Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 9 APRIL 1987

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

THURSDAY, 9 APRIL 1987

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. K. R. Lingard, Fassifern) read prayers and took the chair at 10 a.m.

DEATH OF MR D. B. JENNINGS, MLA

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, it is with deep regret that I advise the House of the death of Mr Douglas Bernard Jennings, member for the electoral district of Southport. It is proposed that the appropriate condolence motion be moved on the next sitting day. As a mark of respect to the late honourable gentleman, the sitting is suspended to 11 o'clock a.m. this day.

Sitting suspended from 10.02 to 11 a.m.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Moreton Island, Sand-mining and Declaration as National Park

From **Mr Warburton** (20 001 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will reject mining proposals on Moreton Island and declare unsettled areas as national park.

Relocation of Mackay Passenger Railway Station

From **Mr Randell** (4 202 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take action to relocate the Mackay passenger railway station to within three kilometres of the city centre.

Relocation of Railway Deviation in Mackay Area

From **Mr Randell** (419 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure that consideration is given to relocating the railway deviation in the Mackay area so as not to create serious problems from any interaction of the railway and cane tramway systems.

Legislation to Prevent Destruction of Small Businesses by Industrial Action

From **Mr Henderson** (5 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will provide legislation to ensure that unions operate within the law so as not to destroy small businesses by industrial action.

Patient Transit Scheme

From **Mr Campbell** (20 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take immediate action under the new Patient Transit Scheme to reinstate previous benefits to country patients receiving specialist care.

Maintenance of Existing Award System and Independence of Industrial Commission

From **Mr Campbell** (10 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure the maintenance of the existing award system and the independence of the Industrial Commission.

A similar petition was received from **Mr McLean** (16 096 signatories).

Retention of Public Ownership of Great Barrier Reef Islands

From **Mr Sherlock** (55 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure the retention of public ownership of Great Barrier Reef islands.

Exploitation of Native Fauna and Action to Improve Koala Habitats

From **Mr Innes** (281 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take action to ensure that there is no exploitation of native fauna particularly koalas and that action is taken to improve koala habitats and ensure adequate research.

Legalisation of Brothels

From **Mr Newton** (49 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take action to ensure that there is no legalisation of brothels.

Petitions received.

OVERTIME PAID IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Return to Order

The following paper was laid on the table—

Return to an Order made by the House, showing the amount of overtime paid in each Government department (all funds) in 1985-86.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table—

Order in Council under the Forestry Act 1959-1984

Report of the Brisbane Market Trust for the year ended 30 June 1986.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Report by Department of Transport on Easter Road Accident Trends

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (11.03 a.m.), by leave: The road toll continues to be a matter of deep concern within the community and it is particularly important that this concern be focused on times of heightened danger, such as the forthcoming Easter holiday period.

It is distressing that a time which holds great religious and moral significance is accompanied by the tragedy and heartache of road accidents. As a measure of the Government's concern for the problem, I arranged for the road safety research group of the Department of Transport to prepare a report on Easter road accident trends.

The report, which I now table for the benefit of members, examines Easter road accidents for the last 10 years and analyses them in terms of road-user types, age, sex, accident location, day of the week, time of day and blood alcohol concentration.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr LANE: I draw the attention of honourable members to some of the major findings of the report. Young road-users aged between 17 and 29 have a significantly higher than normal fatality rate during Easter. Over 70 per cent of all Easter fatalities are under 30 years of age. Those aged between 17 and 29 years make up approximately 60 per cent of Easter road deaths—some 17 per cent higher for this group than for the rest of the year. Perhaps the reason for this is that Easter is the last warm-weather holiday period for the year, and many young people take to the roads to make the best of it. The sad reality, however, is that increased exposure results in increased carnage. This year, the Easter period also coincides with school holidays and Anzac Day.

The research report shows that more than 72 per cent of Easter road fatalities for the last 10 years have occurred on highways outside Brisbane or other cities and towns. The worst time for road deaths is between 6 p.m. and midnight, with the worst day being Easter Thursday. Of the 60 per cent of Easter fatalities tested for blood alcohol concentration, approximately one-third had readings above the legal limit.

I take this opportunity to urge the motoring public, particularly young drivers, to be responsible on Queensland roads during this important but sometimes fatal time of year.

For the forthcoming Easter period, I would like to leave this Parliament and the public with the following message—

> "Don't drink and drive, don't speed excessively, use extra caution on country roads and wear your seat-belt. Be responsible and make it a safe driving Easter."

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Shelburne Bay Silica-mining Project

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister for the Arts) (11.05 a.m.), by leave: I refer to a report in this morning's edition of the *Courier-Mail* in which the Federal Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Environment, Mr Cohen, makes certain comments about a letter that he sent last November to the company involved in the proposed Shelburne Bay silica mine.

In that letter to the company Pacific Mining Limited, Mr Cohen states that his department has considered the environmental impact statement submitted by the company and has prepared a list of conditions which would be imposed on any mine at Shelburne Bay.

I table that letter and the attachment.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents on the table.

Mr AUSTIN: The company has since given a written undertaking that it will abide by the conditions listed in this letter. According to this morning's newspaper report, Mr Cohen says that his letter has been misinterpreted by me as meaning that, if his department's conditions are met, the proposed mining operation would be allowed to proceed.

If I have misinterpreted the letter, so have the companies involved in this project and so would any other normal person reading Mr Cohen's correspondence. When a Minister writes to a company and says, "These are the environmental conditions for your project", and the company subsequently says that it will abide by the conditions, it is perfectly reasonable for that company to expect that it will be allowed to proceed. But that, according to Mr Cohen, is a misinterpretation.

He now says that the Shelburne Bay project cannot proceed on environmental grounds, but he refuses to specify what those grounds are. What are those environmental grounds if they are not the ones listed in Mr Cohen's letter of last November? What is the point of listing environmental conditions at all, if they do not have any bearing on whether or not the project will be approved?

If the Federal Government does not want this area to be disturbed under any circumstances, why was this not made clear to the mining companies at the outset, before they spent $5m on preparations for the project, including detailed environmental impact statements? The companies have been led up the garden path by Hawke, Keating and Cohen; they have been completely deceived into believing that there was some prospect of Federal Government approval for this project.

This is one of the most irresponsible and cowardly acts ever perpetrated by a Federal Government on a private-enterprise venture. Mr Cohen obviously cannot be trusted, he

is obviously not a man of his word, and he has totally destroyed his credibility as far as the mining industry is concerned.

Mr Comben: What about your word?

Mr AUSTIN: The honourable member for Windsor has much to say about this project. For his benefit, I will read out the attachment to the letter so that he will understand. It is in Mr Cohen's words, headed "Shelburne Bay Silica Sand Project Recommended Environmental Conditions", and states—

> "The Shelburne Silica Joint Venture undertake the Shelburne Bay Silica sand proposal in a manner consistent with the undertakings given in the EIS."

What does that mean to the honourable member? Does it mean that one cannot mine? It continues—

> "Any modification to the proposal described in the EIS be brought to the attention of the Department for further assessment. Commonwealth approvals be limited to operations for the mining of silica sand from Conical and Saddle Hills within ML156."

He even names the mining lease—as to where it should occur. He continues—

> "The Shelburne Silica Joint Venture limit, as far as practicable, access roads and clearing within the mining lease."

Why would anyone tell someone as to what that person can do with his access roads if he is not going to grant that person a lease? Mr Cohen talks about a temporary causeway—

> "The temporary causeway be retained and used as the main construction access corridor to Rodney Island until completion of the conveyor construction to and from Rodney Island. The removal of the causeway to be in accordance with and following advice from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority."

They have already accepted that there is going to be mining. Now they are telling them that they have to remove the causeway. The attachment continues—

> "A clause be included in the contract for the construction of the offloading conveyor to ensure minimal environmental damage to Rodney Island."

That is further recognition of the fact that there will be mining. It continues—

> "Water table drawdown be monitored and the results be made available to the Department on a biannual basis."

Why would anyone want to monitor the water-table if he was not going to be doing the mining? I simply ask those questions.

Mr Comben interjected.

Mr AUSTIN: The honourable member is opposed to jobs. Mr Cohen's statement continues—

> "Details of specific rehabilitation measures proposed be made available to the Department as soon as they are finalised."

The Federal Government is talking about rehabilitation. However, Mr Cohen claims that he had no intention of ever approving the mining. It is a disgrace and he simply cannot be trusted.

Mr Cohen comes from the land of doublespeak. He says one thing when he really means another, and then he accuses others of making the wrong interpretation.

This morning, we hear that the Prime Minister and his Government are suddenly concerned about unemployment, particularly the long-term unemployed.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr AUSTIN: And we have Opposition members opposing development programs that will create jobs. What utter hypocrisy from a Federal Government that has thrown out a perfectly legitimate project.

Mr Comben: You are selling out.

Mr AUSTIN: What would that honourable member say if one of his sons wanted a job up there? Would he be saying on some spurious grounds that the project ought to be thrown out? It is utter hypocrisy. This is a perfectly legitimate project that will create jobs and earn millions of dollars in export earnings, yet it has been thrown out on some spurious environmental grounds to appease people such as the honourable member who do not give a damn about creating work in the community.

Mr Hawke beats his breast and sanctimoniously declares that we have got to be concerned about unemployment. At the same time he says that the development at Shelburne Bay, which will create employment, cannot go ahead because it will affect 42 hectares out of a 76 600 hectare dune-field. Twelve hectares of the 42 hectares are bare sand, without any vegetation whatsoever. That is 42 hectares out of 76 000 hectares.

Mr Warburton: What about Moreton Island?

Mr AUSTIN: If you want to talk about Moreton Island, I will come to that in a moment.

Seeing that we are talking about sand-mining, I point out that Opposition members are for ever going to the press and saying, "We demand a public inquiry. We demand a public inquiry." We had a public inquiry into Moreton Island, and then they say, "We don't accept its findings."

Many other projects will be frustrated in this way because of the Hawke Government's infatuation with the greenie movement.

For the record—the employment that will be created by the Shelburne Bay project is as follows—

> 2 600 man-weeks of work on site for construction workers, with a maximum work-force of 80;
>
> a further 2 000 man-weeks of work during the construction phase involved with offsite fabrication for the project;
>
> 900 man-weeks of work in Cairns—

Where is the honourable member for Cairns? There are 900 man-weeks in his city and he has been silent about it—

> and Brisbane for engineering consultants and onsite inspection at Shelburne Bay;
>
> 400 man-weeks of work in Cairns for people involved in the transport, hospitality and service industries.

In addition, the actual operation of the mine will provide approximately 40 full-time jobs.

This is an environmentally safe and economically viable project that will provide substantial benefits for this State and for the people of this State. The Queensland Government is determined that it should proceed without delay before potential customers and markets for the products of the Shelburne Bay operation are lost to this country for ever.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr HAYWARD (Caboolture) (11.13 a.m.), by leave: Mr Speaker, in media reports last night and again this morning, the Chairman of the Expo Authority, Sir Llew Edwards, attacked my reputation and integrity. His unjustified personal attacks followed revelations that I made in this House in Tuesday's Adjournment debate about what I believe to be the administrative and financial incompetence displayed by the Expo Authority in its handling of one aspect of Expo arrangements.

Mr Speaker, Sir Llew Edwards described my comments as misinformed and reprehensible. I take great personal exception to his remarks which call into question my honesty.

In his personal attack on me in the media, Sir Llew said that the travel agents I referred to in my speech were misinformed about the exclusive deal with World Projects Corporation. There is only one way that misinformation could be spread if the Expo Authority itself circulated advice to travel agents outlining the WPC exclusive deal.

Sir Llew has not disputed the validity of the telexes from travel agents complaining about the WPC deal. He has still not explained how they were misinformed and who misinformed them. Instead, he has chosen to describe me as being misinformed and reprehensible instead of explaining how these American travel agents came to believe that there was an exclusive arrangement between WPC and Expo 88.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. Registration of Fork-lifts and Tractors

Mr FITZGERALD asked the Minister for Transport—

"With reference to the answer to Question No. 1 given by him on 8 April—

(1) Do forklifts and tractors used in sawmill yards and at packing sheds on farms have to be registered under the Motor Vehicle Control Act?

(2) If so, will he exempt vehicle owners from paying the registration portion of the charge on vehicles not used on public roads?"

Mr LANE: (1 and 2) The honourable member would be aware from the answer given yesterday by the Honourable the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General concerning this matter that a number of legal issues need to be resolved.

At the present time, the Solicitor-General is preparing urgent legal advice on a number of these issues, including the definition of "public place" in terms of the Motor Vehicles Control Act 1975. However, if sawmill yards and/or packing sheds on farms are not open to access by the public, vehicles operating within the confines of these areas would not be required to be registered as recreational vehicles under the Motor Vehicles Control Act.

As indicated by my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, the decision to which the honourable member refers is subject to appeal. When the legal position on this matter is clarified, I shall arrange to have the honourable member informed accordingly.

2. Closure of Snapper Rocks Road, Rainbow Bay

Mr GATELY asked the Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying—

"(1) Is he aware a restaurant operator trading as Doyle's on the Beach has indicated he is desirous of having Snapper Rocks Road, Rainbow Bay closed so he can build an extension of his restaurant over this road so as to allow direct access onto the beach?

(2) Is he aware that any such closure would disadvantage Rainbow Bay Surf Life Saving Club which is located north of this restaurant?

(3) Is he aware a large number of electors of Currumbin object to such a possible closure?

(4) Will he assure this House that no such closure will be allowed?"

Mr GLASSON: (1 to 4) There is no record in the Department of Lands of any application for permanent closure of Snapper Rocks Road, Rainbow Bay, in the vicinity of Local Government (Surf Lifesaving) Reserve R. 1081.

Should such an application be made, the Department of Lands will investigate the matter and submit a recommendation to me for consideration by Executive Council. Any objections to closure of the road will be taken into consideration by the Department of Lands in its recommendation.

3. Upgrading of Pacific Highway between Tugun and Nerang

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

"(1) Is he aware of the high volume of traffic using the Pacific highway between Tugun and Nerang and the urgent need to upgrade this highway to four lanes so as to avoid long delays during holiday periods?

(2) In view of the expected higher volume of traffic which will be generated during Expo 88, will he arrange for an early commencement of the upgrading of this section of the highway?"

Mr HINZE: (1 and 2) I am aware of the high volumes of traffic between Tugun and Nerang. It is evident from the recently completed Gold Coast transportation study that this is a high-priority section for upgrading to four lanes.

Main Roads has programmed works to provide this four-laning south of Nerang and interchanges at the major intersections for implementation on a priority basis over the next few years. The honourable member will be aware that work is already in progress at the Mudgeeraba interchange, and this will be followed by progressive improvements to the limit of funds available.

4. Land Tax

Sir WILLIAM KNOX asked the Premier and Treasurer—

"(1) Is he in a position to advise the House when a review of the incidence of land tax will be completed?

(2) Will the principles of single tax be applied to the new land tax scale?"

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: (1) The current land-tax structure is being reviewed and changes to apply as at 30 June 1987 will be announced before that date.

(2) The current land-tax scale is based on the single-rate principle, with values less than $400,000 taxed at concessional rates.

5. Queensland Racing Finance Limited

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

"(1) What is the date of the registration of Queensland Racing Finance Limited?

(2) When did the first transactions of this company take place?

(3) What were the total amounts borrowed and distributed?

(4) From whom were amounts borrowed?

(5) To whom were amounts distributed?

(6) Do the above transactions require the approval of the Governor in Council?

(7) What are the assets of Queensland Racing Finance Limited to which the mortgage debenture refers?"

Mr HINZE: (1) The certificate of incorporation of the company is dated 20 October 1986.

(2) 12 November 1986.

(3) $72m was borrowed. Approximately $50m of that amount was used to repay the then-existing commitments of the Racing Development Corporation.

After payment of statutory fees and charges such as stamp duty and fees and charges directly related to the borrowing, it has been approved by the Governor in Council that the remaining $20m be distributed to racing organisations in the three codes of racing in Queensland. That distribution is continuing.

(4) The $72m was borrowed from Westpac Banking Corporation.

(5) Various racing organisations in the three codes of racing in Queensland, as approved by the Governor in Council.

(6) Yes.

(7) The mortgage debenture, in clause 2.1, charges all of the company's right title and interest both present and future in to under or derived from the undertaking and all the assets of Queensland Racing Finance Limited, whether real or personal and wheresoever situate.

The company's assets include, in the main, its receivables. That includes its right to be repaid loans where it makes loans, or its rights to receive funding from the Racing Development Corporation.

I told the honourable member for Chatsworth that I would table all the documents. They will be tabled at a later hour this day.

6. Loans to Farmers for Damage Caused by Cyclone Winifred

Mr EATON asked the Premier and Treasurer—

"(1) As it is now 14 months since Cyclone Winifred, will he, as Treasurer, see if those farmers who suffered severe losses and are still awaiting payment after receiving letters approving loans, are still waiting on the New South Wales Government's reply to the Queensland Industry Development Corporation's request on mortgages against property in New South Wales?

(2) Will he define why and whose fault it is, that these farmers have to wait so long and are now under threat of legal action from companies waiting on payment to farmers?"

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: (1 and 2) I am sure that the honourable member will be interested to know that $34m was paid out to 854 applicants under the Natural Disaster Relief—Cyclone Winifred—Scheme. The expiry date for receipt of applications was 30 November 1986. All loans approved have been fully advanced, with the exception of one which involved security over property in New South Wales. Of this $30,000 loan, an advance of $20,000 was made prior to perfection of securities to enable pressing trade creditors to be paid. With the finalisation of documentation, the balance of $10,000 is now going forward.

7. Young Farmer Establishment Scheme

Mr EATON asked the Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police—

"(1) How many applications for loans under the Young Farmer Establishment Scheme have been received in the last 12 months?

(2) How many successful applicants were there?

(3) How much money is presently available under this scheme?"

Mr GUNN: (1) 39.

(2) 15.

(3) The Government has not determined any ceiling for the funds to be made available under this scheme. In fact, since the commencement of the scheme, over $12m has been made available by way of loan assistance.

8. Suttons Foundry

Mr INNES asked the Minister for Industry and Technology—

"(1) Will he give a brief but full update on the Suttons Foundry receivership including the current value of the shares acquired by the National Party Government for $1.7m in 1983?

(2) Who were the other major creditors at the time of the acquisition of the shares, the extent of their debts, whether they were secured or unsecured and whether those, or any part of those, debts were repaid?"

Mr McKECHNIE: (1 and 2) The Government provided financial assistance to Suttons Foundry to help with the restructuring of the business and to try to retain a valuable foundry industry on the Gold Coast and at Brassall near Ipswich. The company employed some hundreds of workers and was utilising specialised technology in the manufacture of valves. It is a matter of public record that help was given in the form of Government guarantees totalling $1.6m and an equity investment of $1.25m.

Subsequently, the company was placed in receivership and the accounting firm Peat, Marwick, Mitchell and Co. was appointed to handle the affairs. The receivership is close to being finalised. However, it will be necessary to approach the receiver to obtain details sought by the honourable member. I shall endeavour to obtain such information that is not of a confidential nature and advise the honourable member by letter as soon as possible.

9. Court System; Land Appeal Court

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

"(1) Did he listen carefully to the answer given on 8 April by the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services, who said that the courts are frequently wrong and frequently do not take into account all the necessary aspects of a case?

(2) Is it his experience that the courts are frequently wrong and do not take into account all relevant facts?

(3) If an appeal was available—in particular, from the Land Court to the Land Appeal Court, which is presided over by a Justice of the Supreme Court, and if that court has been going wrong, can it be obliged by a change to the law by this Parliament to take into account anything that the Parliament considers relevant?

(4) Have we seen the emergence of a totally new right of appeal on unspecified grounds?"

Mr CLAUSON: (1) Yes.

(2) The courts are sometimes wrong. That is a proposition with which I expect that the honourable member, as a lawyer, would agree. Amongst the cases in which they are wrong are cases where the former court has not taken into account or given sufficient weight to relevant facts. In saying this, I am not being critical of any particular court, or courts, of any particular jurisdiction.

(3) As the honourable member should well know, the Parliament has plenary power to legislate so as to prescribe what matters are relevant and to be taken into account by a court—whether a Land Appeal Court or any other court. The application of any such legislation is a matter for the particular court concerned.

(4) No.

10. National Wage Case Decision

Mr STEPHAN asked the Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs—

"With reference to the decision in the National Wage Case which granted a $10 a week first tier wage rise and a second tier of up to 4 per cent and to Mr Hawke's promise to deliver industrial harmony—

Is it correct that some unions representing the building workers, storeman and packers, and metal workers, to name a few, are still not satisfied and are drumming up support for widespread industrial action to push their claims for more money?"

Mr TENNI: On behalf of the Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs, the answer is as follows—

In many ways, the most recent national wage case decision was an unfortunate one. It gave an excessive immediate increase of $10 per week; encouraged unions to continue seeking increased superannuation; but, worst of all, created an expectation that a 4 per cent increase in the second tier would be universally available. Concerns that that would happen were contained in the Queensland Government's submission to the national wage case full bench, but unfortunately they were ignored.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr TENNI: Many unions are now developing an inflated interpretation of the application of the second tier and treating it like a treasure trove ready for the plundering. Most unions have now given a committment to the system, but only time will tell whether they will accept the spirit as well as the letter of the principles. Building industry unions have already set out on a path of disruption to gain an increase of $52 per week, with one-day stoppages being held in southern States in support of this campaign. That is a campaign which is supported by people such as the honourable member for Cairns. When it is realised that those unions have just achieved in excess of a 120 per cent increase in employer contributions to their totally employer-funded superannuation scheme, that could only be classified as greed.

Mr Hawke's Government, in conjunction with the ACTU, was the architect of what should really be called a two-stage wage-increase system. It appears that the element it overlooked was ensuring that ACTU affiliates would support the system. Mr Hawke and other Ministers constantly call for industrial peace and wage restraint. The pressure is now on the Commonwealth Government to act to ensure that union greed is contained. If it is not successful in doing that, all Australians will be the losers.

11. Financial Position of Queensland Railways

Mr SIMPSON asked the Minister for Transport—

"What is the situation in Queensland regarding the profit or loss of our railways and how does this State compare with other States and the Commonwealth?"

Mr LANE: Queensland Railways continues to improve its performance through a vigorous pursuit of enlightened management and production planning systems. These moves have allowed the department to contain costs and, at the same time, produce more revenue earnings through passenger, freight and other sources than in other railway systems in Australia.

As members are aware, Queensland Railways made an operating profit of $117.8m in the year ended 30 June 1986. This compared with an operating loss in New South Wales of $337m, in Victoria of $377.2m and in South Australia and Tasmania, through the Commonwealth-run Australian National Railways, a loss of $20m.

This financial year I am very hopeful that Queensland Railways will surpass even that record-breaking performance and at the appropriate time I will provide details of the 1986-87 results to members.

It must be remembered that in comparing, say, New South Wales results with those in Queensland, some unusual circumstances must be taken into account. These include the fact that the New South Wales rail system received enormous financial assistance from the New South Wales Government for passenger and freight concessions. In the year ended June 1986, for example, it received more than $80m in terms of passenger concessions—that is, subsidy—and $72m in the area of freight.

Mr Simpson: They have a $500m loss.

Mr LANE: The New South Wales operation is a disaster. It is a scandal and it is a burden on the backs of those poor people who suffer a Labor Government in that State.

This kind of accounting process, of course, makes it difficult for a true comparison to be made between the States. However, members will find from a study of the annual reports of the rail systems of each State that Queensland has by far the most productive and cost-effective operation.

Perhaps the best illustration of this is the position with regard to passenger, freight and other revenue earnings. In the last financial year, Queensland Railways earned $962.2m; New South Wales, $929.6m; Victoria, $243.5m; Australian National, $283.3m; and Western Australia, $230.2m. These figures speak for themselves.

12. Hire-car Industry; Hire a Hack

Mr McLEAN asked the Minister for Transport—

> "With reference to the hire car industry and, in particular, to a firm trading under the name of Hire a Hack at 123 Breakfast Creek Road, Newstead, which firm advertises cars from $15 a day, and to a young couple who hired for four days from this firm a 1972 Ford Falcon (580—OLL) for $25 a day, which car had numerous defects and would most certainly not have passed a roadworthy test since it had (a) worn tyres in an unsafe condition with the spare showing canvas, (b) right front blinker light not working, (c) left front blinker light glass broken, (d) back stop light with broken cover, (e) seat belts frayed and knotted, (f) rust hole in the boot approximately 1 foot square, (g) no wheel brace, (h) rust in sills, (i) driver's seat ripped and (j) faulty passenger seat door catch—
>
> (1) What checks are performed, and how often are they carried out, by his department to ensure only roadworthy vehicles are hired out to the public?
>
> (2) Has he had previous complaints of this nature in regard to this firm or any other firms and, if so, what were they and what action was taken?
>
> (3) Will he immediately investigate the above case, which occurred during the week ending 4 April, and when proven correct, take severe action against this firm who are showing obvious contempt for the law and public safety in an area that demands a high degree of public protection and responsibility?"

