are now less representative and less democratic than they used to be and Government appointments are now the norm rather than the exception.

The Government has done very little by way of making the marketing boards more accountable or more market oriented. There are major problems developing in the selling of Australian agricultural products, particularly as the farmer gets more isolated from his market. John Kerin is taking on the issue at a national level, but the Queensland Government hardly seems to be aware of the problem. Likewise there is a need for more market development, product enhancement, adding value to our product, targeting specific markets and products, and so on.

Let us have a look at the sugar industry, our largest and certainly our most troubled industry. The National Party filibustered for 8 months over the issue of price support and got nowhere. It has provided no leadership, very little direction and a great deal of confusion. It is proposing now to do away with the vital judicial functions of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board, not to make the industry more efficient, but simply to achieve some short-term political goals. Its whole performance in relation to the sugar industry

has been characterised by deceit, point-scoring, and bumbling ineptitude. That is still occurring.

Let us have a look at soil conservation, something that ought to be dear to the hearts of the National Party farming constituents. Its performance has been disastrous, comparing abysmally with that of other States. New South Wales spends six times as much on controlling soil erosion as Queensland does, and on less agricultural land. It has five times as many people in the field as Queensland does. By any measure, Queensland is light years behind New South Wales, and, I understand, other States, in tackling our greatest environmental problem—soil erosion. It even got to the stage last year at which the Queensland Government had to withdraw a booklet published by the DPI, which realistically stated the case in relation to soil erosion, and have it replaced by a glossy version to create the illusion that all was well.

Queensland's bush roads are the worst in Australia and so are many other of the services that the Government provides to country areas—schools, health services, and welfare services and so on. Other State Governments have taken specific initiatives to address the so-called rural crisis. What has Queensland done?

The New South Wales Government has introduced an interest subsidy scheme to pay up to 25 per cent of the interest paid for commercial loans by farmers outside of the RAS scheme. The estimated cost of the scheme is \$5m, which will provide interest assistance for approximately \$100m of the farm debt. This is a positive and realistic response to the high interest rate problem besetting the farm sector. Bulk grains handling charges in Queensland show that in weighted average terms the rate of approximately \$19 per tonne is the highest of any mainland State and \$3.33 a tonne higher than the average of the other States. What has the State Government done about this?

The Queensland Government's only response to the rural crisis is to attack Canberra. In fact, its only policies for rural Australia are to attack Canberra, bash the trade unions and quote shonky statistics. The so-called farmer's party has nothing else to offer. It arrogantly believes that the farmers will vote for it no matter what.

Of course, it has the gerrymander. It says to the farmers, "We've got the gerrymander. The Labor Party wants to take that away from you." My response to that is, "What do the farmers get out of the gerrymander? It's a poor substitute for policies." The farm sector is of vital importance to the economy of Australia. If ever we wanted proof of that, we are getting it now. The Labor Party recognises this, just as it has always recognised it.

In Queensland, the Australian Labor Party introduced legislation for establishing orderly marketing structures, the irrigation schemes and the family farm philosophy that provided the basis for the decentralisation and continued prosperity that has generally characterised agriculture in Queensland. There is no quick-fix solution to the current rural down-turn; however, let me say that the farming sector would receive much more support from the Australian Labor Party by the implementation of long-term policies—that is, effective policies and long-term strategies—than from the policies that are offered by the National Party, which are a concoction of ill-conceived appeals to irrational prejudices.

Some Government members spoke about the effect on rural industries of the Federal Budget. They made the syndrome that is besetting rural Australia very clear. Most city people think farmers are whinging cockies. Sometimes I wonder why, because I find that most farmers are decent people who are battlers and who are prepared to have a go. Notwithstanding that, the image they convey is that they are whinging cockies, and the reason for that is that the farm organisation leaders never stop whinging, and Governments cannot give them enough.

I do not believe that any Federal Government could provide more assistance to the rural sector than the Hawke/Keating/Kerin Federal Government has been able to provide. The latest Federal Budget preserved the integrity of the rural statement that was delivered on 15 April. The Budget adopted the macro-economic strategy that was

advocated by the National Farmers Federation. The reduction in the deficit is well above the expectations and is an improvement on the level advocated by the National Farmers Federation. The commitment given by the Federal Government in its economic and rural policy statement in April to shift the burden of restraint away from monetary policy, hence interest rates, and onto fiscal policy, has been fulfilled.

Mr Gygar: Petrol prices have also increased.

Mr De LACY: The excise on petrol was increased by 3c a litre, but the farming sector received an exemption from that increase insofar as——

Mr Gygar: What about transport?

Mr De LACY: The honourable member should wait and allow me to finish. I conceded that an increase in the excise on petrol was imposed, but it must be remembered that the price of petrol in Australia is no higher than it was when the Hawke Government took office. The price of petrol has not been increased by the Hawke Government at anything like the rate it increased under the Liberal and National Party coalition Government. The Federal Government has exempted diesel fuel for off-road use entirely, which means that the exemption applies not only to the 3c a litre imposed last week but also to the whole excise component of the fuel-pricing system.

The Federal Government increased its allocation for soil conservation by 18 per cent to an amount of \$5.5m, in spite of the fact that the nation is undergoing a period of economic difficulty. It should be borne in mind that there was no real increase in Government outlays in the Federal Budget, which should be compared with what the farmers' friends—this National Party Government—provided in its State Budget.

Although I am yet to examine the fine print, I would wager that the State Government did not match the Commonwealth Government on this issue. Furthermore, I would be willing to bet that no real increase in the allocation for soil conservation and soil erosion control has been provided, in spite of the fact that every commentator in Queensland says it is one of the greatest problems that the State has to face.

The Hawke Government also addressed itself to the great challenge of increasing overseas trade profitability. For the first time in the history of this nation, a team comprising members from all political parties was sent overseas to negotiate. There would be no way in the world that a tory Government would do anything like that, because it would only be worried about point-scoring. The tories are not worried about what is good for the industry.

Moreover, the Hawke Federal Government organised a conference in Cairns attended by 14 nations to discuss the non-subsidisation of agricultural products for export. I am very pleased that the Federal Government chose the best city in which to hold that conference. All the major non-subsidising agricultural exporters in the world were brought together as a precursor to attending the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade conference in Uruguay next month.

Mrs HARVEY (Greenslopes) (9.39 p.m.): I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak in this Budget debate. I am ever mindful of the good house-keeping, balanced Budget emphasis placed by the National Party Government on its approach to the affairs of this State.

I was dismayed to hear the leader of the Liberal Party (Sir William Knox) denigrating the achievements of the Government in balancing the Budget. Much to my surprise, he said earlier, "This Government has always balanced its Budget, but so what? That is not very important." His comments worry me. I hope that he never attains a position of power. If he did and if he thinks that is not very important, the State would go on a downhill slide, joining the southern Labor States in having a complete economic mess.

I congratulate the Premier and the Government on again, as always, having a balanced Budget. That should not be denigrated by anyone. The one thing that constituents

understand is that the budget has to be balanced, whether it be the house-keeping or the State's Budget. What the people of Queensland are really worried about is the imbalance of the Federal Budget and Australia's massive deficit.

I take this opportunity to speak about my efforts in the Greenslopes electorate on behalf of my constituents, who relate to the State's balanced Budget, to the money spent in the electorate and to the cobwebs that were swept aside when I came into the electorate.

Last Saturday the Greenslopes electorate celebrated the opening of the Queen Alexandra Home Community Centre by the Premier (Honourable Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen), who was assisted by the Deputy Premier (Honourable Bill Gunn). Thousands of people attended and inspected the historic home that was once the home of the grandfather of Sir Francis Nicklin. The home was restored very, very well by the Department of Works. From last Saturday it commenced operation as a community centre.

The program being carried out in that building is unique. It has never before taken place in Queensland. I doubt that it has happened anywhere else in Australia. It is a free, open venue, a drop-in centre for all age groups from various sections of the community to mix, mingle and integrate.

The efforts involved in the setting up of the community centre have taken a long, three-year haul. People assume that because one is a Government member all one has to do is to simply ask and it will be given. Members of the Opposition are always saying, "Oh, yes, but it all goes to the Government members." If Opposition members worked a little bit harder and substantiated their case they might receive more for their electorates. I had a three-year fight to get that community centre. As everyone understands, the budgetary pie is only so big. Everyone wants a piece of it. A very sound argument is needed before a slice of it is received. For me, that argument has continued for three years.

I mentioned in my maiden speech in this Chamber—a speech in which I was heckled throughout by Opposition members—the needs of such people in the electorate as the aged, the lonely and the high proportion of sole parents. I said that a place was needed in which the community could actually be a community and develop a community spirit. For three years, through speech after speech, I suppose I have nagged my way to obtaining the community centre. I have made people realise how necessary it was. I am so grateful for the personal support of the Premier and the very active support of the Deputy Premier, Mr Bill Gunn, in putting the project together; for the assistance of the Minister for Education, the Honourable Lin Powell, in providing the building; and for the many people, including the clergy, who provided that very strong base support from which the community support has sprung.