Mr LANE: (1) Before a vehicle is licensed as a vehicle to be let for hire, the owner must provide a certificate of roadworthiness from an approved inspection station or a certificate of inspection completed by a qualified A-grade motor mechanic. During the currency of the licence, further checks are carried out on vehicles let for hire on a random basis or upon receipt of complaints.

(2) Complaints are received from time to time about hire-car firms and are investigated by officers from the Department of Transport.

On 29 August 1986, following a complaint concerning a vehicle let for hire by the firm Hire a Hack, a police officer from the Department of Transport's commercial vehicle squad and a transport inspector visited the premises. The vehicle about which the

complaint was made was the only vehicle on the site. It was inspected, found to be unroadworthy and ordered off the road. This operator has recently been investigated for failure to renew his licence to hire. All vehicles in his fleet became unlicensed as at 31 December 1986. The application for renewal was lodged as recently as 1 April 1987—April Fool's Day—and is currently under examination.

(3) I can assure the honourable member that investigations will continue regarding this case, including an immediate inspection of the vehicle in question and, where necessary, appropriate legal action will be taken. The honourable member will be more than satisfied.

13. Darling Downs Co-operative Bacon Association Limited

Mr McLEAN asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

"With reference to the Darling Downs Co-Operative Bacon Association Limited, and to a number of allegations made by shareholders of that co-operative since March 1984 and in view of the fact that K.R. Darling Downs is now seeking further low interest unsecured loans from the Queensland Government—

(1) Has the registrar of Primary Producers Co-operatives' investigated shareholders' complaints that co-operative funds have been used to purchase cattle for relatives of the general manager, Mr P. Krimmer?

(2) Is the registrar aware that co-operative's purchase of cattle from the wife of Mr Krimmer is at a price set by Krimmer himself?

(3) Is the registrar aware of fraud squad enquiries into these complaints?

(4) Has the registrar investigated shareholders' allegations of conflicts of interest involving the general manager in relation to the payment of approximately $62,000 to Heines, Japan?

(5) Has the registrar investigated shareholders' objections to the allocation of shares to certain managerial staff and the voting implications of that allotment?

(6) In view of the continued refusal of the co-operative directors to respond to shareholder's concerns, and in view of the seriousness of those concerns, is the registrar prepared to intervene and appoint an inspector to investigate the co-operative's affairs?

(7) If the registrar is not prepared to appoint an inspector in this case when there are serious allegations of fraud and default by directors, when would the registrar ever intervene?"

Mr HARPER: (1 and 2) In March/April 1984, two share-holders of the Darling Downs Co-operative Bacon Association Limited, whose names I do not intend to disclose unless specifically asked to do so—I notice that the honourable member for Bulimba is not particularly interested in the answer to the question—

Mr McLEAN: I rise to a point of order. That is not true.

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

Mr HARPER: For the benefit of the honourable member for Bulimba, I will repeat that I do not intend to disclose their names unless specifically asked to do so. They wrote a letter to the chairman of the co-operative outlining what they alleged to be some sort of conspiracy between the directors of the co-operative and its management to override the rights of the share-holders of the co-operative. A copy of this letter was given to the Registrar of Primary Producers Co-operative Associations. The registrar investigated those complaints and, in June 1984, sought legal advice on the various matters which had been raised. The advice received was to the effect that an investigation into the co-operative's activities was not warranted.

In August 1984, the acting registrar, following further legal advice, suggested to the complainants that they should exercise their rights as members under the rules of the co-operative and/or seek action from the appropriate court.

(3) In May 1985, those same two share-holders were advised that they should take any allegations of fraud to the Police Department. No inquiries have been made by the fraud squad with the registrar in regard to any allegations which may have been made by the two share-holders.

(4) The registrar has indicated to me that he has no knowledge of this matter.

(5) See (1 and 2).

(6 and 7) At various times the registrar of co-operatives has had discussions and correspondence with the secretary of the co-operative in response to inquiries made by the registrar. The responses by the co-operative have always been satisfactory to the registrar, who considered there was no indication of a need to appoint an inspector to investigate the co-operative's affairs.

14. Weedicide Pollution in Local Authorities' Water Supplies

Mr HINTON asked the Minister for Health and Environment—

"With reference to State Government monitoring and control of weedicide pollution in local authorities water supplies—

(1) What requirements are applied to local authorities?

(2) What is the department's accepted level for weedicides, such as 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T in town water?

(3) Has the Capricorn Coast water supply complied with accepted water quality standards, given known spraying of 2,4,5-T in its catchment areas in recent times?"

Mr AHERN: (1) The Queensland Department of Health has monitored weedicides and agricultural chemicals in the water supply of two areas of Queensland but this does not include the Capricorn Coast. No significant contamination of the monitored water supplies has occurred and almost all samples have had no detectable levels of weedicides. Therefore, routine testing has not been carried out.

If a local authority has a concern, or a spillage or other abnormal event has occurred, the Government Chemical Laboratory does perform tests for weedicides or other chemicals.

(2) The National Health and Medical Research Council recommends the following levels—

2,4-D—100 micrograms per litre (parts per billion)

2,4,5-T—2 micrograms per litre (parts per billion)

The Department of Health accepts these figures.

(3) Local authorities submit samples for testing, and are supplied with the results.

If the honourable member indicates which reticulated water supplies he is referring to, I will arrange for the information to be supplied.

15. Death of Mr A. Nugent

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

"With reference to the death of Anthony Nugent of Ipswich while he was working as a surveyor on the Helidon By-pass in early 1987 and as he, of 2½ years road experience, was working under the direction of a superior at the time on a site where various potentially dangerous roads construction activities were in progress which should have been co-ordinated by project management so that none of the site workers were placed at risk and as that system of management has failed, causing Anthony Nugent's death—

Will he order a full and proper inquest to be held to examine all the circumstances causing this death or will the sleepy hollow of Helidon and

management be allowed to have this tragedy, which could easily be repeated at another road construction site, conveniently tucked away as just an accident?"

Mr CLAUSON: A detailed police report with regard to the circumstances surrounding the death of Anthony Nugent has not yet been made to the coroner. When such report is received, a decision will then be made as to the holding of an inquest.

16. AIDS Education Programs for Schoolchildren

Mr UNDERWOOD asked the Minister for Education—

"(1) How many children, (a) primary and (b) secondary, (i) have no access to AIDS health education information and (ii) actually receive AIDS health education information and at what years of schooling?

(2) In what specific areas of the curriculum is AIDS health education information contained and at what level of detail?

(3) As large numbers of children and parents do not attend the personal development program, will he take immediate action to ensure that all children in appropriate age groups as recommended by the health authorities receive proper AIDS health education?"

Mr POWELL: In answer to the honourable member—the amount of misinformation and the number of downright misleading statements made about my department's attitude to health education is, to say the least, disappointing.

The specific answers to the honourable member's questions are—

(1) A pamphlet prepared in 1985 by the Health Department has been distributed in such a manner that all children would have received it. An updated version of that document is currently being prepared.

Mr McElligott: That is not true. My kids have not received anything.

Mr POWELL: I cannot help it if the member for Thuringowa's children do not pick up the pamphlets that are available for them at their school.

(2 and 3) In addition to the Personal Development Program, several Board of Secondary School Studies subjects allow for health-related topics to be canvassed. The following table lists secondary school subjects which may include education on communicable diseases, including AIDS—

Years 8-10 Syllabuses	Years 11-12 Syllabuses
Citizenship Education	Biological Science
Health and Physical Education	Health and Physical Education
Home Economics	Home Economics
Science	Multistrand Science
Study of Society	Study of Society

Certain board-registered school subjects are also appropriate vehicles for the discussion of communicable diseases. The detail of content and methodology is a school responsibility, as is the case in all other subject areas.

The Queensland Department of Education is continuing to liaise with the Department of Health in the development of appropriate AIDS education programs for Queensland schools and will continue to ensure that the AIDS disease is discussed in relevant subjects in Queensland's secondary schools.

17. Weirs on Warrego and Paroo Rivers

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

"Will he advise the people of Charleville and Cunnamulla districts, of the results of a survey on the sites for weirs on the Warrego and Paroo River Systems?"

Mr TENNI: An investigation by the Queensland Water Resources Commission of possible weir sites in the Charleville and Cunnamulla districts was initiated early in 1986 following representations from both the Murweh and Paroo Shire Councils. From a preliminary assessment of sites on the Warrego River, Ward and Langlo Rivers, it was determined that a number of sites should be investigated further.

After ground survey and estimation of storage characteristics, a site on the Warrego River at 124.8 kilometres, known as Keane's Crossing near Cunnamulla, and a second site on the Warrego River at 318.3 kilometres, known as Baker's Bend, were selected for detailed investigation. The engineering aspects of this investigation, including estimation of storage capacity, yield and cost of the weirs, have now been completed.

The Department of Primary Industries has been requested to carry out a soil suitability survey of lands that could be irrigated from each of the weirs and to assess the agricultural and economic benefits of the proposals. The anticipated completion date of this study is July 1987. It is expected that a joint report on all aspects of the investigation will be completed and submitted to the State Government later this year. Subject to its approval, the report will then be released for discussion with interested parties in the area.

18. Augathella Hospital

Mr HOBBS asked the Minister for Health and Environment—

> "What progress has been made in the appointment of a replacement full-time permanent doctor, at the Augathella Hospital, which is a position vital to the townships of Tambo, Augathella and Morven?"

Mr AHERN: The Charleville Hospitals Board has advertised the position of medical superintendent with right of private practice, Augathella, continuously from December to the beginning of March and it is intended to readvertise following Easter. There have not been any applicants. A relieving medical officer has been provided from the time the previous superintendent left and will continue to be supplied until such time as a permanent appointment is made to the position.

19. Regulation of Flea Markets

Mr GYGAR asked the Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs—

> "With reference to the growing problem that legitimate retailers have in respect to the operation of flea markets—
>
> (1) Is he aware that the Rocklea Fruit Markets, operating under authority from the State authority, is being used as a massive flea market in opposition to legitimate retailers including fruit retailers?
>
> (2) Will he take action to regulate the running of flea markets in line with submissions made and favourably received at the time, concerning who should manage or run flea markets and what range of goods should be allowed to be sold?
>
> (3) If not, what action does the Government propose to take to stop the illegal and defacto retailing activities of some flea markets?"

Mr TENNI: On behalf of the Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs, the answer is as follows—

(1 to 3) As I informed the House on 12 March 1987, I am aware of the flea market being conducted at the Rocklea fruit markets. Ongoing discussions with representatives of small business as well as flea market operators have been taking place with regard to the activities of flea markets generally.

As the honourable member will be aware, I recently appointed a trading hours investigation committee to examine all aspects of trading hours, which will include the

operations of flea markets. The committee is to report back to me in the near future. Following consideration of the committee's report, which will be made public, the Government will be announcing what action it proposes to take regarding the future regulation of flea markets.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Funds for Employment Programs

Mr WARBURTON: My first question is directed to the Premier. I refer him to recent calls by two of his Ministers for an urgent injection of funds, some millions of dollars, into employment programs in Queensland.

I ask: in view of the fact that the Premier can somehow find $10m to prop up a Gold Coast real estate speculator, borrow $75m to rescue the overcommitted Racing Development Fund and give $40,000 as an ex gratia payment to National Party applicants for financial assistance, has this Government made a decision to provide more funds for employment programs? If so, how much and what programs are planned by the Queensland Government to ease Queensland's horrific unemployment problem, which is the worst of any of the States of Australia?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Again the Leader of the Opposition completely overlooks certain aspects. In a moment I will mention the amount of money that this Government has raised, and which it is now in the process of spending, but the Leader of the Opposition should recall the matter mentioned by the Minister for Main Roads the other day in this House of how the Opposition's colleagues in Canberra have taken the sum of $35m from the Vote that this Minister was entitled to receive for roads.

Mr Warburton: What are you doing about unemployment?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: What am I doing about it? I am going to get rid of the ALP Government in Canberra at the next election; that is what I am going to do about it. Last year the Federal Government gave Queensland $250m less than the State was entitled to in regard to Medicare. The Leader of the Opposition knows very well how that Government operates. The Opposition in Queensland does not play the game and does not do the things it ought to do, but quite apart from that aspect of it——

Mr Warburton: What about our unemployed?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Yes, what about the unemployed and the disastrous circumstances, which have been created by people such as the members of the Opposition, in which this nation finds itself? Again the Leader of the Opposition draws attention to the ALP's disastrous policies, the high interest rates and the foreign debt of over $102 billion.

The Leader of the Opposition can go on and on. Because of what has happened, nobody moves to create employment and jobs throughout the nation. Queensland has created more jobs and job opportunities than has any other State. People keep coming to Queensland seeking employment.

The Leader of the Opposition has overlooked the fact that Queensland has spent just on a billion dollars that was borrowed for railway electrification projects. He has overlooked the fact that Queensland raised $600m for a public works program. The Leader of the Opposition has also overlooked that Queensland is spending $400m on another works program. I do not know what else he expects the Queensland Government to do.

Mr Warburton: Why have you got the worst record of unemployment of any Australian State?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: How the Leader of the Opposition has tried to mislead the people and the media of this nation is unbelievable. He is trying to distort

the facts and paint a false picture. Yesterday, his Federal ministerial colleagues asked me questions about freeholding islands. They told the media that there was nothing to it. I told them that their colleagues in the Queensland Parliament, Mr Warburton and the rest of them, would not play the game and tell the truth. I told them that they distort the facts and do everything they can to destroy confidence.

Mr Warburton: What are you doing about our unemployment rate?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The Leader of the Opposition must surely recall Queensland's outstanding loan programs and the work that has been and is being carried out in this State by the Queensland Government, such as railways electrification and public works generally. That is why people keep coming to Queensland and why they are leaving the States represented by colleagues of the Leader of the Opposition.

Unemployment in Queensland

Mr WARBURTON: In the light of the Premier and Treasurer's not unexpected negative response to my first question, I now ask him: can he reconcile his claims against the release this morning of the latest unemployment figures that show that Queensland is once again the State with the highest rate of unemployment in Australia, with a massive 11 per cent of the State's work-force unable to find jobs, and that Queensland for the first time ever is the sole State to record an unemployment rate in excess of 10 per cent? Queensland is a full two points above the national average, with bread-winners now taking the brunt of the Queensland Government's and the Premier's inaction.

Further, I ask: how does the Premier justify his claims when it is acknowledged—as statistics show—that Queensland's worsening unemployment has nothing to do with interstate migration? The statistics now show that the number of people of working age who are moving out of Queensland is greater than the number of people who are coming into the State.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: I never cease to be amazed how the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues try to create an anti-Queensland attitude and misrepresent the situation. The Leader of the Opposition must know that every month a large number of unemployed persons enter Queensland from interstate. He knows that at this time of the year, with winter approaching, many thousands of unemployed persons can be found in Queensland's tourist areas, such as Airlie Beach. He will recall the situation that was revealed last year in those areas. Mr Speaker, have you ever heard of anything so stupid?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Mr Speaker, you have never heard anything so silly or so stupid as the statement from Canberra this morning that the Federal Government is going to try to overcome the unemployment problem by paying increased unemployment benefits. The Federal Government said, "If you pay them more, they might be prepared to work." Honourable members read that in the paper this morning. Can one get anything more stupid than that? To pay people more money so that they might be prepared to work is a negative approach.

The tragedy confronting Australia today is that the Government in Canberra has destroyed the economy of this nation. It supports unions that have destroyed Australia's credibility as a trading nation. Trading opportunities have been destroyed. The Federal Government is aided and abetted by the Democrats. The union dominance of industry in other States has resulted in people no longer being prepared to exert themselves or to risk capital and is the reason for Australia's current predicament. Because the Leader of the Opposition supports the unions' attitude, he ought to be downright ashamed of himself.

ALP Support for Life-styles Contributing to Spread of AIDS

Mr FITZGERALD: In directing a question to the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to his recent claims in this House that the policies of the ALP may contribute to the spread of AIDS. I draw the Premier's attention to the response in the media by the honourable Leader of the Opposition wherein he denied such attitudes. In view of that denial by the honourable Leader of the Opposition, I ask: is the Premier prepared to present this House with any evidence that the ALP supports life-styles and attitudes that may contribute to the spread of AIDS? If such evidence is available, is the Leader of the Opposition guilty of deliberately misleading the media and the public of Queensland?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: As I said a moment ago, the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues are guilty of misrepresentation and of misleading the media and the public of this State.

I have here a copy of the State policy of the ALP that states that the unity of Labor is the saviour of the world. What a joke! The Leader of the Opposition has indeed sought to mislead people. Today he has been well and truly caught out by attempting to distance himself from ALP policies that promote the type of life-style that has very definitely contributed to the spread of AIDS.

In a media release from my own office I have attacked the Labor Party in response to what the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Warburton, told the media yesterday. At that time he stated—

> "We haven't encouraged and fostered that sort of relationship. I mean that's the nonsense that came from the Premier."
>
> Today's media release is—
>
> "Today Sir Joh said Mr Warburton had been hung by his own words.
>
> The ALP in Queensland has clearly prostituted its standards and its policies to attract the homosexual vote and promote attitudes of a permissive society.
>
> . . .
>
> He said those documents revealed Labor in Queensland would give equal rights to homosexual couples make them eligible for pensions and immediately release from detention all held under anti-homosexual laws and ensure people fined under such laws had their fines refunded.
>
> . . .
>
> In other words the ALP wants Queensland to downgrade to NSW standards and condone homosexual activity.
>
> . . .
>
> He said the ALP's Queensland policy also contained a commitment to support 'freedom of sexuality' . . ."

in gaols and so on. My media release continues—

> "Their policy and attitudes clearly support the sort of sexual freedom that has contributed to the serious AIDS problem we face today."

It is high time that the media highlighted the hypocrisy of the Labor Party. The ALP does not like what I am saying. I am outlining its policies. I intend to table this document so that everybody can peruse it. It is a most outrageous document. I do not know how decent Christian people can vote for the ALP.

The ALP claims that it will provide pensions, property benefits, probate benefits, superannuation benefits and other fiscal benefits to those types of people. The ALP also claims that it will ensure that those people have sexual rights when they are confined in prisons, convalescent homes and hospitals; that those people are not going to be interfered with and that they will have an opportunity to continue those activities in all those types of places.

All of those claims are included in the ALP's policy statement. I would be surprised if this is not as low as any political party could go, or ever has gone. If Mr Hanlon was here today, I do not know what he would do. He would probably immediately resign from the Labor Party. That is what the Leader of the Opposition ought to do.

I seek leave of the House to table this document.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Allocation of Time-limit Orders

Mr FITZGERALD: I direct my second question to the Minister for Education in his capacity as Leader of the House. There appears to be some concern about the procedures undertaken in the Parliament yesterday. I ask: will the Leader of the House explain if there is any precedent known to him for undertaking such a procedure?

Mr POWELL: I thank the Government Whip for the question. I did notice in today's media that some members of the Parliament were complaining about the time allocation that had been given to Bills in the Parliament last night. All honourable members were informed, or should have been informed through the Whips and leaders of business for their own particular parties, of the Government's program for legislation yesterday. However, it became obvious that that legislative program was going to be impossible to achieve if some time allocations were not made. I do not know that any member of the Parliament really wanted to sit after midnight. Some did not even want to go so long.

The precedent, of course, is what is done in other Parliaments in this country. I refer honourable members to the motion that was moved in the Federal House by the Leader of the Federal House, Mr Mick Young, who I understand is a Labor member of Parliament, whereby he gave the following times for Bills—

Taxation Laws Amendment Bill	16 minutes
Australian Capital Territory Stamp Duty Amendment Bill	10 minutes
Australian Capital Territory Tax (Transfers of Marketable Securities) Bill	10 minutes
Sales Tax (Exemptions and Classifications) Amendment Bill	10 minutes
Customs and Excise Legislation Amendment Bill	40 minutes
Customs Tariff Amendment Bill	10 minutes
Bounty and Subsidy Legislation Amendment Bill	50 minutes
States Grants (Tertiary Education Assistance) Amendment Bill	2 hours
State Grants (Education Assistance—Participation and Equity) Amendment Bill	10 minutes—

the honourable member for Brisbane Central might even be interested in that Bill—

State Grants (Schools Assistance) Amendment Bill	10 minutes.

The precedent is there clearly in other Parliaments where the business is arranged by the Government and members are notified. In fact, it might be of interest for members to note that that motion that was moved in the Federal Parliament by the Federal Leader of the House was relevant for three sitting days. It was not just that particular day of sitting, but three days. He went through a long series of Bills allocating times ranging from two hours down to 10 minutes.

I regret that members of the Parliament do not recognise that the Government does have business that it must get through. I also regret that the information that was given to members of the Parliament in early February setting out the legislative program for

the Parliament has been ignored in some cases. In some areas, people seem to think that it is smart to delay the Parliament and to prolong debate for as long as possible.

As the leader of Government business in the Parliament, I have a responsibility to get through that business. I will attempt to do that as expeditiously and as fairly as possible.

Q-Net

Mr SMITH: I have two questions. The first would have been to the Minister for Technology, but I notice that he is out of the Chamber, as usual, so in his absence I will direct it to the Premier.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will withdraw that comment.

Mr SMITH: I will withdraw that comment.

I now direct the question to the Premier. I ask: in view of the licence restrictions on the use of Q-Net under the Radiocommunications Act, and in particular the fact that any purchaser would not be permitted to operate as a common carrier, has the Queensland Government made those facts clear to any potential purchaser? If so, how would the Minister envisage Q-Net being a viable commercial proposition for a private operator obliged to operate strictly in accordance with the provisions of the existing licence?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The honourable member may rest assured that the Government has the matter in hand. The Government will make sure that, as far as is humanly possible, the right action is taken. There are different ways in which that can be done.

I am sure that the honourable member would agree that Governments should not become involved in all the different areas of communication. The Government started the project and got it going. Huge sums of money will have to be spent in future years. The State Government has contributed $20m to start the project off. Information that has been given to me indicates that the next amount that will be needed is another $50m.

It is much better to let private enterprise do the job. With the safeguards that the Government will put in place, private enterprise will do quite well.

Rail Passenger Terminal, Townsville

Mr SMITH: In directing a question to the Minister for Transport, I refer to the need to upgrade north Queensland tourist and transport facilities to take advantage of a rapidly expanding tourist industry. In view of the massive Federal Government expenditure on such projects as the Townsville International Airport and the Barrier Reef Wonder World, and in view of the privately funded south Townsville bus terminal, I ask: will the Minister undertake to have the State Government provide a new or upgraded rail passenger terminal to replace the present facility which is now one of the most outdated and inadequate in the State?

Mr LANE: The proposition in the honourable member's question is so inaccurate that I can answer only by saying "No" to almost everything he said.

Kuranda Tourist Train

Mr GILMORE: In directing a question to the Minister for Transport, I draw his attention to an article that appeared in the *Cairns Post* of Monday, 6 April, which indicated that the Railway Department was about to increase the fare structure applicable to the Kuranda tourist train. I ask: will the Minister please outline his intentions and explain his reasons for those intentions in relation to this matter?

Mr LANE: The honourable member raises a matter of interest to tourism in this State generally because he refers to the Kuranda tourist train that operates at least two services a day from Cairns to that very picturesque railway station at Kuranda at the

top of the mountain range. I understand that the rail journey is one of the tourist attractions in this State that attracts the greatest number of interstate and international visitors. In that particular region, it is second only to the Barrier Reef as a tourist destination.

Passengers are able to travel on the train by booking their tickets through the private enterprise operator Destination Projects in Cairns. They pay a certain fare which covers hostesses' commentaries during the trip and other facilities. Alternatively, passengers may book their tickets through the Queensland Railways ticket office or booking system.

Since Destination Projects has been operating under this contractual arrangement with Queensland Railways, a certain number of carriages on each train have been assigned for its exclusive use. Those carriages have been equipped with commentary facilities at the expense of Destination Projects.

Destination Projects have also constructed on leasehold Queensland Railways land at Freshwater near Cairns a restaurant/kiosk and tourist facility, which are of a very high standard. Destination Projects has invested a substantial sum of money in this particular complex.

Mr De Lacy: With Government money.

Mr LANE: I beg the honourable member's pardon?

Mr De Lacy: It borrowed its money from the Government.

Mr LANE: It borrowed some money from one of the Federal Government's quangos; that is so.

For some time I have been concerned that the operational relationship that exists between some local railway personnel and the management of Destination Projects' facility has not been the best. As a result, I recently visited Cairns with the Deputy Commissioner for Railways. It was decided that immediate action would be taken to obtain a reasonable balance between the two operations—the State-owned operation and the private-enterprise operation.

In my view, that necessitated an increase in fares for passengers booking through the Queensland Railways booking office so that, from the customer's point of view the fares would be more equitable with Destination Projects' fares and so that Destination Projects could have a reasonable expectation of not being undercut by Queensland Railways on a tourist trip in which it had invested substantial sums of money. Consequently, at my instigation, the Queensland Railways fares over that particular route were doubled and a different fare structure was established.

The tour-operators in the area have been advised of the new fare structure. I now set out what people who are travelling on the Queensland Railways facility will now pay—an adult single fare of $10 or a child single fare of $5. A number of other options are available such as an adult return fare of $17; a family special single fare of $22.50—that is the fare for two adults and two children—and a family special return fare of $45; again for two adults and two children. The charge for each additional child, when travelling with the family, will be $3.75, or $7.50 if the child is unaccompanied.

The whole fare structure on the line has been rearranged. PA Management Consultants are presently visiting Cairns to estabish a scheme aimed at creating a better interrelationship between the railways and the private operators and to recommend to me a ticketing system whereby the Kuranda tourist train will continue to be the huge success that it has been in recent years and that it will continue to be in the future. Because of the overflow of passengers, consisting mainly of international visitors, who wish to travel on this superb ride and who in some cases have been denied the opportunity owing to a shortage of seats, I have arranged to provide a third train to the service. With the third train in operation, I hope that such people will not miss out on the trip. It is also important to mention that the third train will need to be restored in a style befitting such a prime tourist service. Some of the money derived from the fare increases will be

applied to the restoration of a set of old coaches which will be provided to further enhance this service.

Electricity Supply to Bamaga

Mr GILMORE: I ask the Minister for Northern Development and Community Services: is it true that at the present time there is no electricity supply to Bamaga, and if that is so, what does he propose to do to rectify that lack of electricity?

Mr KATTER: I thank the honourable member for his question. He most certainly considers Mareeba to be the capital of the gulf and peninsula, which of course it is. Due to his activities and energy, Mareeba is rapidly becoming accepted by all as the centre of the gulf and peninsula and the commercial heart of those areas.

In answer to his question—at the moment some 2 000 people in the area of Bamaga have virtually no electricity. That has been caused by three problems. One generator had low oil pressure and had to be taken to pieces. The second generator had a broken part which had to be sent to Cairns to be machined up. It was almost two weeks before that part was returned, and when it did return it was in such a bad condition that it had to be sent back again. That caused a delay in the repair of that generator. The third generator put a valve stem through the supercharger. The net result of all that is that three of the four generators have been out of service continuously now for some two or three days.

I praise very highly the workers who have been working there. To try to get the generator with the low oil pressure problem back on stream and to keep the other one going, they worked without a break for 36 hours straight. As I say, I praise them for that.

However, I must make two observations which are pertinent to the honourable member's question. One is the enormous difficulties that are faced in isolated regions in relation to the delivery of electricity services. Last year at Edward River, one small break-down cost the Queensland Government some $30,000 before the generator was properly repaired so that it could again deliver the service. As I say, it is enormously costly and enormously difficult to deliver those services.

I must criticise in the strongest possible terms the Federal Government, which is the only Government in Australia imposing a tax on electricity, and is doing so on some of Australia's poorest citizens. The cost of diesel carries an impost of more than 100 per cent tax. That tax has to be paid by the people of these areas, in conjunction with the Queensland Government. That is a most pernicious imposition upon some of the poorest people in Australia. Anyone associated with the ALP Federal Government should be utterly ashamed of himself.

Changes to School Holidays

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: In asking a question of the Minister for Education, I refer to the statement he made yesterday that his department was not advised by the New South Wales Government of that State's new school holiday arrangements and to the considerable concern in the community, particularly from parents who have made long-term arrangements. Bread-winners have made arrangements to take leave and a number of seminars and conferences will have to be rearranged. Sometimes that is at great cost. I now ask: was the Minister aware that the New South Wales Education Department made its announcement on the 1987 holidays in 1985 and that that announcement was widely publicised? Is he also aware that Volume 88, No. 7, of the *Queensland Education Gazette* dated 18 April 1986, which was distributed to all schools in Queensland, carried the dates of the New South Wales school holidays? Because of the very short notice and the considerable inconvenience and additional cost that has been placed on the community, is it not possible even at this stage to reconsider the arrangements for holidays for this year?

Mr POWELL: The honourable member has misinterpreted something that I said yesterday. Yes, I am aware of all those things. The way in which the New South Wales department changed its education system from a three-term system to a semester system is quite interesting. The honourable member might remember that Queensland changed in 1981, I think it was. The New South Wales department was keen to change. However, the political ramifications worried the New South Wales Government, particularly as those related to Victoria. The New South Wales Government arranged for the leaking to Victorian newspapers of a document that informed Victorian people that New South Wales intended to change. As soon as the Victorians saw that, they decided to jump in and change. That is how the change came about in New South Wales. That is an example of the way those two States organise things. In Queensland we, of course, do things a little bit more professionally.

In going through all the paraphernalia, the honourable member for Nundah has really only told people something they already know and something that I obviously already knew.

Mr McElligott: The short answer is "no".

Mr POWELL: The honourable member for Thuringowa gets upset when I give a thorough answer, so he tries to interrupt all the time.

I know that some parents will be upset. Whenever holiday periods are changed, some people will be upset. I know that, and the department knows that. It was proper that people be given as much notice as possible. There is one week in question, that is, the week from 17 January to 24 January 1988, which is more than eight months away. Some people will not be able to rearrange their holiday programs. The department knows that. Each year the department has to face the fact that traditionally a large number of children come back to school late after the summer vacation.

On the matter of children's education in 1987—I simply state that there ought to be absolutely and completely no change and no problem. My first responsibility is to the education of the children of the State. Keeping that responsibility in mind, I have made the minimum possible change to make sure there is no problem caused to education.

The week shorter in 1987 is from 5 to 11 December. Schools west of the 144th meridian and north of the 16th parallel would have finished on 4 December, anyway. All the schools in the State will have a common finishing date, so there will be no problems with the education of children.

I accept that some problems will be caused with parents' arrangements. That may continue for more than one year, because some people are fortunate enough to be able to book holidays more than one year in advance. Obviously those people will make arrangements with the schools for the return of their children in 1988. As I said yesterday, sympathy will be shown to them.

Distribution to Schools of Publication *ANC—The Inside Story*

Mr SHAW: In directing a question to the Minister for Education, I ask: is he aware of any distribution to school principals in Queensland of a publication titled *ANC—The Inside Story?* If so, is this a publication of the Hans Seidl Foundation? Was this distribution in any way authorised or supported by the Queensland Education Department and, in particular, did the Minister's department supply names and addresses of school principals to the distributors?

Is the Minister aware of a statement published in the German language newspaper *Di Wache* that in 1985 the Premier and other Ministers met with representatives of the extreme Right Wing Hans Seidl Foundation and that "an extension of collaboration" was arranged?

Mr POWELL: The short answer to the honourable member's question is, "No, I know nothing about it."

Records of Drivers' Licences and Learners' Permits

Mr SHAW: In directing a question to the Minister for Transport, I ask: is he aware that no records are kept of the learner drivers' licences that are issued and that no checks are made to ensure that a person does not hold more than one driver's licence or learner's permit at any one time? Will the Minister investigate this matter and take urgent action to prevent misuse of drivers' licences for fraudulent purposes and abuse of the procedures normally involved in obtaining a driver's licence?

Mr LANE: I do not believe that the proposition in the honourable member's question is accurate. However, I will check to ensure that, if any tightening-up of procedures and the keeping of records is needed, it will be undertaken.

Recognition of Queensland Tourist Industry

Mr FRASER: I ask the Minister for Tourism, National Parks and Sport: as tourism is Queensland's fastest-growing industry and one which is worth $9 billion a year to the State's economy, what recognition is being given in academic circles to this most important industry?

Mr MUNTZ: The Queensland Government is determined to keep pace with the growth of tourism in this State. The first tertiary studies centre for tourism will be established next year at the James Cook University. That has been possible because of the co-operation between the Australian Tourist Industry Association and James Cook University. It will be the first chair of tourism ever to be established in Australia. That centre will concentrate not only on the educational benefits but also on research. I hope that at a later stage it will be transferred to the new campus to be established in Cairns.

The centre will have intertertiary institution relationships to promote tourism on both an educational and a research basis. It will cost approximately $160,000. That money has been made available. The QTTC has set aside in its 1987-88 budget $100,000 in advance so that that centre can concentrate on research into the tourist industry.

Tourism growth is phenomenal. Recently I received figures on tourism growth in Queensland for the last financial year. As I have been saying for some time, Queensland has something like 37 per cent of the number of tourist projects under construction in this country at present and something like 58 per cent of those that have been committed. Queensland has approximately 50 per cent of the total tourist dollars. New South Wales has 13 per cent and Victoria has 10 per cent.

The tourist industry in Queensland is experiencing tremendous growth. The Queensland Government is determined to ensure that that growth continues.

I seek leave to table these figures.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Sunday Sun Article on Queensland Rainforests

Mr FRASER: In directing a further question to the Minister for Tourism, National Parks and Sport, I refer to an article in the *Sunday Sun* newspaper of 5 April 1987, which states—

> "The Federal Government has dropped plans to tackle Queensland head-on over rainforests because there will not be an early election."

I ask: what is the Minister's reaction to that article in the *Sunday Sun*?

Mr MUNTZ: I am aware of the article to which the honourable member refers, which is headed "Canberra forest tactics softened". It is obvious that the Federal Labor Party was grasping for issues. It was trying to make something out of Queensland's record in regard to the environment and the conservation of rainforests. That is typical of the cynicism that the Labor Party has shown from time to time. Queensland is proud

of its record. I have quoted the figures previously in this House. Something like 50 per cent of Queensland's rainforest is still standing, as compared with——

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (12.16 p.m.), by leave: Mr Speaker, when you assumed the position of Speaker of this House, you did so with a great deal of goodwill from this side of the House. The Opposition was hoping that Parliament would work much more effectively. I have to account to the constituents of Cairns, and I would like it recorded in *Hansard* that for the whole of this autumn session I have asked questions only once. I would like recorded in *Hansard* that fact, and also the fact that this House is not working any better than it used to.

Mr CAMPBELL: Mr Speaker——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Minister for Local Government.

Mr CAMPBELL: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Local Government.

Mr CAMPBELL: I rise on a point of privilege, under Standing Order 115——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have called the Minister for Local Government. I will then hear the matter of privilege raised by the honourable member for Bundaberg.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Racing Finance Limited

Hon. R. J. HINZE (South Coast—Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing) (12.17 p.m.), by leave: I seek leave to table a document relating to borrowings and advances made by Queensland Racing Finance Limited, as I promised to do during the course of the debate on the amendments to the Racing and Betting Act last night. These are—

(a) the racing funding agreement; and

(b) schedules setting out Governor in Council approvals of repayments by Queensland Racing Finance Limited, Racing Development Corporation commitments and new advances to racing organisations.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

PRIVILEGE

Question-time

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (12.19 p.m.): I rise on a matter of privilege. I wish to join with the honourable member for Cairns and voice my protest at being unable to ask questions in this House on behalf of my constituents in Bundaberg.

PAPER

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

Report of the Queensland Cultural Centre Trust for the year ended June 30, 1986.

BILLS: REMAINING STAGES

Allocation of Time-limit Order

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Leader of the House) (12.19 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That so much of the Standing Orders and Sessional Orders be suspended to enable the following Bills to be passed through all their remaining stages on this sitting day. If the remaining stages of each Bill have not been passed by the time specified, Mr Speaker or the Chairman, as the case may be, shall put all remaining questions necessary to pass the Bill, including any amendments to be moved by the Minister in charge of the Bill, without further amendment or debate:—

Stamp Act Amendment Bill, all remaining stages by 1 p.m.;

Superannuation Acts Amendment Bill, all remaining stages by 4 p.m.;

Queensland Art Gallery Bill, all remaining stages by 4.30 p.m.;

Liquor Act Amendment and Spirit Merchant's Licenses (Validation of Transfers) Bill, all remaining stages by 6 p.m.;

Rural Machinery Safety Act and Another Act Amendment Bill, all remaining stages by 8 p.m.;

Sugar Milling Rationalization (Far Northern Region) Act Amendment Bill, all remaining stages by 8.30 p.m.;

Bond University Bill, all remaining stages by 9.15 p.m."

Mr BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.20 p.m.): I want to debate the motion that has been moved by the Leader of the House. I think that it ought to be placed on record——

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Leader of the House) (12.20 p.m.): I move—

"That the question be now put."

Mr BURNS: I put on record the fact that I oppose the gag's being moved in this fashion by the Minister.

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 44		NOES, 37	
Ahern	Hynd	Beanland	Scott
Alison	Katter	Beard	Shaw
Austin	Lane	Braddy	Sherlock
Berghofer	McKechnie	Burns	Smith
Bjelke-Petersen	McPhie	Campbell	Smyth
Booth	Menzel	Casey	Underwood
Borbidge	Muntz	D'Arcy	Vaughan
Burreket	Neal	De Lacy	Warburton
Clauson	Nelson	Eaton	Warner
Cooper	Newton	Gibbs, R. J.	Wells
Elliott	Powell	Goss	White
Fraser	Randell	Hamill	Yewdale
Gately	Row	Hayward	
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherrin	Innes	
Gilmore	Simpson	Knox	
Glasson	Slack	Lee	
Gunn	Stephan	Lickiss	
Harper	Stoneman	McElligott	
Harvey	Tenni	Mackenroth	
Henderson		McLean	
Hinton	*Tellers:*	Palaszczuk	*Tellers:*
Hinze	Littleproud	Prest	Davis
Hobbs	FitzGerald	Schuntner	Gygar

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 43		NOES, 37	
Ahern	Hynd	Beanland	Scott
Alison	Katter	Beard	Shaw
Austin	Lane	Braddy	Sherlock
Berghofer	McKechnie	Burns	Smith
Bjelke-Petersen	McPhie	Campbell	Smyth
Booth	Menzel	Casey	Underwood
Borbidge	Muntz	D'Arcy	Vaughan
Burreket	Neal	De Lacy	Warburton
Clauson	Newton	Eaton	Warner
Cooper	Powell	Gibbs, R. J.	Wells
Elliott	Randell	Goss	White
Fraser	Row	Hamill	Yewdale
Gately	Sherrin	Hayward	
Gibbs, I. J.	Simpson	Innes	
Gilmore	Slack	Knox	
Glasson	Stephan	Lee	
Gunn	Stoneman	Lickiss	
Harper	Tenni	McElligott	
Harvey		Mackenroth	
Henderson		McLean	
Hinton	*Tellers:*	Palaszczuk	*Tellers:*
Hinze	Littleproud	Prest	Davis
Hobbs	FitzGerald	Schuntner	Gygar

Resolved in the affirmative.

STAMP ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 2 April (see p. 1241).

Mr BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.30 p.m.): Again we are back to do a patch-up job on the Stamp Act by introducing a few concessions which are already available in other States and closing loopholes which have been closed elsewhere for some six months or more.

I don't know the precise reason why Queensland always seems to be dragging the chain when it comes to stopping the rorts or when it comes to introducing concessions which have already been in existence in other States for some time, but perhaps it has something to do with the fact that the position of Commissioner of Stamp Duties has been vacant for well over a year now. I suppose the fact that we will have 30 minutes to debate the whole Stamp Act Amendment Bill is a clear indication of how much importance the Government attaches to the Stamp Act.

Doesn't the Government attach sufficient importance to the chief general revenue officer in this State to have that vacant position filled? Why hasn't the Commissioner, who I am told effectively retired in December 1985, been replaced? I can only assume that the very tardy introduction of these amendments is because of the Government's failure to appoint a suitable person to the position. Surely it can find somebody appropriate.

The Stamp Act is one of the most complicated, confusing, convoluted and, dare we say, stupid Acts in Queensland. Officers have commented to me on numerous occasions that it is extremely difficult to follow, interpret and enforce, and that loopholes constantly appear. It is these loopholes which have been exposed by Mr Alan Bond and the tax rorts that he has promoted that these amendments are largely designed to plug. Alan Bond has had a field day at the tax-payers' expense in this State.

In March last year, I raised in the debate on the Stamp Act Amendment Bill, which was then before the Parliament, that the Bond Corporation was actively avoiding the payment of Queensland stamp duty by using a combination of trusts and transferring shares through Canberra—a variation of the so-called Darwin shuffle. I estimated that

Queensland lost substantial amounts of stamp duty while the Government stood by and allowed this practice.

This legislation today proves that I was absolutely correct, because the main provisions close the loophole which allowed Bond to transfer property through trusts without the creation of a dutiable document; and it closes the loophole which allowed Bond to transfer shares through stock exchanges, principally the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, by transferring Queensland shares to those jurisdictions effecting the transfer but then transferring the shares again for registration on the share register. By doing this, Bond avoided the original Darwin shuffle provisions which attempted to close off this avoidance avenue.

Last year, the Deputy Premier claimed that Bond had not used such avoidance techniques and that it was his understanding that he had paid up in full. Now we know that to be incorrect. Mr Bond used exactly the same techniques in New South Wales, but apparently the authorities are a bit more efficient down there and they caught him out. They estimated that his avoidance techniques had cost the State between $8m and $9m.

The Government up here didn't realise that he was ripping us off when he bought Castlemaine Tooheys. Bond Corporation's use of a combination of the trust, the Darwin shuffle and the Claytons contract cost Queensland tax-payers dearly, and now the Government has finally moved belatedly to plug the loopholes.

Section 31H covers the share transfer duty avoidance scheme known as the Darwin shuffle. It is personally pleasing to note that the Deputy Premier is now describing the rort which I told him existed over 12 months ago.

This scheme involves the transfer of Queensland company shares through the Northern Territory or through the ACT, where lower stamp duty rates apply—and that is what the operators are looking for. For that matter, it could be through an offshore register in, for example, Singapore or Vanuatu. But the principle is the same. Then they avoid Queensland's anti-avoidance measures by moving the shares to a register in another State. The quick transference of shares between Queensland and, say, the Northern Territory and Western Australia, transferring the shares in Darwin but not entering the shares on the Darwin register, allows the avoidance of stamp duty in Queensland. If the Deputy Premier had listened to what I was saying last year, this loophole could have been plugged then.

Bond was also utilising the trust and the Claytons contract. The transfer of property was arranged through a trust where the current beneficial owner made a written offer which was then not executed through a dutiable document, but on the payment of certain moneys the current beneficial owner instructed the trustee to hold the property in trust for the purchaser. This was the move used by Bond to avoid duty in the Austotel Hotel Trust. Now Queensland is one of the last States to do something about it. Another loophole is closed by tightening up the provisions which permit section 49C concessions for company reconstructions or amalgamations with the penalties also being increased. A few concessions also have been granted, most of which are already available in all other States.

Section 31D extends from two to 10 days the exemption period during which stock-brokers may hold stock on their own account free of transfer duty.

Section 35 extends the present exemption from credit duty for promisory notes discounted in the short-term money market to notes issued by corporations other than banks, and the first schedule is amended to provide exemption from agreement duty for transport consignment notes in standard form.

Exemption from conveyance duty for first homes valued at $60,000 or less is provided for—a concession first promised by the ALP and later adopted by the Government.

Let me make a point that relates to the first home-owners' scheme. A substantial slug by way of stamp duty is imposed on the people of Queensland who insure their

homes. The honourable member for Bundaberg, Mr Campbell, gave figures that relate to his own house. It is interesting to note that the house and contents insurance premium for his house was $179.93 and that the stamp duty charged by the State Government was $44.98, which represents a charge of 25 per cent on that insurance premium. That substantial tax is imposed by this Government on people who insure their homes. These are the home-owners of this State, and this is happening at a time when the Opposition argues that attempts should be made to improve the construction industry. At a time when the Government should act to have homes built and to help young people acquire homes, the State Government is making a substantial profit out of insurance on homes. I am thankful to the honourable member for Bundaberg, Mr Campbell, for drawing that to my attention.

The Bill contains an exemption from conveyance duty for first homes that are valued at $60,000 or less, which is a concession, as I have said, that was first promised by the ALP and was adopted by the Government in its policy speech.

When I looked at the clock, I thought that I had all the time left, but the House is not going by the clock at this time. Time does not make any difference, now that the gag has been applied.

Mr Mackenroth: You had 90 minutes, but now you really have only 30 minutes.

Mr BURNS: I have no time left. The clock shows that I have nought.

Exemption for insurance policies covering physical loss or damage to goods carried by rail, road, air or water has been encouraged by the Commonwealth. Victoria was the first to take advantage of the exemption by introducing this proposal. Again, Queensland seems to be the last cab off the rank.

I am continually amazed about the Government's gross incompetence in financial and money matters. It is continually making the most obvious blunders and, as we have seen in this Bill today, the proposals are just a copy of southern legislation—after it has been pointed out to the Queensland Minister by his interstate colleagues that rorts are going on and something needs to be done.

One only has to recall the mess that Queensland got itself into over the constantly amended secondary mortgage market legislation. We all recall the laughing-stock that this Government made of itself when it attemted to encourage stock-exchange business to come to Queensland by abolishing stamp duty on share transfers.

Lo, the Premier sets out to promote a loophole, which Queensland and all other States had previously closed, to encourage share business to come to Brisbane. Blind Freddy could see that this was doomed to failure. Within a week the Government had withdrawn the legislation because the southern States, and particularly Victoria, were planning legislation which would virtually close down the Brisbane Stock Exchange.

Last year, I detailed this latest variation of the Darwin shuffle, the trust and the Claytons contract; but the Government was too politically stubborn and stupid, I say, to follow up my revelations. Now, of course, the legislation is before us because other States followed up and amended their legislation last year.

It is patently obvious that the Government urgently needs to appoint somebody to the Stamp Commissioner's job. I suggest that action should be taken to advertise in this week-end's press for a highly qualified person.

If any Act needs the broom put completely through it, it is the Stamp Act; but all the Government seems capable of doing is rushing out to buy another packet of bandaids.

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (12.39 p.m.): Any amendment to the Stamp Act is important, because stamp duty is one of the main sources of taxation revenue that is provided domestically to the State. It is fascinating to look at the taxation debate in Australia. People who fiercely condemn aspects of the system or management of the system by other people so rarely seem to be able to come

to grips with problems that are to be found in their own back yard. Some comments should be made about the total taxation debate in Australia.

One starts from the basis that the totality of taxation is so enormous as to reduce or destroy incentive; that the public sector is so vast that something must be done to reduce it; and that taxation is the source of much evil and much disincentive and, therefore, it must be subject to massive overhaul and reform. One surely has to look at all the options and possibilities. However, some people go out with a veto list. By the time capital gains, fringe benefits and indirect taxes are taken out—everything is sort of vetoed, vetoed, vetoed—what becomes of the possibilities for major and total reform?

It is fascinating to look at what happens in this State. No substantial taxation reform whatsoever has taken place. In fact, the history of this solo National Party Government is one of its relying strongly on traditional forms of taxation and getting more revenue from taxation each year, even when the tax, such as the pay-roll tax, is seen to have a basis which itself is anti-social.

To refresh the memories of honourable members about the revenue sources that the Queensland Government relies upon—or for that matter any of the Governments in the other States—I will cite some figures. For 1986-87, Commonwealth payments were to be $2.1 billion—a total of $2.6 billion altogether from Commonwealth sources, of which the $2.1 billion to which I referred is mainly tax-sharing and the financial assistance grant.

The State-based taxes consist of money received from the following sources—

	$
The issuing of licences and permits	97m
Land tax	42m
Pay-roll tax	515m
Stamp duty	368m

Pay-roll tax and stamp duty are the major pure taxation sources that are State based.

In addition to those taxes, revenue is also received from such things as the TAB, book-makers' turn-over tax, soccer pools and casino taxes. Those taxes amount to roughly $60m. So, State-based taxation accounts for about $1 billion. Then the State also receives revenue from coal rail freight charges and mining royalties. They bring in significant amounts of money.

The subject of this debate is one of the principal and very important sources of State revenue. Like pay-roll tax, where the incidence of stamp duty falls is completely arbitrary. It used to fall upon documents. Any document evidencing some significant legal transaction led to the raising of stamp duty according to a variety of categories.

At the moment, the National Party in Queensland is totally locked into the Premier's "Joh for PM" campaign. It has attacked the whole of the conservative politics in Australia. Essential to that attack is the support of a flat rate of taxation, and yet this Government and this Premier, as Treasurer, preside over progressive rates of taxation within the Stamp Act, which, as I have pointed out, is a major source of revenue for this State. On previous occasions in this House, I have pointed that out very strongly. The stamp duty on conveyancing is a progressive taxation. The bigger the transaction, the greater the percentage of stamp duty. In recent years the only significant exemption that has been introduced by this solo National Party Government has been one for primary producers, and to dress it up the Government tacked on a few small-business people. That meant that all conveyances of rural properties—even a $10m unencumbered property—from parent to child or grandparent to grandchild were totally free of stamp duty. That follows, one suspects, the Premier's own arrangement of his affairs in relation to the acquisition of Ten Mile as part of the family holdings.

That the personal transactions of individuals become the basis of the rearrangement of the total financial structure of the State is not good enough. One can understand that, if one believes in reinforcing the family and stopping the break-down of family assets and family business and provides the benefit of an exemption on the transfer of property between parents and children or between grandparents and grandchildren, all sorts of people living all over Queensland might well want to take advantage of that.

On a domestic basis there is no exemption for the mother who leaves her house to her spinster daughter who has foregone marriage to look after her for the whole of her life.

The way in which laws in this State are changed is very selective. Changes come about by reaction to individual experiences, not because somebody comprehensively comes to grips with a total public function and public administration. That is not satisfactory.