My electorate is one of diverse interests and diverse needs, all of which can be accommodated by the one community centre. It amounts to killing many birds with the one stone, so to speak. Various activities can take place, whether it be occasional child care, arts and crafts for the aged, mums dropping in on an informal basis before and after school for a chat, or for scouting activities. What happens in that building is limited only by the imagination of the people using it.

I take this opportunity to thank the many people in the Government and in the community who have supported it and who have made a dream become a reality for the benefit of all people in the area.

Another program that has taken place with the assistance of the Government is the Brisbane River committee project, through which 20 km of the Brisbane River and its banks are undergoing general beautification for its tourist potential and the public's enjoyment. The Brisbane River committee has achieved. At no cost to the Government the committee has produced a small beach off Captain Burke Park under the Story Bridge at Kangaroo Point. That project was fully supported by the Sand and Gravel Association, which dumped thousands of tonnes of sand at its own expense as a goodwill gesture to the community of Brisbane.

Only a week or so ago, with the assistance of the Mount Gravatt Apex Club, the committee planted several hundred trees on the river-bank under the South East Freeway to screen the car-park from the view of the Expo 88 site, which is directly opposite. The committee is working in very closely with the Expo 88 Authority. Other plans of the committee are dependent on the approval of the Brisbane City Council. So far no answers have been received from the council. The committee is waiting for a response in order to continue with improvements. The committee has many plans of which the community will hear very shortly. They will be to the benefit of everyone in the Brisbane community and all visitors to the city. I again thank the Government for being willing to commission the \$25,000 report by the architect John Ferris, and for being willing to commit itself to a very imaginative project for the benefit of everyone.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mrs HARVEY: I know that the many knockers opposite hate to see things happening. I listen to them complain and complain, but rarely do I hear them say anything positive, even about their own electorates. I am proud to be saying something positive about mine.

Another enterprise supported by the Government is the Child Abuse Research and Education Committee, which I chair. It produced a very useful handbook for the information of all Queensland teachers. Very shortly—in October—that will be followed with a seminar seeking feed-back on the handbook and asking for ways in which teachers can be further helped. The Child Abuse Research and Education Committee has done a great deal in raising in the mind of the community the profile of child abuse. Contacts have been made with various people in the community. Again, the support of the Government has been the major contribution that has made the operations of the committee feasible.

I now turn to the finer details of what has happened in my electorate with the assistance of the Government and its Ministers. I mention, first, school improvements. The Holland Park State School administration building was built very recently for approximately \$300,000. A unique project, it was built in sympathy with the architecture of the existing buildings. I think it was a first. The existing school buildings were approximately 70 years of age. The new building matches the others. It blends in extremely well. Everyone in the area is proud of it. I congratulate the Minister for Works and Housing (Mr Wharton) on that project.

The Coorparoo State School is 108 years old and until now has never had a tuck-shop. I think 108 years is long enough to wait for a tuck-shop. That school is situated on the intersection of two major roads. Until now the little ones have had to cross those roads at great risk to themselves. The school is about to get a tuck-shop. As well, a new toilet block has been provided and the school is to be extensively repainted.

When I first became the member for Greenslopes, the Coorparoo State High School was provided with several hundred new chairs, for which it had waited some years. Now the school is about to gain a music block. That project was strongly supported by the music students of the school, who did much community work to prove that the school had a very strong music department that required the support of the Government. As a result, the Government will now provide it with a music block. I am very happy to say that we all came together on a project and we succeeded in pointing out to the people who mattered that a music block was necessary. Now it is being provided.

The Camp Hill Infants School has had some of the bitumen in its playground resurfaced. Many other small jobs have been attended to at the request of the school. I am happy to say that now the little ones are not falling over and badly injuring their knees in the playground.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mrs HARVEY: Opposition members are laughing. They think that these matters are very trivial and warrant a great deal of joking. I do not think that they are the least

bit funny. I think that they are extremely important, because if a member does not look after the little things, the big things certainly do not get looked after either.

I turn to school events. I am very fortunate in having progressive, innovative and community-oriented schools and school principals in my electorate. On Queensland Day I attended the presentation of Queensland badges at the Holland Park primary school. The children made imitation T-shirts. The students of the Coorparoo primary school made posters representing sections of Queensland that they particularly liked. The Marshall Road students dressed as historical characters and at Camp Hill primary school I presented badges to students with strong community spirits. The students of St Thomas's school wrote and performed a song quite spontaneously. St Joachim's school also entered into the spirit of things.

In each case the students of the schools showed a willingness to enter into the spirit of pride in their own State. I congratulate all the schools in my electorate for their participation in Queensland Day. It is good to see that schools are prepared to take their own State more seriously than perhaps people would give them credit for.

The sports days in my area also demonstrated how the young people are really doing well, and how they are really coming on. There is so much criticism of the young. People say that they do not bother looking for jobs, that they do not do this and do not do that. However, when one attends sports days such as the one that I attended recently at Wellers Hill primary school, with the icy winds blowing, the teachers standing rugged up in parkas and the kids still running with no jumpers on, turning blue with the cold but totally undaunted by the weather, one realises the kind of enthusiasm that the children have for these events and how willing they are to support the events of their school. I think that the children in our schools are to be admired for the efforts that they make as part of a school community.

I have been keen to support the local sporting clubs. I am very proud to say that Coorparoo Australian Football Club taught me the game of Australian Rules, which I did not understand when I attended my first game. So, I have learned a good deal as member for the area. That club won the finals a couple of years ago and stands a good chance this year.

The Eastern Suburbs Junior Rugby League Football Club had problems. I am very happy to say that the Minister for Sport (Mr McKechnie), accompanied by Ron McAuliffe and Reg Livermore, assisted me in addressing the problems of that organisation.

General works to assist my area have been carried out, particularly for the elderly and the young. I refer to the footpaths and upgraded signals at the Coorparoo Railway Station. I accompanied the Minister for Transport (Mr Lane) to the station, and he very quickly had the problems overcome.

I refer to the "No Right Turn" sign at Coorparoo Junction. That junction had the highest accident rate of any intersection in the whole of Queensland. However, since the Minister for Main Roads (Mr Hinze) assisted in having that sign erected, there has not been one accident at that intersection.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The heckling that is emanating from the Opposition side of the Chamber is nothing more than just that. It does not amount to a reasonable form of interjection. I ask that the heckling cease.

Mrs HARVEY: Thank you, Mr Row. I do not mind the members of the Opposition heckling me all the way through my speech. It does not worry me in the slightest. I just keep going because this really matters.

The "No Right Turn" sign has succeeded in preventing accidents. Although I was lobbied very, very strongly to remove the sign and threatened with losing the election—losing 250 votes—I am pleased to say that most people have let sanity prevail—

Mr COMBEN: I rise to a point of order. This speech has nothing to do with the Budget. It is trivialising the debate.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order. I will not accept frivolous points of order.

Mrs HARVEY: The median strips on Old Cleveland Road were installed at the request of the many elderly people living on that road who had great difficulty crossing a very wide, very busy hilly road. Now I am pleased to say that not one pedestrian accident has occurred since those median strips were installed. They have caused some inconvenience for people who, over a long period had become used to turning into certain streets. However, I think that everybody understands that some small sacrifices have to be made for the safety of all people in the area.

A traffic island has been placed in the Bruce Street and Old Cleveland Road shopping centre, and the lights will be installed shortly. I expect the Minister to announce that when the survey for that area is completed. Thanks to the assistance of the Minister, the busy area that bears such heavy traffic in Coorparoo has been made a good deal safer. The people in that area can now feel a little safer on the footpaths and on the roads.

I have been strongly supporting small businesses in the area and I am grateful to the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology (Mr Ahern) for coming to the area and taking an interest in the small business there. I am grateful to the Minister for intervening in the case of A. M. Bristow Pty Ltd when its dog spike manufacturing business ran into serious contract problems. Seven months ago I opened the Greenslopes Mall and am pleased to see it is going well.

There have been many opportunities to help worthy causes in my electorate. The Independent Living Centre at the Greenslopes Repatriation Hospital has received a great deal of assistance from the State Government, for which the centre is grateful. Recently I attended the opening of the new kitchen at the hospital with Senator Lady Bjelke-Petersen. The Spina Bifida Association of Queensland has received assistance for its centre called "Leura". The centre has had some problems, but I am pleased to say that they have been sorted out. Some months ago I opened the new building for the Holland Park Meals on Wheels service and its \$70,000 loan has been reduced by two-thirds. I am pleased that that organisation is doing well, because it performs such an excellent service for the people of the area.

I have visited the Endeavour Foundation at Coorparoo on a number of occasions. It provides excellent work for young people requiring special employment. The Community Youth Support Scheme in the area has been presented with substantial cheques by the State Government. The Community Youth Support Scheme at Woolloongabba has received cheques for its fibreglass boat-building program, and the young people there are doing extremely well. The Community Youth Support Scheme at Holland Park has been putting money into camps for the personal growth of its young people. In addition, the Community Youth Support Scheme people attended the opening of the Queen Alexandra Home and assisted in the serving of morning teas for work experience. I am grateful to them for taking that community role.