The stamp duty area is complicated. Because the incidence of taxation is moving from a tax on a piece of paper evidencing a transaction to stamping transactions, it is becoming increasingly complicated. One can understand the concern of revenue-gatherers that some people are arranging their affairs so that a letter containing an offer is taken up by performance rather than by legal documentary acceptance. That means there are not two bits of paper. Of course, a person who does that is himself in danger in relation to the legal transactions of not having his bit of paper—his security, shall I say—that is evidence of the transaction.

It might well be that performance and actions are sufficient to demonstrate a concluded legal arrangement. Once the legislation moves down the transaction track and considers the intent of people, where does it stop? When is that intent formed? If in the free-wheeling world, when people in Queensland enter into transactions with people in New South Wales or people overseas, the legislation states that the quality of the mental attitude that went with the transaction has to be considered, where does it stop? That is a move away from taxing pieces of paper, which is currently the basis of the tax—at least that is precise because it is known that the paper is in existence—to taxing what goes on in people's minds.

That is being paralleled by increasing discretion given to the commissioner. I do not blame him. I know that quite rightly he feels a public responsibility to garner the revenue. He and the Government probably feel that there is a sense of equity between two transactions of a similar nature. But the moment the State moves away from the paper approach to the approach of the intent of the transaction, where does it stop? That is really talking about a Government analysing and making subjective opinions about all sorts of aspects of life.

I have many things I want to say about the Stamp Act but, because of the time allowed, I cannot say them. Therefore, I am confined to dealing with a couple of principal questions. Because this question is of great inportance, I want it answered. I ask the Minister to rely on his advisers so that he can answer a question about the anti-avoidance provisions as they relate to the amendment of section 49C and the extension of the period during which the transferor and the transferee must remain associated after a company reconstruction from three to five years. I want to know whether there is any element of retrospectivity, whether it means that one can go back to a transaction that in itself was valid for three years and apply a five-year window to it and whether, if that is the situation, that involves an element of retrospectivity. That would mean that one could re-examine transactions which in themselves had a three-year sunset, shall I say, because the association must now continue for five years.

Section 49C is very carefully drafted. As I recall, it was imported from England with some precision. I think it is a provision that is unique to Queensland—at least significant elements of it are. It is of benefit to doing business in Queensland. Many businesses reasonably utilise that section because it is in the public interest—very often it is in commercial interests—to facilitate the rearrangement and reorganisation of

company affairs. Particularly in the modern world of group operations, of take-overs in the legitimate sense, companies want to rationalise, perhaps through a holding company, and compartmentalise different types of business within the group structure.

There is nothing wrong with the intent of the legislation. In fact, it gives Queensland some advantage in allowing people to continue carrying out activities that are commercially sound and have good purposes because of revenue considerations. There are many legitimate occasions on which that is done, albeit that somebody might have taken the system for a ride. One does not want to see the whole thing so closed that we do not continue to recognise and encourage the beneficial organisation of commercial and corporate activity. Those people who have done things properly do not want to be caught by any impossible element of retrospectivity. Because I want an assurance to be given on that, I will not say what I wanted to say.

I wish to comment very briefly, in conclusion, on the substantial point that has been made before in this Chamber, and which has just been made by "his excellency", the member for Lytton. The incidence of stamp duty on insurance transactions, frankly, is so high as to be adding a clear burden to the life of the average Queensland householder, who is already struggling with high mortgage repayments.

When 25 per cent of a transaction—I think it may even be higher than that——

Mr Campbell: No. There is a ceiling of 25 per cent.

Mr INNES: When 25 per cent of a conventional transaction which is supposed primarily to insure premises is taken in Government duty, that is horrendous. I realise that it relates to the value of the property insured. Nevertheless, that is the reality of the stamp duty component in the transaction.

Average weekly incomes in this State are lower than those anywhere else in Australia. The cost of housing in Queensland relates equitably with that elsewhere in Australia, although in New South Wales, Victoria and the ACT it is higher. The cost of housing is cheaper in Western Australia. Surely the Government should not reef off by way of duty 25 per cent of a transaction that every prudent house-holder is obliged to enter into.

Reform must be able to be made somewhere for the benefit of all Queenslanders. In the interests of receiving a couple of answers to questions that I have asked, I will finish my speech at this point.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (12.53 p.m.): The Stamp Act is one Act under which the influential few in Queensland receive benefits that are not available to the ordinary Queenslander. The Opposition spokesman has said that Alan Bond was able to get away with $5m. Now exemptions will be granted to stock-brokers and to other corporations for the issue of promissory notes.

The honourable member for Lytton pointed out that home-owners can pay up to 25 per cent in stamp duty on their home insurance premiums. However, some people receive exemptions. One such person is Michael Gore who, under the Sanctuary Cove Resort Act, was able to receive exemptions from paying stamp duty for secondary thoroughfares and property transfer.

How is it that an influential person—a supposed millionaire; a white-shoe brigader—can receive such exemptions when the ordinary home-owner cannot? That is a bad trend at the moment. Everybody else receives exemptions. Farmers receive exemptions, the influential few receive exemptions, but the ordinary home-owner does not.

It is about time the Government started to look after the ordinary home-owner and the pensioner, and make certain that they are also granted exempions under the Stamp Act.

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police) (12.55 p.m.), in reply: The Opposition complains about the

small amount of time that is being allowed for this amendment, and then it wastes the time of the House by calling for two divisions. The honourable member for Lytton should know the secrecy provisions contained in the Act and would therefore know that I cannot discuss details of Mr Bond's transactions in this House.

Mr Burns: You let him get away with millions.

Mr GUNN: Wait a minute. I have already informed the honourable member in answer to a question in this House that this Government received in excess of $4m in stamp duty from the Bond Corporation for the Bond/Castlemaine take-over. He already knows that, and I do not know how many times he has to be told.

Mr Burns: How much did he put into the National Party fund after you let him rip us off?

Mr GUNN: The honourable member for Lytton knows it.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr GUNN: The honourable member for Lytton said that this Government did not get a bean.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! The honourable member for Lytton has made his speech, and I am not going to allow him to make another one.

Mr GUNN: He did not do it too well, either. He informed the House that the Government received nothing whatsoever from the Bond Corporation when, in fact, it received over $4m in stamp duty.

In answer to the honourable member for Sherwood, Mr Innes, regarding section 49C—there is no retrospectivity in the Bill. It applies only to new transactions after the Bill is assented to.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 15, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

Sitting suspended from 12.58 to 2.30 p.m.

SUPERANNUATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 2 April (see p. 1243).

Mr BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.30 p.m.): Few other issues raise the ire of tax-payers more than superannuation, for there is a public perception that public servants get a much better deal than employees in the private sector. While the Opposition supports many of the proposed changes to the various public sector superannuation schemes, it can only condemn the Government for the provisions which will effectively make some permanent heads millionaires overnight upon their retirement.

Superannuation is designed to ensure that its contributors live a comfortable existence in their retirement. Superannuation schemes are not designed to be manipulated to provide massive windfall payments to public service chiefs, as this legislation will do.

It is very clear that the Government and, in particular, the Minister involved have been completely snowed by Treasury officials who have been pushing this scheme. I

refer to the Superannuation Review Committee of Mr Hielscher, Dr Brennan, the State Actuary and Mr Hennessy, the Manager of the State Service Superannuation Board.

Mr Gunn: And Mr Burns.

Mr BURNS: I did not push it.

Mr Gunn: But you are going to get it.

Mr BURNS: So will the Minister. He might receive his superannuation before I do.

I am told that Treasury pushed ahead with these proposals against the advice of the Public Service Board. Mr Hielscher was looking after himself. I am also informed, although I do not know whether the matter is connected, that the Public Service Board withdrew its objections after the elevation of the Chairman of the Public Service Board, Dr Brennan, to the highest salary tier available under the new contract system. So there was a fight between Treasury and the Public Service Board. Funnily enough, Dr Brennan happens to be on the Superannuation Review Committee, as is Mr Hielscher, the Under Treasurer, who made the recommendations.

As honourable members read in the *Courier-Mail* last Saturday, the proposed changes to the benefit formula, combined with the new contract system for permanent heads, will mean a massive escalation in superannuation payments to those individuals. If they renew their present five-year contracts, as some will, they will be facing pay-outs of $1m or more within a couple of years. This legislation will make Queensland's top public servants—not the ordinary bloke at the bottom—by far the highest paid in Australia, and no-one will be able to approach them when it comes to superannuation pay-outs.

Nobody denies that all public servants should receive fair consideration, but these amendments, as they affect permanent heads under contract, will mean that not only have they got their snouts well and truly in the public trough, but they have created the very real danger that they will put their collective snouts completely through it.

I believe that the *Courier-Mail* did an excellent public service of exposing the rort that this legislation provides for public service chiefs. Of the top public servants who are on the highest contract salary package of $98,000—that is the Co-ordinator-General, Sir Sydney Schubert; the Under Treasurer, Sir Leo Hielscher; the Auditor-General, Mr Vince Doyle; and I understand the Public Service Board Chairman, Dr Col Brennan—this legislation provides for an enhanced pay-out of approximately $830,000 each when they reach 60 years of age. This is over $200,000 more than what they were entitled to just three months ago.

The rort occurred, of course, because they managed to convince their political masters that they should go on five-year contracts which had flow-on provisions for their superannuation entitlements. They argued that contracts and their associated higher salary packages were a way of the future and would put public service heads in line with their private sector counterparts.

What they failed to mention, of course, was that the major reason for some higher salary packages in the private sector was that many private sector managers, unlike the top-of-the-line public servants, do not have access to a very generous continuing superannuation scheme. But Queensland's permanent heads managed to get the best of both worlds, especially those permanent heads who are close to the 60-years retirement age, anyway, and who had absolutely no fear that their contracts might be terminated in five years; they can obtain an extension for another five years. They had nothing to lose and everything to gain. Such examples of unbridled extravagances by the few at the top will, I am sure, be noted by the Commonwealth Grants Commission when the Premier tells it how poor Queensland is.

It is unbelievable that, last December, when they signed their interim contracts, the superannuation entitlements of top public servants increased from approximately $624,000

to an estimated $784,000 overnight and that now, with the new escalation formula provided for in this Bill, that payment will rise by another $50,000 to $830,000.

Such examples of million-dollar pay-outs, which are so grossly above pay-outs available under virtually every other public service superannuation scheme, can, I think, be described only as scandalous. They are obscene. And it is the Deputy Premier and the Premier who have stood by and allowed this raiding of the public purse by these already generously paid permanent heads.

It is a great shame that the provisions for these million-dollar pay-outs not only bring the superannuation scheme as a whole into total disrepute, but they also overshadow some of the other long-overdue amendments which the Opposition fully supports. Many of these proposed benefits are long overdue and they have been in existence in other State superannuation schemes for many years. This Government has lagged behind.

The proposals which the Opposition supports include—

the introduction of deferred benefits;

the 6 per cent increase in existing pensions;

the increase to 5 per cent compound interest on unit scheme contributions paid to those who resign before age 60;

the extending of the death benefit coverage to all contributors;

the optional upgrading arrangements in superannuation entitlements for females who joined the public service prior to 1984; and

the increased benefits payable to dependent children of deceased members—up now to $50 per child per fortnight.

These are all very worthy amendments, and the Opposition fully supports them.

The Opposition also supports the enhanced benefits payable. If the fund can sustain the pay-out, then it is only fair that pension benefits be improved. We are told that benefits will now accumulate at the rate of 3/170ths of the final year's salary instead of the present 1/60th. As I said before, the Opposition totally opposes a flow-on of this benefit to permanent heads who have signed contracts.

If those people want to be in the contract system, they should contract out of the public service and the wages structure. I repeat that the massive pay increases available under those contracts and the subsequent flow-on of those pay increases to superannuation entitlements are not available to any other public servant in Queensland.

What should have happened was that, when these permanent heads signed contracts, their existing superannuation entitlements should have been transferred to a separately managed scheme. They should have been taken out of the public service scheme, from which the little public servants get $50,000 to $60,000 at the end of their working lives. Permanent heads, by remaining in the State Service Superannuation Scheme are not only taking the tax-payers of this State for a ride for their pay-outs, but are also having their pay-outs subsidised by the tax-payer at 10 to 1 or even 15 to 1. However, they are also taking the rest of the public service contributors for a ride, because their greed will prevent the introduction of other benefits to the ordinary public servant. Remember this: what we are doing today is taking the money that public servants have contributed—the excess that the actuaries found in that account—from the public service superannuation and the teachers' superannuation. Millions have accrued because people have been taking lump sums. Because people have been taking lump-sum payments upon retirement, which is cheaper for the fund, a surplus has accumulated. The money that is being handed out is neither Government money nor money from the public purse. It is money that all public servants have contributed. When the Government begins handing out large sums of that surplus to the people at the top, money is being taken away from the little people at the bottom. That is what has occurred. This type of greed at the top will prevent the introduction of other benefits to the ordinary public servant.

I am backed up in that belief by some of the statements that have come from the various union movements, including the POA. On 27 March 1987 a statement by Don

Martindale, the general secretary of the Queensland Professional Officers Association, appeared in *Newsbreak*. Part of that statement was as follows—

> "In addition, the Government would be better off by reducing some of the more discriminatory aspects of the scheme as advocated by the Queensland Professional Officers' Association rather than increasing lump sum payments. Perhaps the present proposals are indicative of those who have the ear of the Government as I'm sure it's not the unions nor the contributors."

Those people are saying quite clearly that they want the little bloke at the bottom to get his share, not just the big bloke at the top.

As I said, the Opposition totally opposes a flow-on of benefits to the permanent heads who have signed contracts. The Opposition wants additional benefits for the ordinary public servants. Such benefits, of course, could include early retirement. It is a gross injustice that provision for early retirement is not a part of this Bill. Clearly, the Government and the superannuation scheme could afford it.

Although the National Party permits permanent heads to plunder the public purse, at the same time it is saying to public servants and police officers who are retired on ill-health grounds, "You've got to accept less because we can't afford it." It is a gross denial of justice that existing public servants and police officers will have their lump-sum ill-health retirement entitlements downgraded.

I recall a few years ago, when the parliamentary scheme was changed, that Russ Hinze argued in Cabinet that members who were in the old parliamentary scheme had a right to stay there and receive the benefits of that scheme, and should not be forced to change to the new scheme. If it is good enough for parliamentarians, why is it apparently too good for public servants and members of the police force to have that right of election? All other States that have changed their superannuation schemes have preserved the existing rights of members who were in their old schemes, but in Queensland those rights can be arbitrarily downgraded. The excuse has been trotted out that some members were rorting the system.

I agree with the Deputy Premier that it cannot be justified that a police officer could be retired after two years six months' service and receive $120,000, or that a policewoman who is retired on ill-health grounds after six years' service receives $145,000. However, as I said, those two examples do not mean that the entitlement provisions are wrong. What they say is that the recruitment or checking procedures were not strict enough to enable those conditions to be discovered earlier. Indeed, it seems that these procedures may be too arbitrary in their application.

The Police Minister has argued that a change in the lump-sum pay-out for ill-health retirement is necessary because of the rapidly increasing number of medical retirements in the police force. The Minister has quoted an escalation from two retirements in 1983-84 to 29 retirements in 1984-85, to 44 retirements in 1985-86. What he does not mention is that 1983-84 was a very low year. What he does not realise is that in 1976-77, there were 23 retirements.

The Government always quotes figures at me, so I will quote some back and make a comparison with the south. Queensland has a lower percentage of medical retirements—0.9 per cent as against 2 per cent in New South Wales. On these figures, it cannot be only the lump-sum attraction that is encouraging early retirement on medical grounds.

I am aware of the suggestions—by the male members of the force, I might add—that policewomen were using it as a way of buying a home. After six or seven years in the force, they got married and got out because of stress, received $100,000 and set up a happy home, and away they went. But that is still not a reason to do away with the benefits for policemen and policewomen who have been in the service for years or, in the same way, for State public servants who have been employed in the service for 10, 15 and 20 years.

The Opposition believes that there is no financial reason why the lump sum payable on ill-health retirement should be reduced. Given the generally enhanced entitlements

under this Bill, that cannot be argued. On one hand, we are saying that we have all this extra money and we will distribute it; on the other hand, we are saying that we are taking some entitlements away from people.

Nevetheless, we do recognise that the formula for determining a lump-sum pay-out on medical grounds may have to be adjusted to incorporate a length-of-service component. But we do not accept, and we reject completely, the notion that a public servant or a member of the police force who has been in the service for 20 or so years and who then for some reason finds himself medically incapacitated should be grossly penalised because a few people, who have been employed only a few years, may have slipped through the net and caused some embarrassment.

Most other State public service superannuation schemes allow for lump-sum payments on ill-health retirement at the level the public servants would have received at age 60. This is the present situation in Queensland. But this Bill drastically reduces that benefit and now, under the death benefit provisions, public servants and police officers who retire on ill-health grounds will receive, instead of approximately 6.75 times their annual salary payable in a lump-sum, a rate between 3.5 times payable at age 25 to a maximum 6 times payable between the ages of 50 and 60. The proposed lump sum payable will now be dependent upon years of service. Nevertheless the maximum payable under the new proposed arrangements will still be less than the current payment. I cannot accept, and the Opposition does not accept, the need for this drastic reduction in benefits.

The Opposition proposes that the Government review the formula which determines retirement lump sums on medical grounds, and we propose that a graduated scale should be introduced to provide for maximum pay-out after 20 years' service at the level the officer would have received had he or she retired at age 60. That is a better answer than the one that the Government has put up.

I have been told of numerous examples of public servants and police officers who are in their forties and fifties, who have given 20 and 30 years' service and now face very substantial cut-backs in their likely lump-sum payments under medical retirement.

I know of one example of a sergeant who has several medical problems and faces retirement. Not only has he suffered a stroke, but he has other medical problems as well. However, after 20 years of dedicated service to the force, he now faces the prospect of having his lump sum cut back from $156,000 to $142,000. $142,000 is not a lot of money in this day and age. To have $14,000 knocked off his lump sum at this stage merely by an arbitrary Act of Parliament, simply because a policewoman got a bit of money or because some others were able to rort the system, would be unfair. The sergeant and his family will suffer because $142,000 is not much to live on for the next 30 years or so. I might add that although he is only 45 years of age, he looks 65. I have advised him that in his particular case, if he is retired on medical grounds, the lump sum seems very unattractive and that he should consider taking the pension, because it will not be affected by the amendments that are before the Parliament today. After only eight years on the pension, he would be well and truly in front—more so than if he had taken a lump sum.

However, most people who are forced to retire because of medical problems still face large debts such as a home mortgage, and they look forward to the lump-sum payment as a means of paying off these debts. This is very understandable, but they should realise that these provisions will make lump-sum payments a very unattractive proposition in the long term.

I believe that the Government is taking a very short-sighted approach in reducing lump-sum benefits payable for medical retirement. Certainly, there have been problems, but this amendment to section 47 effectively throws the baby out with the bath water.

As I have said previously, the Opposition has no objection to most of the provisions of this Bill. If the pension benefits and the lump-sum pay-outs can be enhanced because the surplus in the fund permits a more progressive formula, that is very good indeed.

The Opposition objects to the massive windfall benefits that accrue to permanent heads simply because two out of four of the members of the advisory panel that made the recommendations to the Government also had the good fortune to sign a highly attractive contract prior to their retirement date. The Opposition proposes that permanent heads who sign contracts and receive substantial salary increases should have their superannuation entitlements placed in a separate fund to be separately managed.

I think it is about time that the Government looked at a plateau in the scheme. I suggest to the Deputy Premier—I have not really thought this through to the nth degree—that maybe when a person gets to the under secretary level, he should continue to pay his superannuation on that level of salary. A level should be set so that the scheme does not get into the practice of paying out multimillion-dollar entitlements. If that happens, a great deal of anger and jealousy will be stirred up in the community. Seventy per cent of people in the community get no superannuation at all, but if they are contributors to a superannuation scheme, it is generally the case that the scheme is a very poor one which provides very little benefit. The Government cannot justify not taking steps to introduce a Statewide superannuation scheme so that everybody can have superannuation.

Mr Gunn: What I am saying is that they have contributed for over 40 years.

Mr BURNS: In some cases, that is so. I agree. Although it is usually a contribution period of 45 years, by virtue of the provisions in the Bill, it will now be 42½ years. I am not arguing against that. What I am saying to the Deputy Premier is that cognisance must be taken of what the public's perception of the scheme is. When members of the public read about multimillion-dollar payments, they think that every public servant gets them.

Although a certain number of public servants will receive major pay-outs, a lot of public servants will not. Last year, the average payment was about $150,000 for public servants, including people such as Spann, who received $500,000 and people at the bottom level who got only $50,000. A lot of people in the public service superannuation scheme will never get payments of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Mr Sherrin: That is not Queensland's scheme.

Mr BURNS: It can happen to the Queensland scheme, too, if the scheme is based on a uniform contribution. For example, it could happen that the parliamentary superannuation scheme could be based on the salary of a back-bencher with entitlements paid accordingly, instead of the Minister's receiving a special deal because he is a Minister, the Speaker getting a special payment because he is the Speaker, and my getting a special payment because I am a former Leader of the Opposition.

In the light of the experience gained in managing superannuation schemes, it may be that the Government should have a completely different and close look at the situation. It is no good saying that because the rules were laid down years ago, that is the way it will be done for ever. It is always appropriate to look into these schemes.

I am a strong supporter of a national superannuation concept, and I always have been. I believe that everybody is entitled to superannuation. Although parliamentarians say that they contribute to the scheme and are entitled to receive their money back, and that there should not be any talk about golden hand-shakes because of the reasons that I have just given, it should be remembered that people in the community do not get the chance to put in the amount of money that is contributed by parliamentarians; nor do they receive the same entitlement. It is not a good argument to advance, simply on the basis that because parliamentarians make a contribution, they ought to be treated differently. There are thousands and thousands of workers in the community who, after 40 years of loyal service to one employer all the way through, will retire with nothing. The Government ought to be examining ways to assist those people to get a better deal from superannuation.

In many cases, people in the community see our schemes here as bludging off the tax-payer and the vast majority of contributors. They see the people at the top who will receive those very fancy pay-out sums as bludging off the tax-payer and the contributors. As I said before, the ordinary contributor receives a modest pay-out. I looked at the figures and I was stunned to see that some of the payments are fairly lousy. A lot of people get out of the scheme, and that is why deferred payments and schemes like that are helpful. Many people get out of the service after a few years—8, 10 or 15 years—and they get their own money back together with an interest component. However, they do not take a lot of money out of the scheme. Many ordinary public servants who spend 42½ years in the service will not take as much out as I would receive if I retired at this time or in the near future.

Mr Gunn: But you have got people making higher contributions.

Mr BURNS: What I am saying is that we ought to be looking at a system whereby a contributor, after he reaches a certain stage, cannot make any higher contributions, and at that stage a plateau is formed. As an example, the under-secretary level could be adopted as the limit, and even though a person may be paid a salary higher than that of an under-secretary's, his superannuation payment will be based on the under-secretary's salary. What I am suggesting to the Minister is that if something is not done about it, with the contract scheme in operation, there will be fat fat cats at the top, whereas the bloke at the bottom of the public service will receive a mean and lousy superannuation pay-out. As both categories of public servants are in the same scheme, those sorts of pay-outs are unfair and unjust.

If the Government wants to make it a fat-cat scheme, it should give the fat cats a separate scheme. The legislation provides for portability. They could be transported out of the present scheme. I would like to have explained to me why a police pilot who was a member of the police union and a member of the police superannuation scheme, who resigned and entered into a contract to go into the Government Air Wing, cannot use the portability provisions of the Act to take his superannuation with him. Such people are told that they cannot do that because they are contractors. If they are contractors and they are not allowed to transfer from the police superannuation scheme to the public service superannuation scheme, how can Hielscher do it? He is a contractor, too. How can the blokes at the top end of the public service do it if the little blokes, such as the pilot in the police union, cannot do it?

The proposal to extend the death benefit to contributors who are single or who have no immediate family is fair and equitable. There should be no discrimination on the grounds of marital status.

The Opposition is also pleased that females who joined the public service prior to 1984 will have the option to upgrade their superannuation entitlements to cover extended death-benefit payments.

It is about time that the benefits payable to dependent children of deceased members were increased to a more realistic level and that benefits payable to orphans also were improved, as is provided under section 32.

Deferred benefits are also welcomed. It has long been a problem that public servants or police officers who leave the service for a short while, say, to raise a family, were penalised for so doing. Now they can elect not to take a refund of personal contributions if they resign, but they may preserve an entitlement in the fund to be released at age 60 or upon death or permanent disablement.

National Party members have been putting about that this is an early-retirement provision, but this is a gross misrepresentation. I have read a couple of those statements, one of them being from the Minister himself. The benefits payable under the scheme are not sufficiently attractive to allow for a realistic retirement before age 60. Principally, the benefit will be for persons such as female teachers who often leave the service for a number of years to have a family and who later re-enter service and stay until the normal retirement age.

As I also said before, section 36B allows for all existing pensions to be specially increased by 6 per cent over and above the normal cost-of-living adjustments, and under section (4) of the State Service Superannuation Act the interest payable on refund of contribution under the unit scheme will be increased to 5 per cent per annum compound in line with refunds under the percentage scheme.

Regrettably the Government has failed to bring in provisions for early retirement. Virtually every other State public service is now permitted early retirement, usually available at the age of 55 years.

Given the apparently healthy state of the State Service Superannuation Fund and given that the proposed amendments will only absorb approximately half the surplus—all of the $139m that has been talked about will not be given away; only half the surplus will go—I see no reason why early retirement provisions are not available in Queensland.

Experience in the other States has shown that this is not expensive at all. For instance, both New South Wales and Western Australia provide for early retirement at 55 at virtually no additional cost to the fund. Of course one gets less than one would have received at age 60, but that is to be expected. Nevertheless, the arrangements are still very attractive.

On the basis of 30 years' service, the lump-sum pay-out in both New South Wales and Western Australia at 55 retirement age is six times the final annual salary.

In New South Wales if a person waited until the normal retirement age of 60 he would receive approximately 7.2 times his final salary, while in Western Australia he would receive approximately eight times his final salary. Therefore, if a person wants to retire early and is prepared to take six times his normal salary, he can do so.

I again stress that early retirement is not a significant cost at all on the fund. In fact, the New South Wales Superannuation Scheme introduced the following changes in 1985, which included all the beneficial proposals in this Queensland Bill and more—

- to provide for commutation from age 55 and to allow all pensions to be commuted;
- to extend spouses' benefits to male and all de facto spouses on the same terms as presently apply to female spouses;
- to remove the provision whereby spouse's pension ceases during a subsequent marriage;
- to provide a new basis for the calculation of early voluntary retirement benefits;
- to make specific provision for contributors taking leave without pay or working on a permanent part-time basis;
- to provide for an option for contributors to preserve their benefits on cessation of employment before age 55; and
- to provide for increases in all children's and orphans' pensions.

The cost of those changes was a mere 1 per cent increase. The overall cost increased from 15.2 per cent to 15.35 per cent.

The Queensland Government is rather shy in saying what the cost of the proposals before the House will be. From the New South Wales experience it can be deduced that the cost will be almost negligible. In fact, given the reduced benefits payable under medical retirement, the Government may even make a bit of a profit out of these changes.

The Opposition sees no reason why early retirement benefits cannot be accumulated at negligible cost to the scheme. Provided a person has a minimum of 30 years' continuous service, it would be easy to provide for retirement at 55 at virtually no additional cost. In fact, the superannuation board has proposed early retirement from 55, but the Government has done nothing about it. The lump sum payable in such circumstances would be approximately six times the final annual salary, which compares with approximately 8 to 8.5 times at the normal retirement age of 60.

The parliamentary superannuation scheme—that is, the scheme for members of this House—is also amended to allow for widowed and single members to have benefit entitlements paid to an estate. That is in line with the State Service Superannuation Scheme. Section 21 of the parliamentary scheme is also amended to increase child benefits to $50 per fortnight. That is a good idea.

Mr Gunn: Have you got a costing for that?

Mr BURNS: No, I have not, to be truthful.

Mr Gunn: You would have to have it.

Mr BURNS: You are the Minister, you should have it. Is the Minister referring to the 30 years' service?

Mr Gunn: I said that we would do a costing of it.

Mr BURNS: Right.

Section 27 is added to clarify the legality of the changes introduced in 1984 whereby widows of former members were permitted to commute their pensions into a lump sum. Apparently it has been argued that this was legally questionable under the Act and that these amendments should have been introduced when the Act was changed in 1984.

The Opposition has a number of questions to ask on this matter. I want to know why the Police Superannuation Fund is treated differently regarding the Additional Benefits Fund. Under the legislation for the State Service Superannuation Scheme, provision is made for money to be put into the Additional Benefits Fund, but the Police Superannuation Fund is treated differently. Whenever it needs money, the Treasury just injects the funds. That makes the Police Superannuation Fund look bad. It always appears to be dragging on the public purse.

Mr Gunn: There was a fair drain on it when the age 55 retirement was introduced.

Mr BURNS: I should imagine there would be. I think early retirement would do that.

I take the point that a number of staff in this place would raise with me, that many people join the public service at age 16 but the scheme is based on service of 42½ years—that is being reduced from 45 years—from age 20. For the first four years of the service of people who join the public service at 16, they pay 2 per cent of salary into a death benefit fund to provide only for a death benefit. They really do not get into the superannuation scheme. I was going to argue that they should be allowed to pay superannuation from age 16, but I was told that, because it would disadvantage them in some way, that would not work. It seems that after 42½ years in the service they still would not have reached retiring age. If they had paid from 15 on, after 42½ years they would have reached only 57½. Therefore, it seems to me that there should be a provision that a person who joins the public service at 15 and has paid superannuation for 42½ years should be allowed to retire at that time on full benefits. After all, the person has paid in for 42½ years, which is one of the provisions of the scheme. I do not know whether or not that is a reasonable proposition, but it ought to be considered. That is part of an entire early-retirement package.

The Minister interjected that early retirement in the police force caused a big drain on that superannuation scheme. I could not agree more. However, what early retirement in the police force has done is give a whole range of opportunities to young policemen. It would do the same for teachers, the State public service and for all Crown employees. Whereas it used to take a policeman 20 to 25 years to become a senior constable or sergeant, now it takes only 10 or 12 years. All the older blokes have taken the money and gone, and the younger people are getting the opportunity of gaining experience in the senior ranks. There might have been—and there probably was—a dearth of experience for a short time after many of them left. However, that problem will be overcome, and

then there will be a far younger service with greater promotional opportunities and greater incentive to people to train and get on.

This morning questions were asked in the Chamber about the record unemployment in this State. Regardless of the reason for it, it is time to start talking about creating jobs. When I went to Sweden in 1971, there was a proposal to try to do something about future unemployment in that country by introducing early retirement.

Honourable members have only to go to any bowls club, any pub or any other working-class establishment in their electorates to find that blokes in the 55 to 60-year age group all want to get out. They are all talking about retirement and what they are going to do in retirement.

Mr Gunn: And they look round for another job straight away.

Mr BURNS: I agree that many of them do. However, many of them do not. If you introduce retirement early throughout industry, there will be no other jobs around.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Harvey): Order! I remind the member for Lytton that he must speak through the Chair.

Mr BURNS: I am sorry, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The fact that some people might go and look for other jobs does not mean that the scheme is no good. It does not mean that the scheme should be thrown out. The fact that someone is ripping off the scheme in regard to illness benefits does not mean that the scheme has to be thrown out for everybody else. The scheme cannot be abolished for the bloke who is genuinely ill and genuinely in trouble. Someone who has provided 20 or 30 years' service should not find himself disadvantaged because someone else rorted the scheme.

The same applies to early retirement. It cannot be argued that, because many blokes took the money and then got another job, the scheme would not work over a period. People have to be convinced that they should be prepared to retire early and give other people an opportunity to have a job.

Mr Gunn: They can take the pension.

Mr BURNS: Yes, they can take the pension. However, I am talking about those provisions a step down the line. We used to talk about people retiring at 70 and 65; now we should be talking about retirement at 60, 57½ and 55.

Mr Gunn: Doesn't it get down to the cost?

Mr BURNS: It does get down to the cost. However, there is a cost at both ends. Governments are paying dole at one end for the bloke who has not got a job. These people have contributed——

Mr Gunn: But the media even resent our putting the $2.31 in now.

Mr BURNS: I will tell the Minister why. When people find out about these million-dollar schemes, why would they not be resentful? An ordinary meat-worker at the meatworks who gets $230 a week picks up the paper and reads that a bloke is going to get a million bucks after he has been paid $98,000 a year, has had a car supplied, trips round the world and so on. He asks, "Who is his boss?" He is told, "You are. You are the tax-payer. You are paying him."

Something has to be done about it. That is obscene. The ordinary, average worker thinks that it is obscene and that the system is crazy. Never in his life will the ordinary bloke see a million bucks. It is all right to say that those people are paid extended benefits. The Government should introduce a plateau and stop the increase in benefits above a certain level.

Mr Gunn: It is not their own money; we are only the trustees.

Mr BURNS: It is not their own money. The public is putting money in. We cannot kid ourselves.

The Minister has reminded me that I want to say something about public money. Why does not the Government pay full interest on what it receives from investing members' funds back into the fund? I understand that last year the Government received a return of 16.25 per cent from investing members' contributions, but only returned 12 per cent to the fund, thereby putting $20m into the Treasury coffers.

I turn to teachers' wives. All honourable members have received that letter about retirees who remarry after retirement. It raises a question that should be answered. The second or subsequent wife is not eligible to receive any benefit from the fund, whereas any children from the relationship would be eligible to receive benefits.

I think that those people are entitled to an explanation. They have been in the fund. Why are 15 or 16-year-olds treated in the way that they are? I would like to ask a number of questions on their behalf.

The Opposition will have more to say during the Committee stage. Although it is supportive of the majority of the proposed amendments, it is totally opposed to the massive windfall superannuation payments that will be made to permanent heads simply as a result of the signing of contracts. The Opposition is opposed to the reduction in the lump-sum payments to retirees on medical grounds and also the early retirement provisions providing for a retirement age of 55 being introduced into the next Bill.

Mr SHERRIN (Mansfield) (3.05 p.m.): I rise to support the legislation to amend the superannuation entitlements of Queensland Government employees. It is fascinating to do so after listening to the tirade from the honourable member for Lytton. I emphasise one point that appears to have escaped the honourable member, which is that the legislation does not contain any provision to increase superannuation pay-outs to senior public servants. Any increase in their pay-outs is as a direct result of changed employment conditions and not as a result of this legislation. That point seems to have escaped the honourable member for Lytton.

The Bill amends each of the three major Government superannuation schemes: the State Service Superannuation Scheme; the Police Superannuation Scheme and the Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Scheme, to which all honourable members in this House, with the exception of the Premier, contribute. The proposed amendments have been made possible—and this is a very important point, because it brings great credit not only to the Government, but also to the managers of the scheme—due to the improved financial situation of the Government's major scheme, the State Service Superannuation Scheme. That point has been overlooked by the previous speaker, for obvious reasons.

Regular actuarial investigations into the state and sufficiency of the State Service Superannuation Fund are held at no longer than five-yearly intervals. The latest investigation revealed that, as at 30 November 1985, the fund had an actuarial surplus of $138.8m. The point to be made is that that is not the Government's money. It is the money that belongs to the contributors and, as a result, the Government, because of its responsibilities, has to consider how those funds can be best distributed to the benefit of those contributors—the employees covered by the respective schemes.

The actuary's report on the state and sufficiency of the fund revealed a surplus of $138.8m. It is interesting to compare that figure with the actuarial deficiency that existed four of five years prior to the latest actuarial investigation, which showed a deficiency of $135m.

The point that brings great credit to the Government is that, immediately the results of the deficiency were made known, amendments were brought in to remedy the scheme. Those amendments modified a range of benefits that were provided under the old scheme, and the measures taken in 1984 were designed to restore the scheme to actuarial soundness and are the major reason for the presence of the very beneficial financial situation. That is a point that should be noted in the record; that those amendments

have proved to be highly successful and have turned the scheme around from a deficiency of $135m to a current surplus of $138.8m. Surely this is indeed very favourable.

During that time it has also been possible to increase the rate of interest payable to the State Service Superannuation Fund from 10 per cent to 12 per cent per annum. This increase in the rate of interest reflects the increased earnings made by Treasury on the investment of fund moneys. Everyone is very, very aware of the dramatic increase in interest rates over this time.

It might be opportune to highlight some of the main features of the respective funds during the past year or so. As at 30 June 1986, the balance of the State Service Superannuation Fund—that is, the fund that comprises employee contributions only—stood at $673m, whilst for the State Service Superannuation Additional Benefits Funds—that is the employing authorities' contributions—the balance was $1.569 billion. Considerable sums of money are being talked about.

During the year a total of $90.3m was collected in the form of contributions paid in by employees within the scheme and, as at 30 June 1986, the membership of the scheme comprised 72 508 contributors and 2 103 pensioners.

It is interesting to have a look at the change in the membership and the number of pensioners receiving benefits under the scheme over the last year. During the year ended 30 June 1968, the number of contributors has increased by 4.1 per cent. The number of pensioners has decreased by 3 per cent.

At this time it is opportune to review some of the aims and objectives of the scheme. The State Service Superannuation Scheme exists to provide for employees of the Crown a measure of financial security and protection from themselves and their families. Over the period that the scheme has been operating, it has been very successful. Primarily, the scheme ensures that when the Queensland Government employees cease to earn their income from the Government, benefits are so provided to allow those employees an element of financial independence. Of course, honourable members know that over the years this has resulted in a number of employees not having to rely upon pensions from other levels of government, hence the overall burden on Queensland and Australian tax-payers is reduced.

As with most occupational superannuation schemes, the Queensland State Service Superannuation Scheme is designed on the principle of both employee and employer contributions to the benefit package during the member's term of employment. It is interesting to talk to people employed in private superannuation schemes. A number of private superannuation schemes do not require employee contribution, and the employer makes a 100 per cent contribution. Of course, that fact is often overlooked in media criticism of the State Service Superannuation Scheme.

Employee contributions to the State Service Superannuation Fund vary from 2 per cent to 6.5 per cent of gross salary, depending upon the age of the member. As the Deputy Premier indicated, the employing authorities currently contribute 231 per cent, or $2.31 for every dollar contributed by employees to the State Service Superannuation Fund.

A very important point that needs to be made in this debate is that the State Service Superannuation Scheme is the only major public service scheme in Australia which, from an actuarial point of view, is fully paid up and fully funded. That means, of course, that the Queensland Government, as the employer, makes its full contribution to the scheme at the same time as employees make their contributions. In past years, a number of public sector funds have fallen into grave financial difficulties because a Government was making its contribution not during the life of the scheme but actually at the point of delivery of benefits to the contributors. Of course, that put a tremendous drain on the resources of the State.

The benefit design of the scheme is a promised benefit arrangement under which the value of the benefits paid is related to the length of membership and salary averaged over the final year of service. The proposed amendments are part of a package that will

provide an equitable range of benefits for employees, such as the preserved benefit option and the extension of death benefits. An increase in the rate of benefit will bring the scheme into line with other superannuation schemes, particularly those superannuation schemes that are so prevalent in the private sector.

I wish to discuss briefly some of the major features of the Bill. One provision will provide for an extension of the coverage of death benefits so that where there is no spouse or dependent children the lump-sum benefit is payable to the estate. I am pleased that the Opposition has indicated no opposition to that proposed benefit. Honourable members will be aware that in the past the death benefit coverage under the scheme has been confined to the surviving immediate family of the deceased member. In a case in which the parents of children were deceased, or where one predeceased the other, the children were able only to receive a particular benefit in the form of a pension. Under the new provision, the actual benefit payable will be paid into the estate of the deceased contributor.

The Bill provides female officers who were contributors prior to 27 February 1984 with further opportunity to elect to contribute for death benefit coverage. I know that when that provision was brought in many female contributors to the scheme thought that it was a very good provision. In addition, the legislation specifies that the lump sums payable on death and on ill-health retirement will be of a common value. The honourable member for Lytton mentioned that aspect. This provision will require a reduction in the current lump sum payable on retirement from ill health, in particular for those members who have served for shorter periods of time.

One point that has not been mentioned is that this provision will continue to provide the same pension rate. The legislation also provides for those members who resign or whose services are terminated by their employers for reasons other than misconduct prior to age 60, with the option to preserve a subsidised benefit until the age of 60, earlier death or permanent disability. In other words, this provision allows for a broken period of service.

I believe that the provisions will be very warmly received by all contributors and in particular by those female contributors, who, because of their role within the family unit, will be able to take positive steps towards gaining recognition of broken service without losing their benefits. Those women will be able to return to the work-force after they have raised their children or at a particular time when they feel able to resume their employment. At that time they will be able to pick up where they left off in their contributions and continue on to age 60. I know that many female teachers will welcome this particular provision very warmly.

I will cite an isolated instance. For 12 years my wife taught in primary schools. When she ceased work in order to start our family, she was repaid her superannuation contributions together with a small amount of interest. Once our family has grown up, my wife hopes to return to the work-force under the old provisions of the superannuation scheme. Once again, she will be required to make superannuation contributions until she retires, that is, if she continues on until age 60, and will receive a very small lump-sum payment.

Under the new provision, women in particular will be able to continue making contributions to the superannuation scheme and will preserve their entitlements until age 60.

I believe the proposed superannuation scheme is very beneficial. I commend the Deputy Premier for introducing this Bill to the House.

I now wish to canvass the possibility of reducing the minimum retirement age from 60. I was very heartened by comments which appeared recently in the *Courier-Mail* relating to the possible consideration by the Government of reducing the retirement age.

Although I do not formally support the concept of early retirement, I believe that it has its advantages. Firstly, the introduction of early retirement would create greater employment opportunities, particularly for young people. I would be interested to learn

the results of a study that could be conducted into the number of new positions that would be created as people at the top of the ladder retired. Perhaps the Government will give consideration to such a study.

I believe that it is highly desirable that persons retire at an early age, particularly those people who suffer disabilities as a result of living in these stressful times.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr SHERRIN: Is the honourable member under stress?

Those people who have stressful occupations in which they are required to cope with rapid changes find that their last few years of service to the State can be very trying indeed. I believe that early retirement could well be beneficial to those people.

Early retirement also provides management with greater flexibility in coping with the need to reduce staff numbers in accordance with advancing technologies and changes in management structures.

If the Government intends to consider early retirement, my support for it is totally dependent upon no additional Government contributions being made to the superannuation scheme and a need for employees to receive reduced benefits in proportion to their years of service if they do decide to retire prior to age 60.

I strongly support the Bill. I commend the Minister and the officers of his department for their diligent administration of the respective superannuation schemes. I commend the Bill to the House.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah—Leader of the Liberal Party) (3.20 p.m.): From time to time this legislation comes up for review, and so it should with the changing circumstances in the community. In this particular case, reference has been made to the improved circumstances of the fund brought about by amendments made to the Act some time ago. I am pleased that that is so. Because the fund has a surplus of $138.8m, I am sure that all those associated with its management are very pleased.

The improvement allows for a review of the benefits. In recent years, one of the things that has crept into our modern life is the question: what is superannuation all about? Originally, superannuation was really a reward for service. Indeed, years ago, so far as the public service was concerned, the very top graduates from universities and the very top students from schools always sought jobs in the public service in this country. The first so many hundred in the list of various qualifying examinations round Australia invariably went into the public service. It was felt that, as they were the most skilled people in the community, superannuation was desirable to give them some degree of security and also to encourage them to remain in the public service.

Over the last 20 or 30 years, things have changed. The public service of this nation does not get the top students any more. It is not because the public service is less attractive or requires less competent people—far from it. What has happened in the nation is that enormous competition for the most skilled people has entered commercial and public life. The competition for those people has grown enormously. The result in recent years is, of course, that one has to go a little further down from the top students and graduates in order to recruit public servants.

Another term that has crept into the thinking of the community—and indeed all of us, I expect—is that of "golden hand-shake". We hear it quite often.

Superannuation was never meant to be some sort of bonus or a lottery prize. It was there for the prudent and the thrifty, and for employers who were enlightened and wanted to encourage the prudent and the thrifty. Governments in this country are just as enlightened as leaders in private enterprise. Parliaments have seen the wisdom of encouraging prudence and thrift, so superannuation funds to look after employees have been encouraged in private enterprise and in the public service of this nation.

People who are not involved in those schemes tend to forget that they are contributed to by the employees and that those employees have paid tax on the contribution already

made. I am sure that members of this House do not have to be reminded of that. They have already paid tax on the contribution and have to defer the receiving of that part of their income in order to receive a benefit, presumably later on when they may need it in their old age or in circumstances that they may not have foreseen.

The golden hand-shake story has crept in because the amounts of money that are paid out in superannuation seem to be very large. I see that one of the national newspapers publishes a list of all the people in the community who expect to receive more than a certain amount of superannuation—usually $500,000 or more—in a lump sum. When those figures are published, honourable members will see the names of quite a number of public servants mentioned in that list and those of several members of Parliament. But what the critics do not understand is that those people have contributed over a long period.

Many thousands of public servants do not receive any superannuation at all because they do not serve the necessary time. Only one-third of the members of Parliament in this nation get superannuation, because the others do not serve the qualifying period. The fact that many of the contributors do not get benefits from superannuation because of circumstances they do not foresee is often overlooked. Because some people serve for a long period, in private enterprise, the public service and in Parliament, they are singled out because of the apparently enormous sums they receive. What happens is that those who receive the lump-sum payments—which is the category talked about most—very often discover that their circumstances deteriorate very rapidly after the entitlement has been received. Many people who have received a lump-sum payment have learned that within a few years, because of depreciation in the value of their money, they are unable to maintain the standard of living that they thought they would enjoy.

Mr Davis: You will be okay, Bill.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Thank you. I hope that the honourable member will be a trustee by that time. It may well be the case that the honourable member will be able to look after some of his colleagues. But if he looks after some of his colleagues the way he looked after some of the people involved in the petroleum industry, then I do not want him to be a trustee.

The actuarial soundness of many superannuation funds becomes very interesting indeed because those who have a long life expectancy and take up annuities are better off than those who receive lump sums. Life expectancy is increasing all the time. Many a fund-manager will say that in cases in which annuities are involved, they would much prefer that people take a lump sum. I know of retired public servants in this nation who are receiving annuities from superannuation funds that have been efficiently managed which result in an income that is greater than the salary received by the person who replaced them. That may come as a surprise, but it is quite true. Several former public servants are enjoying an income per annum from annuity payments which amounts to more than the salary of the person who succeeded them in the position they previously held. Because of the benefit to the fund, obviously fund-managers are anxious to ensure that more and more people take lump sums rather than annuities.

In the eyes of many people in the community, superannuation is not a reward for service any more. It is a pity that it is now regarded as some kind of golden hand-shake or a lottery prize, because a great deal of misunderstanding occurs. Unfortunately, because of changed arrangements in the terms of their employment, a number of senior public servants in this State have found themselves automatically put into the position in which prospective superannuation lump-sum payments will be considerably higher than would have been expected if they had continued to receive increments in their salary in the usual way. Naturally, some concern is felt in the community about why and how that occurs.

I believe that an anomaly exists. Although this Bill does not specifically deal with it, the principal Act does. One would have assumed that the salaries that are payable under contract took into account—because of the increase in those salaries—the fact

that those public servants would not be getting the benefits that accrue from long service. One would also have assumed that because the public servants would not be getting the benefits that accrue from long service, the contractual arrangements relating to their employment would be more generous than they would otherwise be. By assuming that the contract salary should have been included as the salary for the purpose of calculation of superannuation, I think that the Government may well have made an error.

I am quite sure that the public and members of this House would not have expected that a change in the circumstances of employment of senior public servants would have meant an automatic increase of a phenomenal amount in the superannuation pay-out. I am sure that there is a way in which a formula could have been devised, having in mind that those salaries would normally attract some incremental increases—whether by way of increases following rises in the CPI or some other adjustment when salaries are reviewed from time to time. The salary and the superannuation pay-out should have been related to the normal salary that those positions would have attracted if those employees were not on contract.

I think that a blunder has been made, which is causing some sort of cynicism towards superannuation pay-outs. It must be remembered that the senior public servants, who it is projected are to receive more than $800,000 in lump-sum payments, would have expected a substantial pay-out anyway. Because they have served in the public service for many years—many of them over 30 years—they are entitled to a substantial pay-out. They would be entitled to substantial pay-outs without any quibbles. The difference between what they would normally expect and what they now expect because of the new contractual arrangements should be looked at very carefully. After all, they are getting a bonus out of the scheme, which is being provided by a multitude of other public servants who may not even reach that status in the public service.

I think that that unfortunate blunder, as I call it, of not taking their normal salary into account and using the contract salary as the normal salary brings a great deal of cynicism into the picture, which the people who hold those offices do not deserve. They are very faithful, loyal and capable public servants. The new contractual arrangements make their superannuation pay-outs look ridiculous. As a consequence, a lot of criticism has been expressed. The amending Bill contains nothing that changes that position.

This Bill contains some very worthwhile reforms, particularly in regard to assistance for dependants. Very often is it not taken into account that people who retire have obligations to dependants. I am aware of a retired public servant who was put in very serious impecunious circumstances because of his commitments to dependants. At that time there was no provision in the superannuation scheme for giving assistance to dependants. I happen to know the circumstances of that gentleman. He is now deceased. However, his circumstances were very difficult indeed and there was no way in which the superannuation fund could help him because the law did not allow it to do so. I am pleased that those sorts of things are gradually being brought under the aegis of superannuation schemes and are being improved by this amendment.

I know of another public servant who, many years ago, died rather suddenly and it was expected that his widow would receive a substantial payment. She did receive some money. However, she was not in a position to go into employment and she certainly had great difficulties in raising her family. Many superannuation schemes, both in the public arena and in private enterprise, provide for dependants. It is true that contributors, in their premiums, have to pay to cover those benefits, and so on. That is very worth while. The thrift and prudence which enables the employer to provide the scheme and the employee to make sacrifices to join the scheme mean that there is less strain on the social services of this nation. People are certainly encouraged to look after themselves and their families as they want to do in their latter years without being a burden on the rest of the community. Those improvements in the legislation are worth while.