The Coorparoo Day Activity Centre for the aged and frail began with 11 members and now has 45 members. The Leisha Harvey Community Link consistently attracts 200 people to its various activities and it donates a substantial part of its takings to charity. It has made donations to the Spina Bifida Association of Queensland, the Coorparoo Red Cross, the Holland Park Meals on Wheels, and the Little Kings. The Coorparoo High School has received a musical instrument and music, and many other organisations, too numerous to mention, have been assisted. A function to be held by the Leisha Harvey Community Link this Thursday in the garden has attracted 250 people and a considerable amount of money from that function will be going to the Queen Alexandra Home. Special thanks must go to Mrs Maurine Hunter, the chairman, and the other members of the committee for their fine work in the community through this organisation.

As patroness of the Civilian Widows Association, the Foster Parents Association and the Queen Alexandra Home, I have the honour to be able to assist all the people who are associated with those organisations. It is an honour that I take very seriously. I do my best to be present when required.

Mr Cam Day, the veterinarian of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has come with me to visit all the local schools to show the children how to look after their pets during holiday-time.

I have had limitless opportunities to help worthy causes in my area. I am sure that my colleagues do the same in their electorates and that there is nothing unique about me. I raise these matters for the interest of many people in my electorate who want to know the kinds of things that have been happening in the electorate.

As most honourable members in this Chamber are aware, I have a great interest in our historical buildings and our heritage. I am very pleased that the State Works Department, besides restoring the magnificent Queen Alexandra Home, which celebrates its centenary this year, is also working on the Old Government Printery building.

It has been a busy, exciting three years. People ask, "Where do you get the energy from?"

Opposition Members interjected.

Mrs HARVEY: Although it amuses the members of the Opposition, I made a very serious statement. It is the support of the many fine people around me that keeps me going.

Opposition Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think that the levity of honourable members has been well satisfied. I ask the honourable member to continue with her speech.

Mrs HARVEY: As long as I have people like members of the Opposition to goad me on, I will never tire, because I realise that there is so much that needs to be done. I intend to carry out that job to prevent the Opposition from ever gaining power.

Mr Randell: You have just proved that you are getting under their skin and that they could not care less.

Mrs HARVEY: The honourable member is correct. Opposition members certainly do not care. They are always talking about the little man, but they never seem to actually do anything for him.

As I said, it is the support of many fine people around me that keeps me going. I suppose that the following comment will also make members of the Opposition laugh. People such as my husband, Barry, have provided support in the form of his tireless attendance at numerous functions and his role as husband, bread-winner, driver, chairman of Queen Alexandra Home, emergency stand-in and campaign manager. I am fortunate to receive that support. I have the support of my family, who do not complain and who do not see me as often as they would like. I have the support of my children, who are willing to be independent. I also have the support of the members of the Greenslopes branch of the National Party, who are ever-willing workers. Most importantly, I have the support of the many community organisations, church-leaders and their congregations. Many individuals have joined in a commitment for the betterment of our electorate and of our State.

I thank the Queensland Government for its support. Despite my having to produce a very strong argument for every single item I have wanted for my electorate and, every time I have wanted a dollar, having to prove that that dollar was indispensable for my electorate, I appreciate that attitude, because one has to be careful where the dollar goes. I understand that there is only so much money to go round. I do not whinge about not receiving things for my electorate, as members of the Opposition do. I prove that certain items are necessary. I am prepared to keep asking and working until such time as I

have made my argument on behalf of my electorate strong enough to ensure that the money is forthcoming. I do not mind how long it takes.

At the beginning of my speech, I referred to the Queen Alexandra Home project and said that it had taken three years. The project is worth every minute's work during that three years, the frustration and the anguish created by the many problems that have arisen. That project is only a beginning for the area. The cobwebs have been removed from an area that was stagnating. It needed many facilities because it had no local amenities. I can carry on from there.

Queen Alexandra Home provides a base from which one can operate. Anyone who can suggest a worthwhile project now has an opportunity to bring it forward. A consideration can be made as to whether Queen Alexandra Home would be a suitable base. A unique position has been achieved. The community's needs have been consolidated into one spot. Any future need that arises could also be referred to that place.

I am very fortunate that, as a member of Parliament, I have received such strong community support. A member is only one person and can only do so much. A completely co-ordinated effort is required to ensure that any sizeable project comes to life, particularly a project that needs to be viable. What has taken place in my electorate has had to be viable. My electorate is a very small, crowded area. It is necessary for the people in the electorate to organise themselves extremely well. There is no room for error or for dabbling.

Mr CASEY: I rise to a point of order. I believe that the Committee has been very tolerant. Mr Row, I seek a ruling from you. In accordance with Standing Order No. 307, on a day allotted for Supply, it is the procedure that five minutes before the conclusion of the time, the Chairman, in accordance with that Standing Order, draws attention to the time and the debate is then adjourned, to be continued at a later stage. I understand this Assembly is also governed by a Sessional Order on this particular occasion. The Sessional Order alters the time that is indicated in Standing Order No. 307; instead of its being 5.25 o'clock it is to be 10 p.m. That is a Sessional Order that has been adopted by this Assembly. It has always been the practice and procedure to cease this debate at 5 minutes to 10 in accordance with that Standing Order. I seek a ruling on that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I refer the honourable member to Standing Order No. 307, which states, "As soon as the Debate on the Financial Statement has been concluded, the business of Supply shall, until disposed of, be the first Order of the Day," etcetera. The Committee is not yet sitting on an allotted day. This is not an allotted day, so there is no point of order.

Mr CASEY: Mr Row, I draw your attention to the Sessional Order as moved by the Leader of the House some considerable time ago in this Chamber. It provides that time be so allotted to 10 p.m. for the debate on the Financial Statement.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member for Mackay to resume his seat while I am on my feet. I intend to rule under Standing Order No. 307. That Standing Order provides that, at this stage, the Standing Order that the honourable member has quoted is not considered appropriate to this debate on the Budget.

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

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have ruled.

Mr CASEY: Mr Row, I am entitled to rise to a further point of order. My second point of order does not relate to the Standing Order to which you referred, namely, Standing Order No. 307. It relates to the Sessional Order for this particular session. I refer to the Sessional Order under which the Committee continues till 10 o'clock on this Financial Statement debate. I believe the Sessional Order states—and I believe the Leader of the House will agree—that, in accordance with normal practice, the debate

continue until 10 p.m. Surely we are going to obey the rules of this Assembly—our own rules.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable to resume his seat. I will deal with the matter when I have received further advice.

Mrs HARVEY: The honourable member for Mackay constantly rises to points of order in order to use up my speaking-time. He has already used up approximately four minutes. However, that is OK. I can understand his little fit of pique because it shows up the inactivity of Opposition members when I start speaking about what has happened in my electorate. I feel sorry for those Opposition members.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mrs HARVEY: It would be better if Opposition members could sit and listen to what I have to say instead of trying to——

Mr Hamill: This is typical of the double standards of your Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Ipswich under Standing Order No. 123A. He has been very vocal this evening.

Honourable members, I understand that the Sessional Order referred to by the honourable member for Mackay is not applicable to this debate. I intend to allow the honourable member for Greenslopes to continue for the remaining two minutes of her speech.

Mrs HARVEY: As I was saying, Mr Row, if Opposition members would pay attention instead of constantly trying to be obstructive, they might learn something.

I look forward to another three years of representation of an electorate of which I am very proud. I also look forward to the support of a Government in its own right, of which I am extremely proud, and I look forward to the support of all Ministers and my back-bench colleagues, of whom I am extremely proud.

I notice Opposition members are squirming. That is all right. I feel fortunate to represent an electorate that I can support strongly with the assistance of Government members. I have had the opportunity in this Budget debate of outlining the things that can occur in an electorate when support is received from everyone concerned. The whole idea of representing an electorate, or providing for the wider issues in Queensland, is a team effort. It relies on many people and on a great deal of support from many sectors. I have been fortunate enough to have had that support, and look forward to another term with that sort of support.

Progress reported.

RECIPROCAL ENFORCEMENT OF JUDGMENTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 26 August (see p. 631) on Mr Harper's motion—

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

Motion (Mr Harper) agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 5, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

MOTOR VEHICLES SECURITIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL**Second Reading—Resumption of Debate**

Debate resumed from 21 August (see p. 553) on Mr Harper's motion—

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

Mr GOSS (Salisbury) (10.16 p.m.): The Opposition supports the Bill that seeks to amend legislation recently passed by the House. The amendments primarily relate to the necessity and desirability of linking the proposed Queensland computer records with those kept in New South Wales. The Opposition is hopeful that in due course those records will be linked throughout the country. I note that at the second-reading stage that move was foreshadowed by the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General (Mr Harper).

The legislation before the House also provides for standard forms of documentation. It is obvious that such a practical measure would be necessary to support the intent of the legislation. It is perhaps a matter that could have been addressed in the terms of the original legislation, along with the potential of linking the records kept in other States. If the legislation was intended to work in a truly effective manner, at some stage that linking would have had to occur.

The important point I want to make is that although the whole operation has yet to be brought together completely, the paramount consideration is that the system should work as effectively as possible. Co-operation among the States can only ensure that citizens and consumers in this State are protected to a greater degree than they would have been if the scheme had been confined solely to Queensland. The amendments will ensure not only that Queenslanders will receive greater protection but also that the same kind of extended protection will operate for the benefit of Australians in other States. That is an admirable goal. The Opposition is happy to support the legislation.

I said previously, when the original legislation was brought forward, that the Opposition whole-heartedly supports the overall thrust of the intent, and has done so for many years. The amending Bill is quite compatible with and represents a logical extension of the original legislation. Accordingly, the Opposition offers its support for the Bill.

Mr SIMPSON (Cooroora) (10.18 p.m.): I support the Bill that is presently before the House. For most people, the major purchases made during their lifetime will be vehicles and houses. It is a cause of concern that people often buy vehicles only to find that the vehicle is encumbered and is the subject of a bill of sale held by a finance company. The whole idea of taking advantage of modern technology and providing a register is to obtain information that will reveal whether a vehicle is encumbered or owned outright by someone else.

The Young Nationals have been urging that legislation of this type be presented. Their views reflect the concerns of young people of meagre means who are not able to afford the purchase of a vehicle that turns out to be owned by someone else. The legislation will enable people to obtain relevant information for a nominal fee. It will also be possible to obtain certification in respect of ownership that will afford some protection from unscrupulous dealers.

Most of the population of Queensland is concentrated in the south-eastern corner of the State. Large numbers of people cross the New South Wales border. It takes no time at all to move from one State to another. The Government has addressed the problem raised by the mobility factor by enabling a link to be established between records held in Queensland and New South Wales through a register.

No doubt when that arrangement between Queensland and New South Wales is found to be operative and effective, States such as New South Wales and Victoria will be looking very hard at establishing a reciprocal arrangement with each other. At the moment the arrangements in Victoria are not compatible with what is envisaged in Queensland. In time it is believed that they will be brought into line so that hopefully that provision, which will ultimately allow people to be able to take advantage of this service, will operate throughout Australia. Under that arrangement a vehicle from New South Wales could be checked just as readily as could one from Queensland. That is of great merit.

One provision will cover vehicles other than registered vehicles. Of course, that makes it possible to register those mechanical devices in which a finance house may have some pecuniary interest, whether it be farm machinery, tractors, boats or other quite valuable items. Items such as that will be able to be checked to see whether a finance company has an interest in them. It is hard to credit that people can fork out amounts such as \$40,000 or \$50,000 for valuable items such as trucks and not go to the trouble to find out whether a finance institution has some interest in the particular vehicle. In one instance, the failure to do that rendered the people involved completely penniless and, as well as that, without a vehicle, because it was also taken away.

I strongly support this progressive legislation, the implementation of which will use modern technology to provide a service to the people in this State, especially to young people who are starting off in life so that they do not find themselves in a precarious financial situation.

Mr INNES (Sherwood) (10.23 p.m.): The Liberal Party will support the Bill before the House.

A number of pieces of legislation, some of which have been amended more than once before they have been promulgated, have been put before the House by the Minister. One recalls another piece of legislation which also dealt with the protection of consumers and the facilitating of business. I refer to the consumer credit legislation. The Minister did announce to a dinner of the Finance Conference of Australia that the Government would give lengthy consideration to the introduction of that legislation and would not adopt it just because other States had adopted it, reserving Queensland's very special view on what was suitable for Queensland. Of course, as has been found in this legislation, despite State boundaries, Australia, for the purpose of commerce, is one nation.

One can predict, when proposing anything to do with a commercial transaction or commodities that are sold on a national level or through financing which is supplied by national companies, that, indeed, standardisation is likely to be required so that those companies' computer records and documentation can be compatible irrespective of where the transaction takes place. In some ways it is unfortunate that in the rush to get these consumer-facilitating, or business-facilitating, processes off the ground, the matter is not thought through.

One would have thought that it was perfectly predictable that one would have to look at the situation in other States and that it would be of enormous convenience for the purpose of security to have access to the records of other States. It is about time the Government displayed a consistent approach to achieving the best legislation and the best deal for consumers and business people rather than engaging in these exercises of phony States' rights, which then become the subject of amendments.

The Government should take a bit of a breath and put its rancour on the back burner from time to time, look at the nature of the industry or business for which it proposes to legislate, find out if it involves interstate transactions and whether there are reasons why one should establish conformity as to the way in which the transaction is done as to documentation or computer compatibility, and get it right the first time. The Government's hell-for-leather haste to be the first into the arena or to be seen as being decisive and active must be restrained a little in the interests of getting legislation right the first time.

The Liberal Party supports sensible attempts at conformity because, for the purpose of business, Australia is substantially one nation. One cannot take exception to this measure. Sometimes Queensland may even have to settle for something which is not perfect even if it was starting all over again. However, if they are substantially on the right track and if they are on the same track that Queensland is pursuing, people cannot be asked to be involved in multimillion dollar variations just to suit Queensland's purposes. The Government should get the Act right the first time. It should produce only one piece of legislation, not a piece of legislation that is amended two, three or four times before it comes into force.

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (10.27 p.m.): I wish to take up the point raised by the member for Sherwood (Mr Innes) who appealed to the Government to get legislation right the first time. When the legislation was recently before the House, New South Wales had no similar legislation. The legislation that had been enacted in Victoria and Tasmania was not, on my understanding, acceptable to the Queensland Government. At a later point in time the New South Wales Government went along the same track as Queensland. There is nothing wrong with his saying that the States have different legislation. I agree that it would be great to have consistent legislation throughout Australia. However, the New South Wales people took up the Queensland point of view because they believed that Queensland had got it right. New South Wales wished to share with Queensland the records that are on computer files. Therefore, this legislation is being amended so that Queensland can have access to the New South Wales computer files and vice versa. I see nothing whatsoever wrong with that attitude. The time that will be taken by the House in dealing with this legislation—it will be only a matter of minutes—to allow access to the New South Wales register is not an indication that the Government does not know where it is going or that this matter has not been considered. The matter has been considered.

It is hoped that the legislation will have some impact on the marketing of stolen cars. When a person registers a vehicle which is subsequently stolen, it must be remembered that the owner has paid a registration fee and also a compulsory third-party insurance premium. That vehicle might be stolen and transported interstate. I draw to the attention of the House that in some other States compulsory third-party insurance premiums are likely to increase dramatically. The Queensland Government was hounded by the Opposition and, to some degree, by the press when the compulsory third-party insurance on motor vehicles was increased to \$168. Although it may be kite-flying, I read from an article on page 14 of today's *Telegraph* which states—

“The Victorian Premier, Mr Cain, has warned motorists that compulsory third party insurance premiums may rise to \$500 a year.

The premium is currently about \$200, but the State Insurance Office is facing an estimated \$1 billion payout over the next two years.

Mr Cain said a \$300 rise will take place if draft legislation to reform the third party system is not passed through Parliament in the Spring session.”

That is an indication of the third-party insurance problems that are developing in some other States, all of which are in the same boat.

I support the legislation. The fact that it has come before the House for amendment is not a reflection on the Government. It shows a willingness to co-operate with New South Wales. It is actually a compliment that New South Wales is supporting the Queensland legislation and wants to be part of it.

Motion (Mr Harper) 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—Short title—

Mr HARPER (10.31 p.m.): I had hoped for an opportunity to comment on the contributions made by honourable members during the second-reading debate. However,

I will deal with them under clause 1. I take this opportunity to comment on what would seem to be the inhibitions of the honourable member for Sherwood (Mr Innes) in acknowledging that wide-ranging discussions can be beneficial to the production of efficient legislation. In his remarks, the honourable member suggested that putting legislation on the back-burner is not in the best interests of the community, which members of Parliament have an obligation to serve.

I might say that Liberal Ministers who held the Justice portfolio were responsible for putting this particular piece of legislation on the back-burner for the best part of 10 or 12 years. It was only under the National Party Government, governing in its own right, that action was taken to introduce amendments to the legislation to rid it of the dust that had accumulated for at least a decade.

Of course, the honourable member for Lockyer (Mr FitzGerald) was correct in stating that Queensland was not prepared to accept principles that did not provide satisfactory safeguards for consumers. That was the problem with the Victorian and the South Australian legislation. New South Wales has now adopted principles that meet the standard required by Queensland; so the Government is able to proceed in a spirit of co-operation to benefit consumers and financiers in both States.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 19, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

SALE OF GOODS (VIENNA CONVENTION) BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 19 August (see p. 351) on Mr Harper's motion—

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

Mr GOSS (Salisbury) (10.38 p.m.): Once again, the Opposition is happy to support the Government legislation. Lately, this seems to be a bit of a habit. I will have to watch my step. I would not like to get into a rut by continually supporting legislation introduced by the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General. In this instance I wholeheartedly agree with the legislation.