Mr GATELY (Currumbin) (3.35 p.m.): Complaints by the member for Lytton that senior public servants and police will get large superannuation pay-outs do not ring true.

Although the member for Lytton directed his speech against these people in principle, he could not help attacking those at the top whom he regards as top cats.

Honourable members: Fat cats!

Mr GATELY: Is that what he said? In his terms they are to become fat fat-cats.

I submit to the House that such superannuitants will never become fat fat-cats. I wish to remind the House, particularly the Labor Opposition, that that will not be possible, for the very reason that the Federal Labor Government, with the aid of the Australian Democrats, legislated to tax superannuation lump-sum pay-outs at the rate of 30 per cent. That was a 600 per cent increase in taxation—in fact, it is double taxation on the wages of any employee in this nation. That despicable and unjust tax increase affects every person who pays into a superannuation scheme, private or Government. It catches the little blokes, as the honourable member for Lytton calls them. After Labor, they will become the battling battlers.

The only winners out of the superannuation debate will be the ACTU and the Canberra Labor Government. I remind the House of the comments that Simon Crean made in 1981 during the superannuation debate. He said that what should be understood at an early stage of the superannuation debate was that these funds will give the union movement and the Government financial leverage. He said that that financial leverage would assist the socialisation of Australia. What a sham!

Unions have been standing over industry and commercial undertakings to force superannuation upon employees per the medium of the 3 per cent superannuation productivity claims. The hypocrisy of this thrust by the alliance of the ACTU, the Australian Democrats and the Federal Labor Government can readily be seen by using the two figures quoted by the honourable member for Lytton. Firstly, I will take his top pay-out figure of $1m. Through the Federal Government's unjust tax—as I said, it is a double tax—such an employee would lose $300,000, leaving him with only 70 per cent of his nest-egg.

Mr Davis: Rubbish!

Mr GATELY: It is not rubbish. It is true. The honourable member should think about it. The honourable member should check the taxation legislation.

Secondly, I will refer to the small blokes' pay-out as the honourable member for Lytton calls them. On $50,000, the small bloke will be ripped off by the Australian Taxation Office by $15,000, which leaves him only a $35,000 nest-egg. What a sham!

I commend the Minister for being prepared to bring forward these amendments.

Mr SCHUNTNER (Mount Coot-tha) (3.39 p.m.): I also commend the Minister for bringing the Bill before the House. It introduces a number of fair and justifiable changes. In particular, I draw attention to clause 20, which deals with the introduction of preservation. Many people feel that is long overdue. I am sure that many contributors to these schemes welcome that.

There are, however, some matters that have not been addressed in the Bill and I wish to draw attention to those. Some possible circumstances occurring after a contributor's retirement are not covered by the provisions of the Act or this amendment to it. The honourable member for Lytton touched on these. The first point is that the remarriage of a contributor after his retirement is not really catered for. The second point I make is that I question the appropriateness of contributors to any scheme to continue contributing to it at the same time as their entitlement under that scheme is declining.

The third point I would make is that portability legislation was introduced a year or so ago. I think that was a very wise and important step in encouraging individuals to preserve their superannuation entitlements. However, the effect of portability means that different contributors can be entering schemes under vastly different conditions and circumstances, and I do not think that that is properly recognised in the various Acts.

People could be entering one of these schemes on an identical day at an identical age with vastly different inputs to the scheme. One person might have an input of nil; another might be bringing a transfer value of $100,000 or more. The contribution rates have not taken into account the sort of situation that I have just outlined.

I urge the Minister to consider the points that I have raised, and other points, in an overall review of these pieces of legislation and to bring possible amendments before the House as early as possible.

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police) (3.41 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions. The member for Lytton made certain comments in relation to the advice received by the Government in regard to the superannuation legislation. Of course, his comments were totally inaccurate. I reject his allegations in relation to certain senior officers of the public service who have served the people of this State loyally and whose advice to the Government has been impeccable and, in my view, given in complete honesty. I reject totally his imputations in respect of those senior public servants and regret that the member chose to attack those officers in such a manner.

Persons employed by the Queensland Government under contract who are members of the State Service Superannuation Scheme are treated in all respects in the same way as other members of the scheme. All members pay fortnightly contributions to the scheme at the prescribed rate for their fortnightly salary, and such contributions entitle them to the coverage of benefits that is determined according to their fortnightly rate of salary and the length of their membership of the scheme.

The Opposition appears to have accepted without question certain claims that have been made in the newspapers in regard to the amendments. It is indeed unfortunate that certain sections of the news media have chosen to exaggerate the level of benefit provided under the State Service Superannuation Scheme and to attack the provisions of the scheme in a highly selective manner. That is particularly the case in respect of the Brisbane *Courier-Mail.*

In the *Courier-Mail* editorial of 7 April it was claimed that the media have a responsibility to reveal the level of benefits provided by the scheme. This Government does not dispute that point. The levels of benefit are common knowledge by virtue of the fact that they are prescribed by legislation—the very legislation that is now being debated.

However, surely there is an onus on the media to ensure the accuracy of its reporting and of its editorial comments and to present a balanced point of view. The *Courier-Mail* claims that the level of benefit payable to Queensland's senior public servants will rise possibly to almost 10 times pre-retirement salary if the officer continues to serve after the age of 60.

The fact is that the factors for converting an annuity pension to a lump-sum payment reduce after the age of 60 years. The age 60 level of lump-sum retirement benefit for employees with 40 years' service is a maximum possible level under the provisions of the scheme.

The *Courier-Mail* also claims that lower-level public servants who retire at 60 will receive almost 10 times their final salary in benefits. Again, this statement is grossly inaccurate as the same multiple of final average salary applies to all officers with the same periods of service irrespective of the level of salary.

The *Courier-Mail* and the member for Lytton delight in comparing the superannuation benefits payable to a handful of the most senior public servants in this State with those provided generally in private sector employment. It is a fact, of course, that neither the *Courier-Mail,* Mr Burns nor anybody other than the people concerned, have any idea what level of retirement benefits are received by executives in the private sector.

Mr Burns: Of course we do. They print them in *Rydge's.*

Mr GUNN: The honourable member does not know. It is considered to be confidential information, and rightly so.

The *Courier-Mail* also delights in pointing out that the maximum level of benefit provided by the State Service Superannuation Scheme to a person who has served the Government and the people of Queensland for 40 years or more, and has personally contributed heavily towards the retirement benefit over the period of employment, is greater than can be provided in private sector schemes. No mention is made of the fact that the maximum level of benefit under a private scheme can be and often is provided after a lesser period of service and, indeed, can be provided without requiring any personal contributions whatsoever by the employee. That happens in most cases. It is a non-contributory service. One could tell that the honourable member for Lytton did not have his heart in his speech. The rate of employer subsidy to the State Service Superannuation Scheme is $2.31——

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr GUNN: I know another person who is leaving this show very soon and he will pick up his little cheque.

The rate is $2.31 for every $1 paid by employees. This rate is certainly not inordinate by community standards and is in fact less than that provided in many of the schemes operated in the private sector of employment, particularly in the corporate sector.

In this regard I draw the attention of the House to the latest authoritative survey on this issue, which was conducted by the Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia in 1980. This survey showed that, on average, private-sector employers paid a higher rate of contribution to their superannuation schemes as a proportion of employee contributions than is paid by the Queensland Government to the State Service Superannuation Scheme. The average rate paid by employers to private sector schemes covered by the survey in fact was $2.40 for each $1 contributed by members.

I also refer to an article in the *Courier-Mail* of 7 April, in which an attempt was made to compare the maximum levels of benefit provided under the Queensland State Service Superannuation Scheme to persons with 40 or more years' service with the levels provided by the Commonwealth and other State schemes. The article can only be described as less than honest, as it omitted more facts than it presented. In the case of the Victorian scheme the *Courier-Mail* omitted to mention that in addition to the lump sum amounts shown, the retirees would also be entitled to considerable rates of pension. The newspaper forgot that. It was just a little mistake. In the cases mentioned, the pensions payable would be in the range of $24,500 to $33,250 per annum, with such pensions increased in line with the Consumer Price Index. That is not a bad little handshake. The figures quoted in the article as the levels of benefit payable under the Commonwealth scheme to departmental heads are indeed much less than the benefits to which such persons would actually be entitled from the Commonwealth scheme, had they been employed by the Commonwealth for the equivalent periods necessary for maximum benefit to be gained under the Queensland scheme.

The Opposition has also attacked the proposals to reduce the lump sum payable under the schemes to persons retired on the grounds of ill health. The benefit payable when a member is retired on the ground of incapacity emerges as a fortnightly incapacity pension which can, at the member's option and subject to medical competency, be converted into a lump-sum payment. Whilst the amount of the lump-sum benefit has been reduced to the equivalent of the death benefit, the entitlement to a fortnightly pension remains unchanged. The primary objective of the provision of a benefit of this nature is to compensate for the loss of the ability to earn income. It is felt that the incapacity pension adequately serves this purpose, and so it does.

The level of lump-sum benefit which will now be provided pays regard to the length of service of the member and thus the length of time that member has contributed to the scheme. I believe that that is fair enough. The Government has no doubts that all reasonable members of the scheme would appreciate that the levels of benefit provided

must be limited to the levels which can be met within the funding arrangements of the scheme. The number of persons retiring from Crown service on the grounds of ill-health has increased markedly over recent years and the proposal to reduce the level of lump-sum benefit payable in such circumstances is considered both prudent and reasonable.

The honourable member for Lytton spoke at some length about the possibility of reducing the retirement age under the State Service Superannuation Scheme. Indeed, a number of representations have been made to the Government by members of the scheme for the reduction in the age of early retirement from the current age of 60 years. Before the Government can move in this direction, it will be necessary for a complete actuarial investigation to be made to assess the levels of benefit which could be provided at earlier ages and the effect of such a measure on the viability of the scheme. It is also necessary for an assessment to be made of the possible manpower implications for the public service of such a move.

In view of the interest expressed on this aspect, I have arranged for a review of those matters to be made and for a report to be submitted thereon to the Government as soon as possible.

The member for Mansfield, Mr Sherrin, has taken a great interest in the Bill. He is a member of my committee. As I have told him at committee meetings, we will look at the situation regarding an earlier retirement benefit for public servants—but, once again, much research will need to be done on the effect on the fund and the public service generally.

The member for Nundah, Sir William Knox, was correct when he said that the public are missing the fact that superannuates have paid into the fund for up to and over 40 years. When one takes into account inflation plus the fact that the contributors have already paid what amounts to a double tax on much of their superannuation, I think they are justifiably entitled to their benefits.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. W. A. M. Gunn (Somerset—Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 45, as read, agreed to.

Clause 46—

Mr BURNS (3.52 p.m.): On behalf of the Opposition, I oppose clauses 47 and 48, which relate to the medical provisions. As four different Acts are being amended, one could debate the matter under two or three clauses. In this provision the Government is throwing out the baby with the bath water as far as the ill-health and retirement provisions are concerned.

As it stands, the amendment penalises the vast majority of public servants and police because of the rorts of a few. The Opposition would support the linking of the lump-sum pay-out to the length of service. We believe that the present lump-sum pay-out for persons who retire on medical grounds should be retained for all officers who have served a minimum of 20 years, with a graduated scale for service of less than 20 years. The Opposition opposes the clause.

Clause 46, as read, agreed to.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): The question now is that clauses 47——

Mr Burns: I spoke on clause 47. I thought that I was asked to speak to clause 47.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Does the honourable member wish to speak to clause 47?

Mr BURNS: I can speak to it again if you like, Mr Temporary Chairman.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: The honourable member has already spoken on the clause, and he does not wish to say anything different?

Mr BURNS: I will speak to clause 47. I might have to go through the whole lot.

Clause 47—

Mr BURNS (3.54 p.m.): I called clause 47. I will repeat what I said. The Opposition opposes the medical amendment provisions of the Bill. Opposition members believe that it should be linked so that those people with 20 years' service should not lose substantially. Unfortunately, under the provisions of the Bill, the people I know and who have given 20 years of good loyal service and who are boarded out medically will lose $14,000 or $15,000 as a result of amendments to a number of Bills. I have picked clause 47—it is as good as any other clause—on which to oppose the provisions.

Question—That clause 47, as read, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 48	
Ahern	Knox
Alison	Lane
Austin	Lee
Beanland	Lickiss
Beard	McPhie
Berghofer	Menzel
Burreket	Muntz
Clauson	Neal
Cooper	Newton
Elliott	Powell
Fraser	Randell
Gately	Row
Gibbs, I. J.	Schuntner
Gilmore	Sherlock
Glasson	Sherrin
Gunn	Simpson
Gygar	Slack
Harper	Stephan
Harvey	Stoneman
Henderson	Tenni
Hinton	White
Hobbs	
Hynd	*Tellers:*
Innes	Littleproud
Katter	FitzGerald

NOES, 28	
Braddy	Yewdale
Burns	
Campbell	
Casey	
Comben	
D'Arcy	
De Lacy	
Eaton	
Gibbs, R. J.	
Goss	
Hamill	
Hayward	
McElligott	
Mackenroth	
McLean	
Prest	
Scott	
Shaw	
Smith	
Smyth	
Underwood	
Vaughan	
Warburton	*Tellers:*
Warner	Palaszczuk
Wells	Davis

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clauses 48 to 85, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 2 April (see p. 1245).

Mr UNDERWOOD (Ipswich West) (4.03 p.m.): The Minister says that this particular piece of legislation is a modernisation of the Act. I suppose it is a modernisation in one respect, that is, that this legislation allows the Government to further politicise the art world in Queensland. Honourable members saw the Minister's record when he was the Minister for Health and modernised the hospital boards of this State. His idea of modernisation is, of course, to make them less accountable to the public, less democratic and more politicised. In other words, this Minister set about the National Party

nationalisation of the hospital boards and he is about to do the same here with the board of trustees of the Queensland Art Gallery.

That raises grave concern not so much about the nuts and bolts of the Act itself as about the intent of the Minister in bringing forward this piece of legislation and about what he will do once it is passed. It is a matter of grave concern when politics is being used for the nationalisation of the arts in Queensland. It does not do any good for the prosperity of the arts in this State or assist them to flourish.

Honourable members have already seen certain problems occur in the art world in Queensland because the Queensland Government sees its responsibility and role in the arts as starting and finishing on the south bank of the river. I mean exactly that. The Government has put a very expensive complex on the south bank, which, at the time of its construction, shoud have led to a full public accounts committee review of the expenditure involved. At the end of 1983, that complex was written up as reviving memories of the Sydney Opera House, not because of its grand and attractive style—which is a matter of debate—but because of the financial blow-out in the construction of the building to in excess of $130m. That amount represented a trebling of the initial estimate of cost of the building. The Government cannot claim to have constructed that complex effectively with the result that, for instance, moneys were left over and could be spent in other important areas of the arts in this State. That is simply not the case.

The Minister, in his second-reading speech, skites about how the building was paid for. It was paid for by the people of Queensland at the expense of the remainder of the art world in this State and the other people of Queensland.

Numerous statements have been made by people involved in the art world in country areas. They complain bitterly about a lack of support for the arts in country areas. I suppose that later in these proceedings, the Minister will blame the Federal Government and the Australia Council for those problems. I will say to the Minister what has been said in the past: the State must bear its responsibility in this field as well. It is of no use if the full burden is left to the Federal Government and its instrumentalities by the State Government saying that its responsibility starts and finishes on the south bank.

Various excellent exhibitions have been conducted by the art gallery. Some have been successful, but others have not. The Pop Art show received a lot of media attention, but it was a financial disaster. I refer to a report published in the *Daily Sun* on 30 July 1985. The heading states, "Gallery losses hit by critics—Pop Art show fails". The report reads in part—

> "Queensland was the only State to flop with *Pop Art 1955-1970,* which is expected to lose more than $100,000 nationally.
>
> This was despite it being the most heavily sponsored art show to tour Australia, with more than $1.25 million donated by private enterprise.
>
> It drew 39,730 people to Brisbane compared with 78,000 in Sydney, where profits were estimated at more than $50,000.
>
> . . .
>
> The International Cultural Corporation of Australia which organised both shows, said the gallery had failed to attract a wide cross-section of the public."

That article made a very important point.

Most visitors were from schools or attended as part of organised outings. Seventy-five per cent of the visitors to the Pop Art exhibition paid concession admission charges. I use the extract from that article to illustrate the problem that exists—that is, the failure of the Government through its instrumentalities to support the promotion of the art gallery.

It is all very well to leave the art gallery to its own devices on the south bank. In this day and age, what is needed is more widespread promotion of the art gallery. It is also all very well to say that many thousands of visitors are attending the art gallery.

The analysis shows that a great proportion are schoolchildren who love to go there, especially during school hours. However, they do not go to the art gallery in great numbers with their parents or friends on week-ends or during other free time. That is the important factor that must be borne in mind.

A greater interest in and awareness of the art gallery and its surrounding facilities must be fostered. Transport services such as the Railway Department, the Brisbane City Council and airline companies have to be involved in organising package tours and special promotions. A little imagination and a little lateral thinking, which does not exist in some organisations, could help to promote the art gallery and other facilities that are located on the south bank. That needs to be done, and it does not require significant amounts of money. All that is needed is will-power and more attention being paid to the arts by the State Government. The attitude of the State Government seems to be that its responsibility starts and ends on the south bank of the river.

Construction of the Performing Arts Complex has had a dramatic effect on some of the other theatres in Brisbane. Some problems have been overcome, but some remain. The same could be said to apply to the art world. A number of serious problems exist in the art world in Queensland and they should be attended to. The problems extend into the country areas, particularly provincial cities in Queensland where the people who are interested in the arts contribute a great deal of time and effort. However, there is not that much support for them coming from George Street. Much of the support that is given finds its way via State instrumentalities and State organisations which are using Federal funds and Federal initiatives. Of course, the Minister for the Arts is very good at taking positive Federal initiatives and calling them his own, just as a number of his colleagues are.

There are some interesting things to note about my earlier comments on the further politicisation of the arts in Queensland. To note them, one only has to look at the *Queensland Government Gazette* of 28 March this year, in which it will be seen that, under the Libraries Act, Sylvia da Costa-Roque was appointed by this very Minister himself. When the arts complex was opened, Ms da Costa-Roque was very supportive of the Government and its moves. In the *Sunday-Mail* of 20 March 1983 she wrote a story headed, "Arts complex is tops. It will be one of the greatest in the world." I hardly think that it compares with the Louvre or the New York Museum of Modern Arts and so on.

Mr Lee: Why don't you give Queensland a break?

Mr UNDERWOOD: I am talking about Ms Sylvia da Costa-Roque, a former supporter of the Liberal Party but now a fully fledged National Party person. She has been rewarded for her affiliation with the National Party and her support of the National Party over recent times.

Other appointments, such as the appointment of Earle Bailey to the Royal Queensland Theatre Company, have occurred under that particular Act. Again, this Minister was responsible for that appointment. Earlier I spoke about the Minister's record in the politicisation of the hospital boards and the "de-accountability"—in other words, the taking-away of any sort of public accountability—of those organisations.

In the arts area I see a further extension of the Minister's previous track record. That is a matter of serious concern. He did not initiate the things that have occurred in the art world here in Queensland, such as the exit of one Mr Kevin Siddell, who clashed with the then head of the department, Mr Allen Callaghan. Of course, Mr Siddell was not a known National Party person, he was more on the Liberal side of things. For a number of reasons, he was not welcome in that area. He departed, leaving the arts area more to the whims and grip of the National Party.

Those matters are of major concern. The arts need greater support by the State Government, and a little bit more initiative must be shown in order that the facility on the south bank can be used to its full potential. It is a fine facility. There are various opinions about the look of the building from the outside. Thank God lots of plants are

growing over there! It is nothing like the Sydney Opera House. However, it has done wonders as far as an arts facility in Queensland is concerned. People enjoy it, and I know that I enjoy visiting the complex itself. More interest should be shown in promoting the arts and in using that facility as a home base in this State instead of saying that the arts start and end on the south bank.

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (4.14 p.m.): The extent of intellectual excitement which the contribution by the member for Ipswich West aroused could be seen on the face of his colleague the member for Logan. It was a pedantic and really a very poor contribution. It was typically negative. No-one in Ipswich goes backwards. Annually half a million people go through the art gallery, which is probably one of the greatest percentage uses of any such facility in Australia. Yet on an analysis of the member's contribution, it is seen that the criticism is based on the fact that a hell of a lot of them were schoolchildren. What better use could be made of such a facility? Tens of thousands of schoolchildren go through the art gallery, build up a bit of the knowledge, a bit of the excitement and a bit of the appreciation of the arts, which will provide a more appreciative adult audience. Five hundred thousand people per annum is a terrific result. It is a tribute to the location; it is a tribute to the qualities of the architect; and it is a tribute to the lay-out, the management and the functioning of the art gallery. It is a terrific asset to the city and to the State and a very appropriate headquarters for what is a very rich artistic tradition in this State.

The honourable member for Yeronga interjected earlier that it is really a legacy of Sir Gordon Chalk. Actually, he is not being totally fair; it is really the legacy of Sir Leon Trout, who happened to be the president of the Liberal Party in Queensland at the time. More importantly, he was the chairman of the trustees of the old art gallery. It was his vision to establish a new gallery to house properly what was a fairly significant collection. That vision, which was supported by Sir Gordon Chalk, won the day.

I have looked back at the debates that went on and I know something about the history of the development of the concept for the Cultural Centre. In all fairness I should say quite properly that it was the drive by Sir Leon Trout and Sir Gordon Chalk, supported by metropolitan Liberals, that pushed for the creation of that major concept.

The participation from some of the country members, including a former Minister responsible for the arts, was a little less fulsome. However, the trade-off was that Brisbane got the Cultural Centre and the country areas got a commitment to the provincial city cultural complexes. That was a pretty fine compromise. It meant that the State and the capital got a superb headquarters for the arts in what is, without any shadow of a doubt, the finest complex of its type in Australia. Architecturally and functionally it is superb. Many international visitors say that, considering the population of the State and the city and their wealth, the centre is among the finest facilities of its type in the world.

Mr Elliott: It is right up to world standard.

Mr INNES: There is no question about that.

Because it was the building around which the rest of the concept was developed, the gallery really is the nucleus of the whole Cultural Centre. One of the exciting things about the gallery is that there is a very fine legacy of Australian paintings, and a very fine legacy of the products of Queensland artists.

Mr Casey: It should be called the Brisbane Art Gallery, not the Queensland Art Gallery.

Mr INNES: That is absolutely wrong.

Mr Elliott: What about the touring companies?

Mr INNES: Exactly. The touring works, the tuition and the training of art-teachers and others who go out to areas such as Mackay and elsewhere are a few examples. Those people have had the benefit of access to the gallery. Many collections tour out

from the gallery. The arts need a State headquarters. One does not condemn Rockhampton for pioneering its own art gallery—no doubt that is important to the people of Rockhampton—but there is still a benefit by having a number of complexes throughout the State and there is an enormous benefit by having a State home for the more important works. I am sure that anybody in Mackay with artistic talents who wants to further himself in those pursuits would probably come to Brisbane to do a fine arts course and be involved in training and gain experience at the gallery before returning to Mackay to spread the word. The gallery is a tremendous facility.

One of the things I would like to slip in here is that I think it is a matter of regret that here in this House, which has been renovated superbly with tremendous dedication to craftsmanship, although the brass hanging rails have been provided, there are no significant original works of art. I am not speaking about this Chamber but about the rest of the building. In fact, the irony is that now in the Strangers Dining Room, in the place where the original used to be there hangs a print of Godfrey Rivers' painting of a jacaranda and a seat. The original is now over at the Art Gallery. With some co-operation from the gallery, I would like to see some of its substantial paintings hung on loan in this building.

Mr Comben: They would get knocked off around here.

Mr INNES: Unfortunately the member for Windsor insists on imposing his own standards of morality on everybody else. Just because he looks like one of the ayatollah's troops, he should not do that.

Mr Comben: At least make me an Australian; make me Ned Kelly.

Mr INNES: No. All he needs is a red head-band, and he would do well in Persia.

The Parliament has had a tradition of co-operation with the gallery. Parliament House has tremendous places where significant paintings could be displayed. I really think that the Parliament should in every term commission a major Queensland artist. Many great artists who were born in this State still actually work here.

I think some major work—I would suggest representational rather than modern so that everyone can appreciate it—should be acquired. Something is needed to complement and finish off this building. In the meantime, it might be as well if the Parliament borrowed back some of the paintings that were previously housed here and which could be superbly displayed here. The tens of thousands of Queenslanders who visit Parliament House could appreciate those paintings.

The Liberal Party cannot complain about the concepts that the Minister propounds in the Bill. It cannot complain about a reduction in the number of trustees. I understand that the trustees receive $50 for attending meetings and that most of them probably give the money straight to the foundation, so that it is put back into the system. So I do not suppose it matters too much whether there are nine trustees or 14 trustees.