It is somewhat amusing to have a piece of legislation such as this before the House and to be given the opportunity to support it. The legislation simply implements the United Nations Convention. Given the hysterical and misleading statements that one from time to time hears from the conservative section of the political spectrum about the undesirability of signing, ratifying and implementing United Nations conventions, it is interesting that the Queensland Government, which has often led the charge against such matters, particularly in relation to the public debate over the Bill of Rights, brings in a Bill indicating that the Queensland Government is effectively of the opinion—

“... that the adoption of uniform rules which govern contracts for the international sale of goods and takes into account the different social, economic and legal systems would contribute to the removal of legal barriers in international trade and promote the development of international trade...”

Conservative commentators regularly prattle on about the relevance of conventions and covenants of this sort when considering dreadful places such as Russia. The relevant convention was executed at Vienna in 1980 and is drawn up in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. It is heartening that the Queensland Government is finally realising the value of joining with the rest of the world and is attaching Queensland somewhat belatedly to the rest of planet Earth for the purpose of ensuring certain

minimum standards in specified commercial transactions. It is a pity that the Queensland Government did not have the same attitude when considering certain minimum standards of human rights and matters covered by other covenants.

Admirable goals are contained in such conventions; but, in the mind of the Queensland Government, many practical problems arise in implementing those goals. Apparently no such practical problems exist here in this instance. It is good to see that the Queensland Government can see its way clear to co-operate in a push for uniformity, not just across the States, but across the world through this convention. I hope to see more of such legislation in this House.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah) (10.39 p.m.): This is an interesting piece of legislation. It is not often that the House looks at conventions.

Mr Mackenroth: Of any kind.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: At any time, that is right.

Some time ago a Treaties Commission was set up in this State; but, I am sorry to say, that commission has fallen into disuse. It was chaired by a Supreme Court judge and its duties were to consider conventions as they arose and decide if they should be ratified or rejected by the State.

It is continually forgotten, particularly by the Labor Party in this country, that Queensland belongs to a federation and that many of the conventions that are allegedly entered into by the Commonwealth on the country's behalf require the ratification of the individual States. Regrettably that process has not been as effective as it should have been.

Australia is allegedly a party to almost 1 500 international conventions; yet, when one looks at the actual list of conventions that Australia has ratified, one finds that Australia's track record on ratification is very poor. The reason for that poor record is that the machinery in this country for the attention of conventions is not working as it should. When State laws are affected, each individual State should examine those conventions to see whether that part of the country can conform. It is the practice of the Australian Commonwealth that a convention on a State matter will be ratified only when all States and all legislatures have agreed to that convention. If it is not a State matter, the Commonwealth alone is involved. That practice has fallen into disuse.

The result is that Australia's record of ratifying conventions is very poor. I am not upset about that. Some totalitarian countries ratify conventions at the drop of a hat. They do not apply those conventions but happily sign them at international meetings and then do not even observe them in their own countries. It does not upset me one little bit that the table of conventions that have been ratified in this country is not as impressive as the list in Russia or some of the South American republics which, without consideration at all for their people, will happily ratify a convention.

The process of putting before the State legislature a convention is a happy one, which I support. I would like to see more of that. A great deal of care must be taken with ratifying conventions. That is why some years ago the Treaties Commission was set up. I am sorry that the present Government has not used the Treaties Commission, which still exists under the aegis of the Premier. Matters are apparently not being referred to that State commission. Of course, not having work to do, it does not meet.

The Treaties Commission was set up because the Government in Canberra was intent on using the foreign affairs powers of the Constitution to ratify or agree to conventions, whether they be ILO conventions or any other treaties, without reference to the States. The feeling was, and I believe it is unchanged, that the Government in Canberra would happily ratify a convention without any reference to the States.

If Australia were to set up reciprocity with New Zealand on traffic laws, although it would be a State matter, under the new interpretation of the foreign affairs power of the Constitution it would be quite possible for the Commonwealth Government to ratify

a convention with New Zealand about reciprocity without consulting the States, as I believe it should.

The passage of this legislation through the House is a rather interesting demonstration that the States do have a say in treaties and conventions that affect State laws. Therefore, it is important that the State legislatures, not necessarily quickly or simultaneously, in due course approve of the convention so that it can be applicable to that part of Australia. Maybe it is a cumbersome way for the Commonwealth to work; but it is the right way, the better way and the safest way in which to work. I am pleased that the Minister has taken a special interest in it.

Other federations round the world adopt a far more rigid process of observing international conventions than Australia does. Australia should take a leaf out of the books of those federations that have a consultative process between the Federal Government and the respective State constituents. No such machinery exists in this country; it relies simply on communication between Prime Minister and Premier or between Governor-General and Governor, depending upon the nature of the matter.

I recommend to the Minister that he take further interest in the process. I trust that, because of his experience with this particular matter, he might like to examine some others. If possible, I would like him to use his influence to resurrect the Treaties Commission, as I fear for the future of this country, particularly because of the attitude taken by the Federal Government.

Honourable members will have noticed that in recent times the Federal Government has changed the style and title of Her Majesty the Queen. As I understand it, that was done without reference to the States. I believe it should have been referred to the States. It was not a matter of major note in the media. Not only as a matter of courtesy but also because of the relationship between the Queen and the respective States, there should have been consultation.

Changes that were not referred to the States also occurred in a number of other sectors relating to processes of the Federal Government. I trust that when the Minister meets with his fellow-Ministers from other States in relation to suggestions of conforming to international treaties or conventions, he will insist that the matter come before this House if State laws are involved.

As for uniformity for uniformity's sake—care should be taken. As to conforming to conventions and treaties simply because they have been debated in Geneva, the United Nations or wherever conventions are held—I do not believe a convention should be considered as gospel simply because 25 countries have adopted it.

I attended two of those meetings, one in relation to justice and the other in relation to international labour laws. I was amazed and astounded at the ease with which some countries agreed to a convention but were not prepared to adopt it in their own countries and practise the principles of the convention.

Mr Comben: Come on!

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: That is absolutely correct. That was one of the most disturbing factors.

Australians have always believed that if the nation puts its signature to a convention, it has already been adopted by Australia. It has been the practice in Australia that a convention is not adopted until it has been signed and agreed to by every constituent member of the country.

For example, one International Labour Organisation convention has been adopted by almost every country except Australia. That convention relates to the employment of young people in coal mines. The reason why that convention was not adopted was that in New South Wales it allowed electrical apprentices to work in coal mines. That was not considered to be in accordance with the international convention. It was a crazy and stupid provision of the convention, because everyone in New South Wales was happy to see electrical apprentices of 18 or 19 years of age work in coal mines. However,

because those apprentices were considered to be young people in the eyes of the convention, Australia could not ratify the convention. Yet those countries that have virtually slave labour in their coal mines were happy to sign the convention.

I support the Minister and hope that he will continue to take an interest in relation to this matter.

Mr INNES (Sherwood) (10.48 p.m.): I am happy to follow the honourable member for Nundah, who has considerable experience in relation to these matters. At one time the honourable member for Nundah was the Attorney-General of Queensland. He was responsible for some very substantial legal reforms following cautious consideration, and some not-so-substantial reforms followed by cautious consideration.

The honourable member for Salisbury (Mr Goss) failed to make a crucial distinction in relation to the attitude of people on my side of the political fence. Our attitude towards convention is that there is nothing wrong in principle with adopting conventions that clearly deal with international matters. What the Liberal Party opposes is the adoption of conventions that relate purely to domestic matters.

As the honourable member for Nundah (Sir William Knox) has clearly indicated, the history seems to be that in the world there are people who wish to use conventions as a political weapon to impose on other people standards that they have absolutely no intention of following themselves. The tradition in Australia is to whole-heartedly support the passing of laws with the intention that the law shall fully apply to our citizens.

The introduction to the schedule, which incorporates the active provisions of the Bill, refers to the desirability of the development of international trade on the basis of equality and mutual benefit as being an important element in promoting friendly relations. It says—

“...the adoption of uniform rules which govern contracts for the international sale of goods and take into account the different social, economic and legal systems would contribute to the removal of legal barriers in international trade. . .”

The primary function of this legislation is the promotion of uniform standards for international trade.

The honourable member for Salisbury (Mr Goss) would well know the minefield that exists with international law, the rules that relate to the determination of which proper law of contract will apply to the courts and the forum in which the action will be brought, and to the remedies that will be available. It is a specialised minefield of legal operation.

There is nothing wrong with or inconsistent about people of the non-Labor persuasions supporting the introduction of conventions that relate to clearly external matters—international trade, to wit. That is quite different from the introduction of laws that have a purely domestic effect on our own citizens. It is a crucial distinction.

Under the Constitution, the Federal Government was given powers in relation to overseas trade. Certainly, the States retained the law-making power over the law of contract in the domestic situation in each State, and of course each State has its own Sale of Goods Act.

Mr Comben: Come on, let us go home.

Mr INNES: It is all getting a bit hard for the honourable member for Windsor, who prefers the global approach and the smell of the rain forest, which I am partial to myself. Thinking about legal matters at 11 o'clock at night is a bit of a struggle for the honourable member for Windsor. In about two months' time he will no longer have to grapple with these matters at 11 o'clock at night. He can be safely in bed, in a hammock or in his li-lo in the bush.

The legislation is important and substantial and it merits some serious consideration.

I notice that the honourable member for Windsor has a substantial number of yellow letters in front of him, which no doubt have been taking all his time.

Mr Gygar: He is desperate for re-election.

Mr INNES: He is desperate for re-election. I note that the letters bear the new logo of the Labor Party, which has removed the Australian flag—a removal of that well known international indication of Australia's Statehood. I have to introduce an international element into these comments.

To return to the Bill, I point out that it has an international aspect and that is why it is totally consistent to support the passing of a convention that applies to contracts that have some contact with the State of Queensland. It is proper to support the Bill. It is not inconsistent to say that one objects strongly to Australia's entering into conventions without the total agreement of its States for matters of purely domestic operation.

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.54 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions. I was particularly interested to hear the comments of the honourable member for Nundah (Sir William Knox), who is the leader of the Liberal Party in this House. He brought forward reminders of some of the changes by stealth that have been imposed on the Australian people by the Australian Labor Party in Government in the Federal sphere. Some of the things that have occurred in the past tend to be forgotten.

I was interested to hear the honourable member for Nundah refer to Her Majesty the Queen. We forget the era in which Australia had a Prime Minister who took down portraits of the Queen and substituted portraits of himself, and the era in which the word "Commonwealth" was removed from letter-head and paper money. All of these things have been matters of grave concern.

Last week-end, I received a letter from the Royal Australian Navy and was surprised to discover that yet another insidious change had been foisted on the people of Australia. The Royal Australian Naval Reserve, of which I am proud to be a member, is now simply known as the Australian Naval Reserve. These changes are being foisted on the people of Australia by stealth and without reference to the will of the people of Australia.

I thank the honourable member for Salisbury (Mr Goss) for the contribution that he made to the debate. I can assure the honourable member that the Queensland Government foresees no practical impediments in the legislation. By implementing conventions through the enactment of State legislation, the Government is following an example of the proper way in which conventions should be implemented; that is, not through unilateral Commonwealth legislation, as mentioned by the honourable member for Nundah. The Queensland Government recognises that Australia is a federation. The States should be an integral part of the process of ratifying conventions, and this is the safe way—indeed, the correct way—in which that should be done.

In spite of the remarks made this evening by the honourable member for Sherwood (Mr Innes) about the debate on the previous legislation, I can again assure the House that Queensland will not adopt a policy of uniformity merely for the sake of uniformity. I am pleased that the parliamentary leader of the Liberal Party (Sir William Knox) also agrees with the attitude adopted by the Queensland Government in that respect.

Motion (Mr Harper) 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.

Clauses 1 to 6, as read, agreed to.

Clause 7—Evidence of certain matters—

Sir WILLIAM KNOX (10.59 p.m.): Something is either remiss, or I have missed the point in relation to possible amendments to the convention at any future time. I

ask the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General (Mr Harper) whether, if the convention is changed, it will be necessary for the matter to be referred again to Parliament.

My experience tells me that occasionally conventions are reviewed by international bodies and amendments are made. In the light of that, I presume that either a process is incorporated in the legislation presently before the Committee or it will be necessary for the Government to bring forward amending legislation at a later date. I had the idea that the schedule could be amended, but I may have misinterpreted that. Perhaps the Minister could advise me on this matter. The schedule is in fact the convention and, if it is amended from time to time, what is the process by which that is attended to in this Chamber?

Mr HARPER: The Bill that is before the Committee is in accordance with the schedule, and if the schedule is to be changed it will be necessary to return the legislation to this Chamber to amend it.

Clause 7, as read, agreed to.

Schedule and preamble, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House): I move—
“That the House do now adjourn.”

Occupation Licences, Bribie Island; N. W. and L. C. Turnbull

Mr COMBEN (Windsor) (11.2 p.m.): Queenslanders have recently heard many tales of this National Party Government's looking after friends and being looked after by friends. It is sad that yet another sordid scandal of misuse of public land is about to be revealed, a squalid tale of a \$5m-plus gift of environmentally sensitive land to friends of the National Party—another Lindeman Island!

A decade ago, part of Bribie Island was promised to the Queensland people as a national park. The land which was to be declared national park was 5 000 ha of vacant Crown land on the western part of the island fronting Pumicestone Passage—

Mr Newton interjected.

Mr COMBEN: If I were the honourable member for Caboolture, I would be careful.

As I was about to say, it was land over which occupation licences under the Land Act had been granted to two brothers, Messrs N. W. and L. C. Turnbull.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr COMBEN: The honourable member's turn will come and everyone will listen with interest to the answers. He is already hung.

Neither I nor any other person denies that there have been family connections with occupation licences 454 and 445 and the Turnbull family stretching back almost a century. But such a lengthy connection does not present any type of kinship title as proposed by one very stupid National Party member who is sitting on the other side of the House trying to interject. The land is undeniably held by the Turnbulls by virtue of an occupation licence, the essence of which is that the licence can be determined at any time by the Minister, without compensation, although reasonable compensation is generally paid for improvements that have been carried out.

In this instance, because the Turnbull brothers are, according to local residents,

well connected with the National Party, their occupation licences 445 and 454 were not simply and abruptly determined and compensation paid for the only improvements—a ramshackle old house, an ancient tin machinery shed and a disused dip, compensation for which might amount, at a most liberal estimate, to a maximum of \$10,000. Instead of this normal and rational approach, the National Party Government, after vacillating for years, has decided to determine only 4 790 ha of the occupation licences for national park purposes, whilst re-licensing to the Turnbolls 210 ha as a special lease, which they can freehold by spending \$210,000 on improvements.

Such prime Bribe Island real estate fronting on to Pumicestone Passage will, if developed in any way, be worth between \$5m and \$7m, which is not a bad bit of compensation to receive when there is no moral or legal right to compensation; not a bad return for the expenditure of \$210,000. Even that money will be totally recouped when the land is freeholded, developed and sold.

Mr Newton interjected.

Mr COMBEN: I am sorry that I cannot hear what the member for Caboolture has to say. I would be fascinated to hear what he is saying. He has a lot of explaining to do and I want him to enter the debate.

This is the sort of compensation that only friends of the National Party in Queensland can receive. The only parallels that I can find in Australia for such generous and shonky dealings are the activities of the Dodgy brothers in the television program *Australia You're Standing In It*.

In recent months this matter has been raised and trenchantly criticised by *The Northern Times* and the Caboolture shire chairman, Councillor Alex Barr.

Mr Newton: He wouldn't be a member of the Labor Party, would he?

Mr COMBEN: No, he is not.

It is to the credit of both David Bentley of *The Northern Times* and Councillor Barr that the questions that all Queenslanders want answered have been raised in debate at the Caboolture Shire Council and reported.

Something sinister is going on. The Government needs to state why people who have no right to compensation are being compensated to the tune of between \$5m and \$7m. With local residents stating that the Turnbull brothers have strong and close National Party connections, I can only wonder if this compensation is in fact another bribe or sling to friends to keep them quiet. In comparison with this scandal, even the \$400,000 bribe to the Premier pales into insignificance.

The facts are there. They remain undenied and are even admitted in newspaper articles. The imputation can be drawn. The Government must answer or it will again be condemned by its silence. Is this compensation a bribe to keep local National Party members and friends quiet over the loss of grazing land in an election year? Is this multimillion dollar land grant the price the Government pays its supporters for returning land to the people in the form of national parks? The people of Queensland need answers—five million answers—from this Government.

Federal Budget

Mr McPHIE (Toowoomba North) (11.7 p.m.): Much has been said in this House today about Budgets. Very briefly I wish to touch on some aspects of the Federal Budget that are of concern to all Australians. Because the Federal Budget contains a trend in the distribution of tax contributions that must be condemned, all Australians should be made aware of these facts. Before the introduction of the Federal Budget the Prime Minister told the nation that a state of war existed. Some of the points from the Federal Budget that were highlighted in the press were delays in pension increases, cuts in family allowances, cuts in foreign aid and cuts in defence spending and a whole host of other areas.

Increased taxes are to gather in another \$1.5 billion, none of which will be used to pay the debts of this nation. There is to be no reduction in the operations of the ALP Government down in Canberra. In fact, members of the Federal Government congratulated themselves on the fact that the 1986-87 Budget had a deficit of only \$3.5 billion. In time that will be added to the overall debt of this nation. That is something to be roundly condemned. From 1901 to 1982 the accumulated national debt of this country was only \$23 billion. In the term of the present administration since 1982, that figure has increased threefold to \$65 billion.