We cannot object to accountability. However, I would say that perhaps the suggestion the Minister makes with some force in the Bill that there needs to be a reduction in the number of trustees and that there needs to be accountability does not do justice to what has gone on for the last two or three years.

As a result of ill health the director of the gallery has been out of action for much of the last two years. The trustees have played a very major role in running the gallery. Their committees on finance and their committees for acquisitions have done a major job. The present staff has responded. The record shows that through the well-publicised success of major exhibitions the gallery has performed outstandingly; it has performed superbly, thanks to the great interest and the competence and skills of the present trustees backed up by a loyal staff.

In regard to the reduction in the number of trustees from 14 to 9—one will wait with some interest to see who the new appointees will be. One would have thought that the present appointees have earned their spurs.

I understand that the finances of the gallery have been run very well. Mr Neville Stitt is the finance committee chairman, and the acquisitions are under the control of Professor Goodwin.

I suppose there will always be differences of opinion about the style of paintings that should be acquired. However, in the main, people could not complain about acquisitions and the way in which the available money has been harvested and used.

As I understand it, the trustees have done a great job with the financial administration of the gallery. Apparently a budget is in fact provided each year and audit accounts go to the Governor in Council each year. According to the Minister, that might not be strictly necessary under the present legislation. However, I understand that what the Minister advocates is in fact done.

There has been accountability, and the level of responsibility of the people who have been the trustees has been such that they have done what one would expect of commercially prudent people and people who have control over significant public moneys.

The record shows that the present trustees are doing a great job. Despite perhaps some technical deficiencies in legislation, they have responded to accountability. I hope that in the rearrangements it is not a question of off with the old and on with the new for the sake of new appointments. Let us look at the abilities and achievements of the present trustees which, I suggest, would be very significant. The gallery cannot be criticised in any significant way. In general the Liberal Party cannot contest the principles. However, we hope they do not mean that there is some more meddlesome purpose in mind. The Liberal Party waits with some interest to see what results from the reform.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (4.25 p.m.): I reject the cynical comment made by the honourable member for Sherwood about the Rockhampton art gallery. It is a good little art gallery, and I congratulate Rockhampton for having the foresight to establish it.

Everyone is very proud of the art gallery in the $200m Queensland Cultural Centre in Brisbane, but the provincial cities have not had the same help. Every provincial city is trying to build its own performing arts centre, but they receive only a 20 per cent subsidy. Many rate-payers and citizens of those areas are having to pay off their art galleries and performing arts centres over many, many years, at high interest rates. Greater help should be given to those areas and to the provincial cities for the establishment of performing arts centres. Extra training should also be given to young artists. I make those few comments to the Minister.

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister for the Arts) (4.27 p.m.), in reply: I thank all honourable members, except the honourable member for Ipswich West, for their contributions to this debate. In all of my time in this Parliament, I do not think I have heard such a ridiculous speech as that made by the honourable member for Ipswich West. To set the record straight—the State funds for the gallery provided by the residents and tax-payers of Queensland amounted to $6.05m and the Commonwealth funds amounted to $2.58m. From listening to his speech, one would have thought that the arts were totally supported by the Commonwealth Government in this State.

The member for Ipswich West mentioned that nothing was done in the country areas; but, as the honourable member for Sherwood correctly stated, more than 500 000 people have visited the Queensland Art Gallery since June of last year, which is the highest attendance per capita of any State gallery in Australia. The last major and most popular exhibition was the Twentieth Century Masters from the Metroplitan Museum of Arts. In the last 12 months, the gallery has taken five exhibitions and two education presentations to 33 towns, as well as continuing its consultation service. Promotional

visits to 17 towns in regional Queensland and northern New South Wales were undertaken in conjunction with the Twentieth Century Masters exhibition from the Metropolitan Museum. Over 40 000 people participated in a program that required 52 visits by Queensland Art Gallery staff to towns throughout Queensland, and over 200 working days were spent installing and demounting exhibitions.

In view of that record, one can see that the statements made by the honourable member for Ipswich West were absolute and total nonsense. The honourable member for Sherwood does have a good understanding of what goes on in the gallery, and I can assure him that this Bill is truly a modernisation of the Act. There is nothing sinister in it. One of the reasons that this Bill has been presented is that, if something did go wrong with the administration of that art gallery, the honourable member for Sherwood would perhaps be the first to say in the House, "Why hasn't the Minister changed the Act? He has had adequate opportunity." It is simply modernising the Act and making the art gallery accountable in law for what occurs within it.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 50 and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENT AND SPIRIT MERCHANT'S LICENSES (VALIDATION OF TRANSFERS) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 31 March (see p. 1104).

Mr GOSS (Logan) (4.30 p.m.): The Opposition has no objection or opposition to the legislation. As the Minister outlined, it relates to the transfer and imposition of conditions on spirit merchants' licences and an apparent defect in the 1973 legislation that has only just been turned up by the Full Court. It is a matter of practical common sense that there should be a validation of the transfers and the conditions and the acts of the court that have occurred since that time up to the present time, and that the specific power that was thought to have existed now be confirmed for future cases.

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (4.31 p.m.): The Liberal Party also supports this modest technical amendment. What is happening at this stage of the afternoon demonstrates how silly it is to set a program of guillotines early in the day. More than one member of the Liberal Party would have liked to speak to other Bills that have already been debated today. The Whips were not consulted about the number of persons who wanted to speak. It is possible that honourable members could have finessed an arrangement within the times laid down by the Government.

The Bill is very small and does not require a great deal of time for debate. The Liberal Party is happy to support it. Members of the Liberal Party regret that time that was allocated to the debate on this Bill was not allocated to earlier legislation of far more substance and on which we would have liked to talk at length.

Mr HAMILL (Ipswich) (4.32 p.m.): I support the comments of the two previous speakers. It is important that a few points are made about the ambit of the legislation and the Liquor Act. It is necessary that the measures contained in the amendment are passed by the Parliament. Of course, if they were not passed, given the transfers that have been handled over a number of years since 1973 when the offending piece of

legislation passed through this Chamber, considerable difficulties would be caused in the industry.

The Bill further impresses upon honourable members the important role played by the Licensing Court and the Licensing Commission in respect to various facets of the liquor trade in Queensland. It is important to recognise that the Licensing Commission has a very responsible role to play in regulating the liquor trade in this State. In the 1984-85 report of the Licensing Commission, the commissioners referred to their concern about the number of business failures that had occurred in the industry. They were concerned particularly about traders who did not have the requisite business acumen to enable them to properly execute their tasks and their role, given the privilege to sell liquor that was granted to them. The commission in its report expresses its view that conditions ought to be placed on granting and transferring of licences, such as a condition that a prospective operator of the premises ought to have had adequate experience in the field he wishes to enter. The Liquor Act provides for a great variety of licences to meet the various needs of the liquor industry in this State.

The licensee has some very onerous duties to fulfil in return for the privilege granted to him by the commission. The Liquor Act provides for penalties to be imposed on licensees who serve people who are intoxicated, violent, quarrelsome, abusive, disorderly and so on. Today, a major problem in our society is that of under-age drinking. That is one area in which licensees continue to have considerable difficulty in enforcing the provisions of the Liquor Act and the provisions that place those conditions upon their licences.

The other part of the Liquor Act that it is important to mention in this context is the significance of the liquor industry for Queensland, particularly because of the emphasis that is placed in Queensland on the development of tourist facilities. A large part of the tourist trade revolves around the provision of accommodation and entertainment. An integral part of a tourist development is whether or not the licensee will be granted a restaurant licence or a normal liquor licence.

In recent years, many large tourist developments have taken place in Brisbane, along the Whitsundays, in the north of the State and particularly on the Gold Coast. Big money changes hands among those people with tourist development interests. The Licensing Commission and the Government should be very careful to ensure that privileges that are granted to licensees are not exploited.

Recently, the relationship between certain tourist resort developers and this Government has been the subject of public comment. An article that was published in the *Times on Sunday* of 19 October last year revealed the close and, dare I say it, intimate relationship between developers and this Government. Those claims have been neither denied nor refuted.

It appears that one prominent Government member who has hotel interests has received loans from various developers. For example, that member's company obtained a loan from the Leslie Corporation, a prominent canal-developer on the Gold Coast. However, that loan does not appear on the Leslie Corporation's 1984 balance sheet.

Another loan—this time for $50,000—came from Eddie Kornhauser, the developer of the $120m Paradise Centre in Surfers Paradise.

It is worth pointing out that, because of the passing of special legislation, the H.S.P. (Nominees) Pty. Limited legislation, Mr Kornhauser was able to subdivide the Paradise Centre horizontally, after which he sold off the hotel. That was an example of a liquor licence receiving prominence with shops and Grundys being treated separately. The sale of a hotel in the middle of Surfers Paradise ought to have been quite lucrative.

The most interesting of the transactions concerned an $80,000 loan from the Cowrie Corporation in 1981. That loan was written off in 1984. Apart from the Minister's having generous friends, another issue arises. I am sure that, because the Minister is responsible for corporate records of the State, he would be interested to learn that the Cowrie

Corporation's name does not appear on any company register in Australia—certainly not in Queensland.

The company that received this apparent gift of $80,000 was Waverley Park, which falls into the same category as companies such as Maralinga, Kanni, Belah, Brosner, Lowanna, Rosteph and, of course, Junefair. That name is well known as being associated with the Oxenford Tavern, of which this Parliament has heard much over recent years.

I am disturbed that all of those companies that I have mentioned are family concerns of one of the Minister's colleagues, namely the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing. It is incumbent upon Mr Hinze to explain this extraordinary financial arrangement, which raises questions concerning the Government's association, and particularly the Minister's association with developer interests.

I ask the Minister to investigate the Cowrie Corporation and inform the public as to exactly who Cowrie is—this extraordinary benefactor of $80,000 to Mr Hinze. I believe that the public has a right to know who the directors of that corporation are and the involvement that it and other corporations have with the Government and its Ministers.

I am sure that all honourable members will take a keen interest in matters of association between this Government and developers. This type of association has been prominent in developments such as Sanctuary Cove and the legislation that was passed by this Parliament last night relating to integrated resort development. Debate on both of those Bills was gagged, therefore limiting the rights of all honourable members to contribute to a debate on important matters of State. All honourable members must take a keen interest in ensuring that the Government of this State is totally and thoroughly beyond reproach in its dealings with the corporate sector.

I table that article from the *Times on Sunday* of 19 October of last year so that all honourable members may peruse it. The Minister will then be able to investigate those matters that I have requested him to investigate.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 13, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

RURAL MACHINERY SAFETY ACT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 31 March (see p. 1087).

Mr McLEAN (Bulimba) (4.41 p.m.): On first reading the Bill, the Opposition did not oppose it. However, after looking into it and talking with people, it became quite evident that the Bill did present a problem. The Opposition is opposing it. The Opposition believes that the safety of workers, whether they be farm-owners or farm-workers, should be protected.

Some time ago, the Government brought in a Bill that allowed a period of 10 years before tractors had to be fitted with roll-bars. Now the Government has changed its mind and gone back on that. The reason for that is quite obvious in the Minister's second-reading speech.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister said—

"Under the provisions of the Rural Machinery Safety Act 1976, all wheeled tractors weighing between 560 kilograms and 3860 kilograms inclusive, except those specifically excluded under section 14 of the Act, are required to be fitted with a protective cab or frame. This requirement commenced on 1 January 1978, in respect of new tractors, and on 1 January 1987 for other tractors. Section 14 of the Act provides that the cab or frame shall, together with the attachments for fitting it to the tractor, be in accordance with the provisions of Australian Standard 1636-1984.

Numerous representations have been made to me by associations and persons involved in the rural industry expressing concern that there would be considerable difficulties in fitting roll-over protective structures to earlier model tractors to comply with Australian Standard 1636-1984, which is a test standard and not a design standard."

That sounded okay when the Minister made that statement in his second-reading speech, but it does not stand up to scrutiny. The information that the Opposition has received is that that is not completely true. There are plenty of roll-over protective structures that can be purchased for just about every tractor that has been made, and the ones that are not catered for could be covered by provisions within the Act, anyway.

Quite a deal of pressure must have been placed on the Minister to make him change an Act of this Parliament that had been in existence for quite some time, particularly a few days before one of its provisions was due to be enforced. That occurred with this Act.

The Opposition has no alternative but to oppose the legislation on that ground, as well as the ground of safety.

Whilst the legislation is being debated tonight, a farmer could be killed. I will touch on that later. The farming industry is a particularly dangerous one. I did not realise that because it is not my long suit by any means.

Mr Davis: I was able to help out.

Mr McLEAN: You were. The honourable member for Brisbane Central was a farmer in his younger days. He helped me out by indicating some of the dangers that he faced in his rural career. He was a very successful farmer. Many times when he was driving a cab around Brisbane, he wished that he was back on the farm.

An honourable member: There was more money in it, too.

Mr McLEAN: There was more money in it, too.

Government members ought to realise the dangers that are inherent in the industry because quite a number of them have rural industry backgrounds. When I went through the literature in preparation for the debate on this Bill, I was astounded by some of the facts. I refer to an article that was published in the *National Farmer* and states that on average, every four days an Australian farmer is crushed to death beneath a tractor. If someone had told me that—bearing in mind that I have been arguing in favour of industrial safety most of my working life—I would have thought that that was an exaggeration.

The fact that every four days a farmer is crushed underneath a tractor does not fit well with legislation of this kind that tends to make safety provisions more lenient. It is not the question of money that I am referring to—although I am sure that pressure has been exerted on the Minister to change the original Act by those particular groups that are concerned about financial implications.

Some people might claim that, because farmers have workshops located on the farm, they can build their own machinery. I would have thought that a tractor manufactured earlier than 1978 would not come into the category of being owned by a farmer who would also have a workshop that is capable of manufacturing equipment to the required standard.

Mr Lee: What about the fellow who started off small in 1978 and has since got bigger?

Mr McLEAN: I will take the interjection, and I accept what the honourable member is saying. When I perused the Bill, my initial reaction was the same. However, I point out to the honourable member that the cost of a roll-bar for a tractor—a commercially made roll-bar that has been tested and tried—is between $200 and $400.

Mr Powell: No, it is more than that.

Mr McLEAN: They are the figures that are published by the manufacturers.

Mr Simpson: It cost me $400 and $600.

Mr McLEAN: I repeat that they are the figures that are given to me. I am not in a position to argue about it, because I do not know. I reiterate that I obtained those figures from the people who make the roll-bars.

The question is whether a farmer can build a roll-bar to an adequate standard of safety that will save his life.

Mr Simpson: I am just talking about the cost of them.

Mr McLEAN: What price does the honourable member put on his life?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Cooroora!

Mr Simpson: I am only trying to help him.

Mr McLEAN: I accept the interjections because I do not know the cost of roll-bars. I can only be guided by the literature I have read and the people I speak to in the industry.

I am putting my side of the case. Even if the cost of putting a cage or a roll-bar on a tractor is $500, what price does the wife of a farmer or the mother and father of a boy who works on a farm put on the life of a person who is killed in an accident?

I remind honourable members that a former Minister was killed in a tractor accident, even though he had a roll-bar for his tractor. Unfortunately, at the time he was using the tractor, he did not have the roll-bar on it. I would be willing to bet that his family and his wife wished to God that he had taken the time to put that roll-bar on the tractor. He would have been here today if he had.

Mr Powell: Not necessarily.

Mr McLEAN: Perhaps not necessarily, but there would have been a 90 per cent chance that he would have been here in this House, debating this very Bill.

Mr Powell: Not when a tractor overturns.

Mr McLEAN: A tractor can overturn, but the survival rate, according to the figures that I have, is something like 80 per cent if a decent roll-bar is attached.

Mr Simpson: What about seat-belts for the tractor?

Mr McLEAN: Probably the same thing applies—although accidents can occur in which car seat-belts kill people instead of saving them. I suppose that the same thing could happen with a tractor.

Mr Simpson: The same thing can happen with seat-belts on a tractor.

Mr McLEAN: I am sorry, but I do not understand that.

It is obvious that if on average a farmer is killed every four days of the year, a serious problem exists. It is a more serious problem than I realised.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: It wouldn't be tolerated on an industrial site.

Mr McLEAN: It would not be tolerated to the point that legislation would be enacted. As a party that represents the rural sector, the National Party——

Mr Lee: Do you admit that your party does not represent the rural sector?

Mr McLEAN: No, I did not say that at all. The Labor Party represents the working class, whether they be in the rural sector, the metropolitan sector or any other sector. The Labor Party represents the working-class people. The honourable member's party does not do that, nor does the National Party. The honourable member's party represents big business and the National Party represents the rural class. Everybody knows that. That is not a point of argument.

When a Bill of this nature comes before the House——

Mr Alison: You are wrong again. You said we only represent the rural class. We represent right across the board.

Mr McLEAN: All right, the honourable member's party represents right across the board. We will not go right off the track at this stage. Over the last couple of days I have spent time talking about the Government's industrial relations policies as represented by legislation that has been put through this House, and the National Party most certainly does not represent the worker. I will return to the Bill.

I have seen a number of articles relating to tractor-related injuries. In the *Courier-mail* of Monday, 23 June 1986 a photograph appeared accompanying an article about a boy who was killed by a tractor. The article states—

> "A Mossman boy, 15, was killed yesterday when a tractor he was driving overturned.
>
> Douglas Mark Hall was ploughing on his parent's property on Winebale Road, Mossman, when the plough hit an obstruction about 9 a.m.
>
> The rotary hoe on the tractor caught in the ground, spearing it forward and toppling the tractor down an embankment.
>
> The death was the second tractor fatality in Queensland in two days.
>
> On Friday, a farmer, 60, was crushed to death at Crediton, near Mackay."

It is a serious problem and should be looked at by this Government. After the tractor-owners have been given 10 years in which to put roll-bars on their tractors, and because of pressure from a small group of people, the Government will now legislate to allow tractors over a certain age that do not have a roll-bar fitted to remain in that condition. That is okay if a few people only are concerned because it could be said that they are not in a position to put the roll-bars on. Goodness me! The legislation will apply all over Queensland. The people that have these tractors must have been prepared to put the roll-bars on. They have known for a long time that they had until 1 January this year to do that.

One of the responsibilities of a Government when it passes legislation is to carry that legislation through. Many businesses have set their future plans on what was going to happen after 1 January this year in regard to the sort of supplies that they would need to supply roll-bars for tractors because of the legislation that was put through this House. That has not happened. On 1 January this year the message went out that the Government was going to change the legislation. However, it was too late for a lot of those companies to change their plans. I do not know how involved that is, but it must be reasonably involved because on inquiring into it I found that quite a few companies are claiming that they could go to the wall due to the change in the legislation. If that is the case, surely the Government has a responsibility not to change the legislation to suit the little pressure groups that are complaining because of an outlay of $200 or $300 if a farmer, with his own workshop, can make his own roll-bar to the standard that is safe enough to protect the worker who will be using his tractor. The document that I have shows that the commercial cost of such a roll-bar is between $200 and $400, but

according to interjections from the other side of the House it is a lot more than that—$500 or $600. The farmer has to get the steel to his property, make the roll-bar and test it. Surely to goodness there will not be a great difference in cost.

Mr Simpson: He hasn't got to test it.

Mr McLEAN: He should have to test it. If it is the farmer who is driving the tractor, I do not care if he is putting his life on the line; that is up to him. However, if he uses a young kid to drive the tractor or employs anyone else to work on his property, he should be under the same scrutiny as any other employer in this State and abide by the safety standards that have been tried and tested. Why should a farmer be any different from the employer of people on a building site?

Mr Simpson: You are not being realistic.

Mr McLEAN: Tell me why.

Mr Simpson: The first one has to be tested, and thereafter they are sold on the basis of the proven design. If you take the same specifications and if the steel is properly welded—that is where the problem lies—they should do the same job.

Mr McLEAN: I accept that. Using the proper steel, how much does it cost to make such a roll-bar? The farmer still has to get the steel and the gear needed to do the welding.

Mr Powell: The testing procedures are the problem.

Mr McLEAN: Perhaps that is so.

If Government members would read the article about that 14-year-old boy who was killed on a tractor, they would see that quite obviously the steel used was not adequate. That canopy would have cost a lot of money to build.

A Government member: That is not a roll-bar.

Mr McLEAN: No, I know it is not; but it is still a cover.

Mr FitzGerald: It is a sunshade.

Mr McLEAN: Okay, but that boy is dead. I am arguing that that is wrong. I do not think honourable members disagree with me.

The "Killer Farms" article in the *National Farmer* certainly made me aware of the extent of the problem, which is far greater than I had ever thought. The fact that every four days a farmer is killed by a roll-over stands out even more when it is viewed in the context of the legislation before the House. The article gives the following tractor accident statistics: overturning sideways, 39 per cent; falls from tractor, 15 per cent; run over, 12 per cent; overturning backwards, 10 per cent; caught in PTO, 8 per cent; and others, 16 per cent.

Mr Vaughan: What is a PTO?

Mr McLEAN: I do not know. Could the honourable member tell me?

Mr FitzGerald: It stands for power take-off.

Mr McLEAN: I do not claim to know about these things. At no stage did I say that I know these terms. I want to bring before the House the fact that there is a problem, one which I was not aware was so great.

Mr Eaton: You are concerned with the safety issue.

Mr McLEAN: Yes, I am concerned about that. It is a safety factor.

I do not think the legislation before the House will do very much to solve the problem. All it will do is reduce the pressure that has been put on the Minister by a small group of people.

Mr Powell: Have you got a copy of the amendment?

Mr McLEAN: No, I have not.

Mr Powell: 1970 is the relevant time.

Mr McLEAN: That has cut back the time by eight years.

According to the article from which I have been quoting, the human reasons for the accidents, as defined by Victoria's Agricultural Engineering Centre's officer in charge, Bill Brown, are that farmers and farm-workers usually operate alone and without supervision—everyone is aware of that; farmwork is seldom routine, so that it is hard to build up high, all-round operational skill and safety measures; farmwork takes place in all seasons and weathers, mainly in the open; and farm machinery has a relatively low capital cost, so the cost of safety provisions is relatively high.

That is probably a big issue in this argument. I suppose a 1978 model tractor would not be terribly expensive, and 1970 model tractors would, of course, be even cheaper. The protective covering would probably cost almost as much as the tractor. Perhaps in many cases it is used as a secondary bit of equipment in case something breaks down.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr McLEAN: Exemptions were contained in the Act. I accept that it would be impossible to get a cover that would pass the requirements of the legislation. However, I cannot accept giving people carte blanche to build their own covers.

Mr Simpson: The farmers should buy ones that have been manufactured and tested.

Mr McLEAN: That is what I am trying to say. I think that there could be an accident.

The Opposition opposes this Bill on the grounds that I have outlined. The Opposition is quite surprised that the Government has introduced this sort of legislation. The safety aspect should most certainly be paramount in any legislation. Many people need protection overall. If farmers are driving unsafe equipment, that is their responsibility. However, once they employ a person to drive a tractor for them and to work for them, they should live by the same rules as everyone else in this State.

The Opposition opposes the Bill on those grounds.

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Condamine) (5.03 p.m.): I welcome the opportunity to speak to this Bill. Obviously there are good reasons why the Government has acted the way that it has.

I take on board the comments made by the member for Bulimba. The Government shares his concern in regard to safety in the workplace. However, I will begin by making a comment that might shed some light on the matter.

I believe that many of the safety regulations that pertain to secondary industry would apply to a machine that does the one job over and over, or very few jobs, in a day. While the honourable member for Bulimba was speaking, I was thinking of a farm tractor and I quickly thought of a few of the tasks that it might be used for in a day. It might have to pull an implement to plough, the driveshaft of the PTO might be used to drive a welder, it could be down the paddock drilling a hole in the ground, and the loader on the front could be used to lift bales of hay or other products around. A farm tractor has a multitude of uses.

That is where the trouble begins. It is pretty easy to philosophise and say that safety is the right thing and then try to draft legislation. However, when a multitude of uses is involved, problems arise.

I think that farmers pride themselves on being very practical people. They went along with this legislation. In fact, farmer organisations were party to the legislation introduced in 1977 under which roll-bars and other safety factors had to be fitted to

tractors and other types of machinery. However, when the farmers got down the track a bit further, and started to apply it in a multitude of ways in various farming situations, they encounted problems.

It probably would have been better if the legislation had been modelled on the legislation that made seat-belts in motor cars compulsory. If one had a motor car that was manufactured before the legislation was passed, one was exempt. Governments throughout Australia encouraged people to fit seat belts to vehicles that were manufactured before the legislation was passed. It would have been much safer and tidier if that had been done in the farming scene also. However, it was not done, and 10 years down the track there are anomalies. The honourable member has mentioned that it is very difficult to fix roll-bars to some machines in existence simply because the castings for axles and other things——

Mr McLean: There could be exemptions.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: That is right, but I am told that Crown law opinion is that, unless that kind of an exemption level is contained in the legislation, a certain date of manufacture has to be specified. If that power of exemption is given to the chief inspector of machinery, he becomes legally liable. It is a pretty dangerous sort of a thing to do.