Something is very dreadfully wrong with what is being done with the money that is being gathered. Tax-payers' money has been used to increase grants to no end of political advisory groups. My colleagues the members for Aspley and Mount Gravatt and I have listed them. My colleague the member for Mulgrave spoke about them even this evening. The Federal Government is handing out tax-payers' money to all sorts of radical environmental and feminist groups.

The Federal Government has doubled its funding to UNESCO. Because that is a discredited organisation and because Australia's ambassador to that institution is a former discredited Prime Minister of this country, Gough Whitlam, I want to speak about this matter. Not only has he got that job in Europe at UNESCO for which he draws a tremendous salary by Australian standards but also he is given regular first-class trips back to Australia every year to take his place as a member of the commission on constitutional review. He would be the highest paid and costliest world tripper this earth has ever seen.

Mr Borbidge: Campaigning for the Labor Party at the tax-payers' expense.

Mr McPHIE: Yes, that is what it is.

There is no end of tax-payers' money going to the backers of an Australian republic, something that is not required or wanted by the majority of Australians. A host of other minority groups are dipping into the tax funds. The Federal Government has even gone to the extent of giving tax-payers' funds to the gay community. That is to be roundly condemned.

I have spoken before in this Chamber about UNESCO. The Federal Budget that was brought down two weeks ago more than doubled Australia's contribution to UNESCO from \$2.1m last year to \$4.7m this year. The United Kingdom, the United States of America and Singapore have withdrawn from that organisation because it is not functioning. Yet, Australia has increased its contribution of tax-payer's money to that body, which is heavily oriented towards the Soviet Bloc.

UNESCO is manipulated by communists, and spreads anti-West propaganda. It has the most extravagant expenditure of any body in the world, and a record of non-achievement of goals.

In fact, about the only thing that UNESCO does of any significance is turn out more than 300 million pages of reports every year. It is an absolute waste of money. It is bankrupt financially and functionally.

UNESCO is run by a director-general from Senegal named Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow. He has held that position since 1974. Mr Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow is not only corrupt but also uses all sorts of devious means to support his regime. He employs KGB spies who have been sacked by the KGB in France.

Mr Menzel: They need a public accounts committee there.

Mr McPHIE: A public accounts committee is probably needed there because they are an accounting failure.

The bureaucracy in Paris alone costs 75 per cent of the \$373m budget. Mr M'Bow is living in a penthouse of his own design and construction that was modelled in the UNESCO headquarters building in Paris.

If UNESCO is not a corrupt organisation, I have never heard of one. Australian tax-payers' money is being used to support UNESCO, yet this nation's friends—the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Singapore—have withdrawn from the organisation. The Labor Government in Canberra is paying money to support that body. I have no idea why tax-payers' money should be spent in that way—

Time expired.

Johnstone Shire Council

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (11.12 p.m.): I want to put a few facts straight regarding accusations made against the Johnstone Shire Council. That innuendo is an attempt at bringing disgrace upon a group of men who have been elected by the public to do a job. The policy of that council was laid down. The public accepted that policy, and the council is carrying it out.

First of all, I want to rebut the accusations made against Councillor Les Scheu in regard to his flying down to Brisbane at a company's expense. He did that because that company had made a written submission to the council that it examine some types of housing that it wanted to build in north Queensland and advise whether it would be acceptable to the council.

Any responsible shire council would naturally want to consider any submissions or offers made to it. The council gave full approval for Councillor Scheu to fly down to Brisbane at that company's expense. While he was in Brisbane on holidays, Councillor Scheu met with the shire clerk and they carried out that inspection.

Councillor Scheu rejected the proposal in the report that he made to the local authority because after the recent cyclone the council was inundated with offers from building companies wanting to set up a type of housing that was supposed to be cyclone-proof and would end all the fears of people living in cyclone zones.

The council, as part of its responsibilities, had to consider all the submissions that were made to it so as to act in the best interests of not only the council but also the residents of north Queensland.

I turn to the accusations regarding Councillor Pervan. Councillor Pervan and his brother commenced a project in Innisfail that was going to satisfy a need in the community. That building was commenced long before the cyclone. I know that the Premier and the majority of Cabinet Ministers, when they were in Innisfail, saw a video of the cyclone damage that was caused in Innisfail and the flooding that occurred there. The placement of the fill for that building and the payment for it was done within the letter of the law.

Another matter that I wanted to clarify was the accusation against Mr Paul McNamara regarding his updating of the by-laws of the local shire council. Mr McNamara is a very competent person. He is qualified to do the job, and he carried it out. It was approved by the council and the council's legal advisers.

The revised by-laws were then submitted to the Local Government Department in Brisbane, which approved of them. So, there is nothing wrong with the ability of Mr McNamara. The job was carried out to a tee. If that were not the case, the State Government would not have approved of the changes to and the updating of the by-laws.

Those accusations have caused a stir in other shires in north Queensland. The people in those shires feel that members of Parliament should be carrying out the job of helping the local authorities in the area and in the rest of the State. In the future local government will be going through harder economic times than it is at present. The outcry has been so great that it has been taken up by the local newspapers. I would like to quote from *The Cairns Post* editorial dated Friday, 22 August 1986, which states—

“Parliament has often been referred to as ‘a coward's castle’. The title is appropriate. Parliamentarians can launch a scurrilous attack against a political

opponent or someone for whom they bear a grudge, knowing full well there is no basis of truth or fact in their allegations."

I will table that document, together with an article from *FNQ Sunday* dated 24 August 1986, which appears under the heading "Striking a blow for democracy." The article is written in a section called "Gunn Shots" that appears every week. The article states—

"'Is it just a mean streak in them, an inferiority complex or just that they feel they are so inadequate at the job they should be doing, that they have to take it out on someone, generally Mr Average Citizen, who can't fight back.' I'll tell you what the trouble is Cr Marsh. The one you are thinking of is completely inept, and in the normal business world would be just about unemployable."

That is the sort of thing that is bringing disrepute on the politicians of north Queensland.

Mr De Lacy: Who is the one they are talking of?

Mr EATON: I do not know. His name is not mentioned in the article. I think that most people in north Queensland would be aware of that situation.

I wish to table statements written by Mr Don Brooks, who is working for the Johnstone Shire Council. They all refer to non-Labor councillors. I would like to know if honourable members would accept the council's invitation to attend a council meeting. I am sure that the council would suspend council orders to allow any politician to raise any subject that he wished to discuss with them, whether it be mismanagement or any other policy matter regarding the future of the council. The council is carrying out the policies that it promised to the people it would carry out if it were elected. It was elected by the people. When one drives into Innisfail, one can see the progress that is going on in the town. The Johnstone shire councillors are carrying out the policy that they promised.

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

Roadworks, Greenslopes Electorate

Mrs HARVEY (Greenslopes) (11.17 p.m.): I refer to a rather ugly situation that has arisen in the Greenslopes electorate due to the fact that an election is looming. This situation results from a lot of misinformation and downright political mischief concocted by my political opponent. It relates to proposed road changes and rumours about road changes in the Coorparoo area.

I refer to the proposal that Noela and Mansfield Streets be made one-way. Because there is a feeling of insecurity in my electorate regarding this situation, I wish to outline where the National Party Government stands in regard to this road proposal. The local Liberal alderman, Mr Jeffreys, and the former Liberal member for Greenslopes have concocted a story so mischievous that their actions are totally reprehensible.

Mr Menzel: They might have done it in the toilet.

Mrs HARVEY: Yes. I do not know the full story, but I did hear it going around several years ago.

Their actions have caused a great deal of business worry and insecurity. They have endangered the sales of business properties and destroyed business confidence in the area, purely by means of a rather malicious rumour published in the local newspaper for the sport of creating political mischief.

I am referring to the fact that there will be a flyover constructed from Stanley Street East into Coorparoo in line with the State Government's policy to eliminate railway level crossings. That will be of great benefit to the area and of assistance to the many high school children who cross the Coorparoo railway line. Following on from that there is a proposal that traffic should travel one way up Cavendish Road and then hook back along Harries Street and over that very same flyover.

When I first became the representative of this electorate three years ago I discovered a proposal to turn Noela and Mansfield Streets—two very quiet and attractive suburban

streets—into busy one-way streets. I made very strong representations to the Main Roads Department stating that that should not happen. I called in the local traders who also thought that as it was a very worthwhile proposal they would support it. The Main Roads Department accepted my proposal. Many of the local business people were aware of my stance.

As far as I was concerned, that was the end of the matter and I heard no more. However, more recently, the political people to whom I referred were reported in the local newspaper as saying that certain things were going to happen and that it was the fault of the State Government. On checking with the Minister for Main Roads, I found that it had nothing to do with the State Government. The matter is a council decision concerning council roads. The council was very quick to pass the buck. The council said that, as the Government is spending 85 per cent of the money, it is the Government's decision. The Government said that as council roads are involved, it is the council's decision. The matter is going backwards and forwards. The council is being totally dishonest.

Mr Henderson: Is it a main road?

Mrs HARVEY: It is not a main road. It is not a State Government declared road.

Over two years ago I proposed that, instead of Noela Street and Mansfield Street, Holdsworth Street, which is the street behind the Myer store, merely needed to be widened. The Brisbane City Council has a 5-acre depot in Holdsworth Street. I call upon the council to give a little bit of that Holdsworth Street depot, which it would not miss, for road-widening in Holdsworth Street. That would solve the problem.

Rumours have circulated about shopping centres and other areas being resumed. That is total nonsense and cannot and will not happen. The ball is in the city council's court. If it were to hand over a small section of the Holdsworth Street depot that hooks into Harries Road, traffic can travel up Cavendish Road, into Holdsworth Street behind the Myer shopping centre and back down Harries Road. As the area is a light industrial area, it would have no effect on local residents in ordinary homes or on the shopping centre. That would provide a very worthwhile solution to the problem. I have the support of the Minister for Main Roads on this matter. He realises that this is the only way to solve the problem. The area is crowded and very few options are open.

I resent the harm and upset that was caused by the two mischiefmongers who wanted to stir up trouble. I believe that the local alderman has been putting pressure on the city council committee to take Noela and Mansfield Streets as the option, whereas the Main Roads Department knows that it is not a viable option for the residents. The matter has reached a stalemate. That means that the council must get its act together and follow the Government's proposal. I await the council's decision. If it cannot provide a decision, stronger action might need to be taken.

Time expired.

Consumer Guard

Ms WARNER (Kurilpa) (11.22 p.m.): I rise to speak on the ongoing saga of Consumer Guard, which is a registered product owned by Delabridge Pty Ltd and a very worrying concept.

Delabridge is very clever at advertising its product, Consumer Guard, but if the recent experiences of Waterworks Waterbeds and Combined Waterbeds and hundreds of customers are evaluated, the cleverness is entirely in the advertising and not in the provision of goods or services.

Basically, Consumer Guard is offering retail traders the right to exhibit a sign or logo that states that businesses have paid a certain amount of money. Retailers should be warned that all that they are receiving is the right to display a sign. The amount of money requested from retailers varies enormously.

In April, Mike Geary and Associates, of Combined Waterbeds, was approached by Consumer Guard with offers of business amounting to \$100,000 for a payment of \$3,600. The four companies involved in Combined Waterbeds are Waterbed Factory, Waterbed Bargains, Regal Waterbeds and Pacific Waterbeds. Originally, Mike Geary thought that the \$3,600 subscription to Consumer Guard would cover the four outlets, although he had signed a document that stated otherwise. The main "come-on" used by Consumer Guard was the promise of further business that was generated by Waterworks Waterbeds' going into receivership. Consumer Guard provided disappointed customers of Waterworks Waterbeds with letters of credit to go to Combined Waterbeds retailers to receive goods to the amount stated.

Mr Alison: Have you ever used a waterbed?

Ms WARNER: No, never.

Combined Waterbeds began to supply the goods, expecting reimbursement from Consumer Guard. It sent a bill to Consumer Guard but was then informed that until the full amount of \$14,400 was paid—that is, \$3,600 for each of the subsidiary companies—no reimbursement for the provision of services would be provided.

Mike Geary became very sceptical about the integrity of Consumer Guard and refused to supply any more beds. Combined Waterbeds further found that the Consumer Guard logo was acting as a disincentive to customers, who were very wary of anything to do with Consumer Guard.

The main problem with this whole concept is that it is very hard to pin down Consumer Guard. It appears to act just within legal bounds, but there is a strong smell of the operation of a protection racket. Consumer Guard seems to indulge in the old thimble and pea trick, fobbing off one trader's debts on to another trader without ever having to come up with any hard cash itself.

Its advertising is mysterious. The words sound good. It claims that it is offering protection. However, it fails to state what that protection amounts to. One of the claims made by Consumer Guard is that it will act as a referee in a dispute between a trader and a consumer. Consumer Guard also suggests that it has the power to establish an ethical course of action. Consumer Guard is hopelessly compromised by that claim. Because it has accepted money from the trader, it can hardly claim to be impartial.

The fourth part of Consumer Guard's advertisement states that within a specified period of time it will rectify the matter for a customer. However, at no time does it state what that specified period of time is.

A further problem exists in relation to Consumer Guard's method of selling. Consumer Guard recently approached a swimming-pool contractor and suggested that he should pay it \$600 per pool to use the Consumer Guard logo. He hesitated because he regarded that as a large amount of money. Consumer Guard then suggested to him that, if he did not pay for a logo, all of his competitors would display the logo and he would be branded as an unethical trader. That method of selling, rackets in which a detrimental result is threatened if money is not handed over, certainly smacks of protection rackets.

Last week Consumer Guard spent approximately \$11,800 in attacking me personally for doing what I was elected to do, namely, raising matters of public interest in Parliament. I will not be swayed from that responsibility, regardless of the advertising power of Consumer Guard. I intend to continue to raise such matters in the House.

If Consumer Guard had spent that \$11,800 on reimbursing disappointed customers and traders, instead of making rude and aggressive comments about me, it would have received favourable publicity. Consumer Guard is obviously scared. It protests too much. No reputable company would over-react in such a hysterical manner. I assure Consumer Guard that it has highlighted its own problems, not mine.

The inability of the Consumer Affairs Bureau to achieve satisfaction for the dissatisfied customers of Consumer Guard traders is another sad feature of the whole

matter. Consumer Guard has made promises to the Consumer Affairs Bureau that have not yet been honoured.

Time expired.

Mount Thompson Crematorium

Mr HENDERSON (Mount Gravatt) (11.27 p.m.): I mention the ongoing saga of the Mount Thompson crematorium and summarise the points that I raised on Thursday, 21 August 1986, during the Adjournment debate.

A few weeks after the 1985 Brisbane City Council election, Brisbane Crematorium Ltd applied for rezoning of special lease crematorium land to residential. People who live within the area of the crematorium were unaware of that proposal until signs appeared on the land. However, Brisbane Crematorium Ltd had discussed the proposal with the local Liberal alderman, who failed to inform her constituents about what was happening.

An action committee was organised and a chairman was appointed. The Liberal alderman did nothing whatsoever to consult that committee until she was challenged at a public meeting to explain this extraordinary occurrence.

Brisbane Crematorium Ltd later consulted the council about the implications of the town plan. The action committee requested equal time for discussion of the proposal after news of the meeting was leaked from city hall.

During my last speech on the Mount Thompson crematorium I had incorporated into *Hansard* a letter from the chairman of the action committee, Mrs Barbara Hay, requesting equal discussion time with the Brisbane City Council. That meeting was subsequently held, and the action committee was informed about what was happening.

The stage was then reached at which the council's committees had considered the application. The full council rejected the application by Brisbane Crematorium Ltd to rezone the land.

The final episode of the saga occurred during that full council meeting, because a most extraordinary thing occurred. The local Liberal alderman sat through the entire proceedings and said nothing. That was in quite dramatic contrast to her actions over the ill-fated Mount Gravatt East dump. In that case she seconded the proposal in council, and in fact sang its praises to the full accompaniment of an orchestra. However, when the proposal by Brisbane Crematorium Ltd came before the council, the alderman sat and said nothing.

That saga raises several serious questions. Why was the proposal by Brisbane Crematorium Ltd lodged with such indecent haste, so soon after the council election at which the Liberals were elected, when a similar proposal was rejected by the previous ALP council? That is an interesting question. Many people would say that one of the reasons is the family connection between a person in the council and a person at Brisbane Crematorium Ltd.

Why did the Liberal alderman make no attempt to advise constituents of the application of which she personally knew? The same thing happened with the ill-fated Mount Gravatt East dump. The first that the citizens knew about the dump was when they read about it in *The Courier-Mail*. That is despite the fact that the local alderman had seconded it and, as I said before, spoken enthusiastically in council in support of it.

Why did the Liberal alderman make no attempt whatsoever, until challenged to do so at a public meeting, to consult the action committee after it was formed to protect the rights of residents?

Why did the Liberal alderman not voluntarily extend a courtesy to the action committee to meet with the council when BCL was afforded this opportunity?

Why did the action committee have to depend on a City Hall leak to find out about that meeting in the first place? Why did the Liberal alderman not advise the committee?

Why did the Liberal alderman say nothing in council when the matter came up for debate? In fact, she remained totally mute.

A number of situations arise here. I do not believe that the council is fair dinkum in rejecting this proposal, anyway. The rejection decision is purely cosmetic in an attempt to make the proposal appealing to a restless constituency, in a desperate gamble to get the State election out of the way. The Liberal council did not want any backlash against Liberal candidates in Chatsworth, Mansfield or Mount Gravatt.

The defence of this decision in the court will be gutless, cosmetic, superficial, cheap and amateurish. The Liberals are counting on the fact that they can fool the majority of the people most of the time, but I believe that the people will not be fooled. They are well informed, thoughtful and much more intelligent than the council gives them credit for. Therefore, I believe that this cheap political gimmick will not pay off.

Motion (Mr Wharton) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.32 p.m.