After consultation with various farming bodies and after discussing it among ourselves, the Government has come up with this amendment. This Government believes that there are not too many old tractors—that is pre-1970—that are still around and in use. That kind of tractor is very often the second or third tractor on the farm. It might be started up during harvest-time to tow something around the paddock. It may be used for only 10 or 15 hours a year. That tractor has a specific job to do. If one goes to a machinery yard to buy a tractor of this kind, one might pick up an old Ford or Massey Harris for $2,000 or $3,000 and use it on rare occasions. Once the tyres are worn out, one is damned lucky to keep it running. It is not possible to get the tyres.

Those types of machine are still in existence, and this Government has to be practical. Some farmers even use such tractors as anchor points for travelling irrigators or, with a little blade on the front, to push the grain up to an auger. It does put an onus on the farmer, he has to understand his own circumstances. When a farmer employs workers, he knows what his liabilities are with regard to workers' compensation and the onus of looking after——

Mr Vaughan: He has big ones.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Yes, he knows he has big ones.

Mr McLean: In 1980, one farmer was killed every four days. The people who have been killed would also have been experienced. The figures that I read showed that most of the people had spent at least 10 years——

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Yes, that is right, because the tractors have a myriad of uses. I also read a survey which stated that more accidents on the farm are caused by animals than by machines.

Mr McLean: How many people have been killed by animals? More than that?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I do not have the figures here to quote, but there are more injuries. I am acknowledging that it is dangerous.

The other consideration is money. These fellows have gone to the trouble of fitting themselves up with good workshops with oxy-electric welding torches, grinders and all of the other equipment that they require. They have gone to special schools, such as the Dalby agricultural college, in order to learn how to weld and the various properties of different types of steel. Having spent $5,000, $10,000 or $15,000 in their workshop in order to best utilise the facilities that they have and after undertaking various courses, they feel that they are able to build the roll-bars themselves. Many of these people are hard pressed for money. It is easy to say that it is just a matter of $400 or $600, but

that is only one item. In addition, they are faced with the day-to-day expenses. That being the case, they opt to build their own roll-bars.

As I understand it, the amendment proposed to the Bill will mean that on tractors manufactured between 1 January 1970 and 1 January 1978 the farmer will have the option of either building his own roll-bar to an acceptable standard or buying one that has been manufactured to Australian standards. Obviously, from 1978 onwards, all machines have had this item built in as part of the manufacturing process. It will be phased out pretty quickly.

The whole basis of this Government's argument in proposing the amendment to the Bill is that the people whom we represent take into account all the things that have been spoken about; they take into consideration the cost factor, their own skills and ability and the various anomalies that arise because of old machinery.

I turn to the matter of covering machines with safety covers. I have made a short list. I will use a grain header as an example. During a grain harvest there are augers, belts, universal joints, driveshafts and wheels, all of which are operating at the same time within one machine. It is a machine that does about 8 or 10 jobs at once and is very complex.

As I understand the legislation, the owner will have to provide safe conditions for the operator when he is operating near his machine or on the platform of operation. To a great extent, owners are doing that. The worst possible case that one could think of would be to make it a condition that guards be placed on slashers and motor mowers. It is obvious that such conditions are not necessary. A practical approach must be adopted with legislation. When the legislation was drawn up in 1977, the philosophy was very strong and the idea was good, but it did not quite fit into the actual workplace. That is why the current proposals are contained in the Bill.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the member for Yeronga.

Mr Vaughan: Here's an old farmer now.

Hon. N. E. LEE (Yeronga) (5.11 p.m.): If the honourable member leaves out the "old", he will be right.

The Liberal Party supports the Bill. I agree with what has been said by the speakers before me. The Liberal Party supports anything that may save lives. It believes that this legislation will do that. Honourable members know that certain persons are allowed to design and make their own roll-bar. Many farmers with modern workshops on their farms and in other places can do exactly that.

Mr McPhie: You would be able to do that successfully.

Mr LEE: I would certainly be able to do that with my background in earth-moving, contracting and machinery. After all, I was involved in an earth-moving contracting situation in which I employed 580 men and used 100 tractors. Most of that machinery was in the form of crawler tractors and not wheeled tractors, to which this Bill refers. That gave me a good understanding of tractors.

I am sure that the member for Cunningham has a workshop that has the capacity to make roll-bars as safe as anyone else's.

Mr Simpson: You never lost one every four days.

Mr LEE: I never lost one. In fact, never in my working life did I lose a tractor. I did not ask men to go into dangerous places. If a person does not ask someone to do something that is impossible, accidents do not occur. It is necessary to implement safe work practices.

A badly designed roll-bar is worse than none at all. A badly designed roll-bar gives a tractor-driver a feeling of false security.

Mr Vaughan: What rubbish.

Mr LEE: I was referring to a badly designed roll-bar. If a person has a badly designed roll-bar, he might say, "I can go down into that crevice" or "that dam". Because of the sense of security that he has with the roll-bar over his head—a false sense of security—he might roll the tractor. The honourable member is stupid enough to say that is rubbish. It reflects his lack of understanding of agricultural matters.

Mr Vaughan: That is a cock-eyed argument.

Mr LEE: It is not cock-eyed; it is true.

A badly designed roll-bar could lure a driver into danger spots, places into which he would not go if his tractor did not have a roll-bar attached. As I have said, it gives him a false sense of security. I can fully understand the reasons why exemptions are given. Many tractors on properties and at other places are used solely for their power take-offs. On my property at Roma, I have what is called a SWER, that is, a single wire earth return line. It is an electricity line that allows the use of a motor with a maximum capacity of 7 horsepower. Frequently a farmer needs machinery that has the capacity to drive 50 or 60 horsepower. Although it is not needed to be put on wheels, the simplest thing is to have it on a tractor. Why should it be necessary to have roll-bars on that equipment when it never shifts in its whole life? It might be used to drive elevators so that grain can be lifted into the silos. Hundreds of farmers do that. Why should roll-bars be placed on such a tractor? It would be utterly ridiculous.

The honourable member for Bulimba thought that PTO meant "please turn over". For his information, I point out that that term means "power take-off".

Mr McLean: Thanks very much.

Mr LEE: That is all right. I do not mind providing the honourable member with some of the vast knowledge of the Liberal Party.

As I said, many tractors use the power take-off. Others use the power shift, which turns around the power pulley and the shift and drives a belt that operates the pump. There are hundreds of those sorts of tractors.

Mr McLean: Have you read the Act? They were exempt, anyway.

Mr LEE: No, they are not.

I can fully understand the exemptions. The Liberal Party is concerned for the graziers and the farmers. Why should those people be forced to fit roll-bars to their tractors? Sometimes those roll-bars would cost more than the tractors are worth. How stupid can one get! The rubber on the tyres of those tractors is often so worn that it is impossible even to drive the tractors. They are truly what one would call stationary tractors.

Mr Innes: That is a socialist idea.

Mr LEE: Yes, that is a socialist idea.

I also notice that machinery-inspectors are to be afforded increased protection. I can understand that. I can imagine what would happen after a farmer out on the downs, where there is flat country for miles and miles and miles——

Mr Davis: That's my country.

Mr LEE: It is not the honourable member's country.

I can imagine what would happen if, after that farmer had been out in the fields ploughing all day and came in covered in dust, he was confronted by a machinery-inspector who said, "Hey, Mister, you need a roll-bar on that tractor." The farmer would not be able to roll his tractor if he tried. The first thing that a big, brawny farmer would want to do would be to give that inspector a knuckle sandwich. That is what he would like to do. Therefore, machinery-inspectors need a bit of protection. If that machinery-inspector did not get a knuckle sandwich, he would probably get a shotgun blast in each

ear, or his rear, or whatever one likes to call it. I can understand why the Minister has included in the Bill a provision for increased protection for machinery-inspectors.

Mr Cooper: You are not talking about Roma?

Mr LEE: No, I am not talking about Roma. I am talking about some of those wild people on the downs. The people of Roma are civilised. However, I did purchase a property out there by the name of Fairfield. Because one of the local farmers did not like oil-drillers, he aimed a couple of .303 bullets in their direction. That cured them of leaving gates open. I did not mind his attitude once I had seen the results.

Although it has some reservations, the Liberal Party fully supports the Bill. It realises that it is sensible legislation. Anything that saves lives is supported by the Liberal Party.

Mr ALISON (Maryborough) (5.19 p.m.): As a member of Mr Lester's committee, I support the Bill. This legislation is a reasonable response by a reasonable Government to a very tricky situation. It is tricky in that primary producers, for reasons that I will not go into, are going through a rough period.

As the Act presently stands, new tractors manufactured after 1 January 1978 must be fitted with roll-bars. Other tractors were to have been fitted with roll-bars as from 1 January of this year.

Mr Davis: What would you know about it?

Mr ALISON: I am told by colleagues of the honourable member for Brisbane Central that he would not know the difference between a sulky and a tractor. I assure the honourable member that at least I know the difference between a sulky and a tractor.

The legislation will allow owners of tractors manufactured before 1 January 1978 to fit roll-over bars of their own manufacture.

I now wish to foreshadow an amendment to be moved by the Minister to allow tractors manufactured before 1 January not to have roll-over bars and the owners of tractors manufactured during the period 1 January 1970 to 1 January 1978 to have the option to fit their own roll-over bars.

Mr Vaughan: That is from 1970 to 1978?

Mr ALISON: Yes.

Mr Vaughan: They have got the option?

Mr ALISON: Yes.

I take this opportunity to raise a number of points pertinent to the Bill concerning roll-over protection systems for tractors.

The original legislation relating to roll-over protection systems on tractors was introduced some 11 years ago in response to the serious situation involving roll-overs on tractors resulting in death and serious bodily injury from such accidents. There is little doubt that the fitting of such roll-over systems does have an effect in reducing the number of fatalities and the high cost; both in direct terms and consequently as a result of such accidents.

It is my understanding that most industrialised Western countries throughout the world have introduced similar legislation. In particular, it is understood that Sweden has been quite successful in reducing fatalities due to tractor roll-over accidents almost to zero.

Whilst the legislation passed by this House in 1976 was introduced against the backgound of a high incidence of serious accidents, it is clearly now the case that it would be impractical to require the rigorous application of the Australian Standard on roll-over systems to many very old tractors. The Queensland Cane Growers Council in

1982-83 conducted a survey throughout the Queensland cane-growing industry in an endeavour to determine the usage rates and ages of tractors on cane farms. An important outcome of this research in 1982-83 was that tractors older than 10 years of age at that time, were performing something like only 14 per cent of the total tractor hours within that industry.

It is logical to assume that the proportion of tractors manufactured prior to, say, 1972 would have decreased to a substantial degree in the five years since the Queensland Cane Growers Council conducted its survey. Given that all new tractors manufactured and sold after 1 January 1978 have been required to have roll-over frames fitted, it is clear that the usage of tractors manufactured prior to 1 January 1978 is low and is steadily decreasing. A large number of tractors older than 1 January 1970 generally perform light duties such as use as irrigation anchors and pose a low risk of rolling over.

Another factor which should be considered by honourable members when considering the contents of this Bill is that economies of scale affecting production within the rural industry have meant that farmers have had to progressively upgrade tractors doing the bulk of the work on farms, so that newer, larger machines are employed.

Furthermore, previous Federal Government taxation policy has encouraged, via investment allowances——

Mr Davis: How dare you talk about this!

Mr ALISON: At the moment I am not running the Federal Government down. I will spend some time on that in some other debate.

Mr McPhie: Work that out later on.

Mr ALISON: Yes, we certainly will.

The investment allowance has encouraged the change-over of tractors and upgrading of same.

While on the subject of roll-over protection systems for machinery, I would draw honourable members' attention to the increasing incidence of serious accidents involving heavy earth-moving plant. In particular, it is my understanding that the incidence of roll-over accidents involving road-rolling machines is one that this Government has presently under consideration. To this end, the Honourable the Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs needs to be commended for his present initiatives in discussing these issues with the road-making and earth-moving industry in this State. I understand that there is a consensus of view within the industry that road-rolling machinery and some other specific and dangerous earth-moving plant should be fitted with roll-over protection systems and/or falling objects protection systems.

Mr Simpson: Because they would be outside the weight limit.

Mr ALISON: Yes, I guess so.

I stand in support of this consultative approach being adopted by the Minister and the responsible attitudes being demonstrated by the road-making and earth-moving industry in recognising the need for consideration of these problems.

Finally, I reiterate my support for the changes to the Rural Machinery Safety Act embodied in this Bill, which essentially gives consideration to the declining use of old tractors with age, and the financial plight of many in the rural industry, by not requiring roll-bars to be fitted to tractors older than 1 January 1970 and allowing the owners of tractors manufactured after 1 January 1970 and before 1 January 1978 the right to manufacture roll-over protection systems comparable in quality to——

Mr Hayward: You said before that tractors manufactured prior to 1970 were used for light duties.

Mr ALISON: As I understand, mostly, yes.

Mr Hayward: Wouldn't you also concede it is possible that if that sort of spare tractor is around the farm, it would be used to pull other tractors out of bogs and things like that?

Mr Simpson: Hardly any tractors that had roll-bars were built before 1970.

Mr Hayward: But is that not likely to occur?

Mr ALISON: I would accept my honourable colleague's comment because he would know more about that than I would.

By not requiring roll-bars to be fitted to tractors manufactured earlier than 1 January 1970 and by allowing the owners of tractors that were manufactured between 1 January 1970 and 1 January 1978 the right to manufacture roll-over protection systems of comparable quality, a benefit is embodied in this legislation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! There is so much audible conversation in the Chamber that the Chair can hardly hear the honourable member for Maryborough. Would the Chamber please come to order?

Mr ALISON: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

I would like to see roll-bars put onto all tractors, but the Government must be practical about the problem. I believe that this Government has been practical and reasonable in its approach by bringing forward this further amendment tonight. Balance in these matters must be maintained. Certainly, the safety factor must be taken into account, not only for farmers but also for employees. The Government also has to take into account the present situation of the primary producing sector.

As I said before, I believe that the Government's approach is very reasonable. The legislation, with the amendment that I foreshadowed which will be moved by the Honourable the Minister shortly, reflects that reasonable approach. It is my pleasure to support the Bill.

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (5.27 p.m.): I rise to support the remarks made by the Opposition spokesman.

Mr Lee: Here is the farmer from Brisbane Central.

Mr DAVIS: That is okay. What about the farmer from Yeronga?

Mr Innes interjected.

Mr DAVIS: I love the way this matter is being taken seriously.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable member for Brisbane Central requires the protection of the Chair, I will give it to him. The House will come to order.

Mr DAVIS: I do not require the protection of the Chair.

It is absolutely amazing that the House is debating a Bill about safety—a Bill that is designed to protect the lives of people—yet those ridiculous remarks are being made by people who should know better.

Members of the Labor Party believe that any legislation that will protect the lives of people should be supported. However, we do not believe that this Bill goes far enough.

It is absolutely amazing that a Government that wants to put seat-belts in cars because they save lives does not enforce the same standards in respect of rural safety. The Opposition supports legislation affecting seat-belts because they save lives.

Mr FitzGerald: Retrospectively? That is what this legislation is doing.

Mr DAVIS: When the honourable member is finished, I will continue.

The facts boil down to this: this Bill is a cop-out. Its provisions are slanted to protect country people. It is designed to protect people, such as Government members, from themselves.

As the Opposition spokesman pointed out, many commercial roll-bars have been built, particularly by the Sherwood organisation.

Mr Lee: Oh, you have the letter?

Mr DAVIS: At least I read it, unlike the honourable member for Yeronga. The honourable member for Yeronga is typical of Queen Street farmers. He has a property at Roma that he uses as a tax-dodge. If he can save a dollar or a penny, he is the kind of person who will save it. That is the whole crux of this matter.

Mr McLean: If he had to pay for that letter, he wouldn't read it.

Mr DAVIS: That is so. This legislation boils down to that kind of attitude—save any expense; do not worry about lives; worry about saving some money.

Basically, if it was left to Government members and their supporters, the issue of safety would be left to the people on the farms, the cow-cockies and the graziers who could build their own cages. If some of the Government members and their supporters were able to do so, they would build their cages out of wire netting. That is what they would do. The main factor in their lives is economy.

Mr Lee: You would build it out of barbed wire.

Mr DAVIS: And the honourable member for Yeronga would be one of the best.

As the Opposition spokesman said, it is fair enough if farmers and those who own tractors want to go ahead and not worry about their lives. If they have suicidal tendencies, let them go ahead and do that. As the member for Bulimba stated, when it comes to workers, youngsters and other people who should have protection, it is up to this Government to ensure that they have protection. Earlier, my friend the Christian gentleman from Cooroora stated in answer to an interjection that he supported the member for Bulimba.

Mr Simpson: No, I didn't.

Mr DAVIS: Yes, he did. He should not try to get out of it now, because he is a Christian and he should not tell those untruths. What he said was—and I wrote it down—that he would support the idea of commercial-type cages and——

Mr SIMPSON: I rise to a point of order. So that people in this place and those who may read *Hansard* are not misled, I state that I did not support the member for Bulimba. What I did say was that I would still be recommending that farmers get a properly proven and tested one, but I do not believe that they should necessarily be required by law to do it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I take it that the honourable member has considered himself to be personally maligned by the comments of the member for Brisbane Central. I do not think that that was the case. There is no point of order.

Mr DAVIS: Purely and simply so that I can continue with my address to the gathering, I will withdraw it. I will tell honourable members why the honourable member for Cooroora wants to get out of what he said. It is because when he made that remark the Minister glared at him. If looks could kill, the member for Cooroora would be fairly sick at the present time.

I support entirely the remarks of the member for Bulimba and the Labor Party's attitude to this Bill. What the Labor Party says it will do, it does. It believes in safety for workers and safety for farmers, and that is why the Labor Party opposes the way in which this Bill has been introduced into the House.

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (5.33 p.m.): The first thing that I point out in respect of this legislation relates to a question that has been asked before: what makes people in rural areas—people on farms who own tractors—second-class citizens?

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: Yes. If the anomalies in regard to this matter are looked at and then one casts one's mind back to the time of the introduction of the legislation requiring seat-belts in cars, one will ask: what makes rural people second-class citizens and why should they have retrospective legislation imposed on them? When the seat-belt legislation was introduced everyone said, "Do not impose something on the worker." Many workers bought certain model cars—some of them old cars—that did not have seat-belts fitted. Because of that the Government said, "You do not have to put seat belts in the older cars. What will happen is that from this date on"—that is the date when the legislation was introduced—"new cars will have to have seat-belts." No-one can argue with that. That is precisely what happened. When Fred Campbell introduced that legislation, I remember having quite a considerable discussion with him in the party room about the practicalities of what the Government was trying to do. I am glad that one of the points that I brought up at that time has been accommodated in this legislation. At that time I had a 1270 Case tractor fitted with dual wheels. I remember distinctly saying that it was totally impractical to say that a roll-bar needed to be fitted to that particular type of tractor. That tractor could not be tipped over. It was 16-feet wide. It was on superwide duals. It was used for skip-row work—35-inch rows—and it could not be tipped over in that sort of country, even if one tried all day.

Mr Lee: You couldn't jack it over with a jack.

Mr ELLIOTT: It could not be jacked over. A crane would be needed to tip it over.

Basically, what those on the land were trying to point out at that time was that in some areas this measure was absolute hog-wash and an absolute waste of time and that it put a burden on farmers. At that time farming was going relatively well. At the time that I first entered Parliament my farm was certainly making money. For a few years after that it did quite well. However, there has never been a worse time than now to place an impost upon farming communities.

Because I am elected to represent an area, principally I am talking about it. As has been pointed out by the member for Yeronga and my colleagues the members for Maryborough and Condamine, most of the areas that I am talking about are dead-flat country, with no gullies and, in a large number of cases, do not even have a dam. What some people are saying is that the Government should get a great big sledge-hammer, find a cocky, bash him, cause him a detriment and cost him money. That is the sort of reaction that I am getting from people in my electorate. All I can do is come in here to speak about it and try to influence people. After all, that is what we as members of Parliament should be about.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: If the honourable member for Brisbane Central wants to fit seat-belts to horse saddles and put roll-bars on motor cycles, that is all right.

I put it to the House that the average person who owns and operates a farm has a far different attitude from that. What the Government should be doing is undertaking a massive education program and doing as much as it can by way of publishing pamphlets and sending mail to people to try to encourage them to adopt a responsible attitude to safety. I will tell honourable members now that they can go to all sorts of lengths and pass totally impractical legislation, but between 60 per cent and 70 per cent of the farmers out there will not have a clue that anything has ever been done.

Mr Davis: You are saying that farmers are law-breakers.

Mr ELLIOTT: I am not saying that at all. I said nothing of the sort.

What I am saying is that right now those people out there are so busy trying to keep their farms going and to stop going broke that they do not spend a whole lot of time reading the newspaper or watching television. As a result, they just do not pick up this sort of information. Unless a campaign that actively gets to the people involved is undertaken, they will never know about this legislation.

It ill behoves anyone to come in here and suggest that the Government is anti-safety. In 1978, by legislating that tractors built after that time be fitted with roll-bars, the Government demonstrated pointedly that it supported safety. I think it is most unfortunate that, when that legislation was framed, consideration was not given to the areas in which tractors were to be used. I believe that if a tractor was to be used for a certain application that did not require a roll-bar it should have had written physically for it a note of exemption. Upon resale, it would have to be fitted with a roll-bar only if it was to be used in a steep area.

Mr Davis: Have you got a roll-over bar?

Mr ELLIOTT: I have a roll-over protection canopy—a ROPS canopy—on my current tractor because it came from America fitted with one.

Mr Davis: How much did it cost?

Mr ELLIOTT: It was not an optional extra. It came as standard equipment. When a person buys that sort of tractor he has no discretion on whether he will have a roll-bar.

Mr Lee: Most tractors today even have air-conditioned cabins.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is right. My tractor has an air-conditioned cabin.

There is no longer an argument on this matter. No-one in my area is arguing that new tractors should not be fitted with ROPS-type canopies.

Most farmers know that regardless of whether they themselves are driving the tractor, their son is driving or they are paying someone else to drive the tractor, if the driver is sitting in an air-conditioned cabin, they will get better performance. Also, the person who is driving the tractor will give a far better performance. In fact, it is an investment in productivity to put a cabin on a tractor.

Mr Davis: Then why worry about it?

Mr ELLIOTT: Because we are talking about retrospectivity.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: Unfortunately, we are talking about retrospectivity.

Mr Davis: They were told.

Mr ELLIOTT: They knew nothing of it at all. It is just not good enough to say that they did.

Quite frankly, after all the consultation that has taken place and the consideration that has been given to the legislation, particularly by those members who represent rural areas, the stage has been reached at which there is now a practical alternative. I think that the amendments are reasonable. Now there is something that at least approaches an acceptable format for making certain that safety is catered for without going overboard.

I urge the Minister to keep in mind the protective features for shaftings, pulleys, belts and so on and to ensure that problems are not caused for people who are obviously not at risk when they are operating a tractor. I think that has been accommodated.

I thank those concerned for their patience and assistance. I support the Bill.

Mr RANDELL (Mirani) (5.42 p.m.): I have great pleasure in congratulating the Minister on coming to grips with this problem and making a decision. Pressure has been put on the Minister from many groups who are all trying to further their own causes and obtain relief.

No doubt other honourable members have received letters, as I have, from grain-growers and cane-growers in particular putting forward their own cases. I share their concerns and I commend them for bringing those concerns to my attention.

The attitude of the member for Brisbane Central is disgraceful. I think that the honourable member would grind every farmer into the ground if he could. In every speech that the honourable member makes in this Chamber on the rural sector he attacks the farmers.

Mr McLean: He is a farmer himself.

Mr RANDELL: If he is a farmer, he is a disgrace to the farming community. He tries to grind the farmers into the ground. I remind the honourable member for Brisbane Central that some of the best workers in Queensland—and they consider themselves to be workers—are the farmers, and he grinds them into the ground in every way he can.

Mr Davis: I'm trying to help them.

Mr RANDELL: *Hansard* will show that the honourable member has criticised the farmers and tried to grind them into the ground. I do not want to hear any more from him.

Even though I do not agree with him politically, the Opposition spokesman shows a concern for growers. His concern, and the concern of every member of this Parliament, is to save lives. However, the Government will go about doing it in a way that is different from that suggested by the Opposition.

The Government has to accommodate people, it has to try to get the best deal that it can and it has to ensure that farmers put some roll-over protection on their tractors in order to save lives. That is what the Bill is all about. The Minister is to be commended for introducing this legislation. He is doing a great deal of good for this State.

The main concern of the Minister and, as I have said, of every member of this Parliament, is to save lives and to protect people from injury. The Minister is a sincere man. He is doing what he sincerely believes is best for everybody. No matter what legislation the Minister introduced, the Opposition would criticise it. There is no doubt about that.

Most honourable members would be aware that Queensland is in the midst of an enormous rural economic depression. Some farmers have genuine financial difficulty and cannot find the money to fit frames to tractors. If they could do so, they would. It is no good the member for Brisbane Central saying that they should find the money; they just cannot.

There are many farmers in this community who are only on their properties by the good grace of the bank. The banks have put them there and they are caretakers on the farms. Those farmers are given $150 or $200 a week to buy food and they work the farm. If they have three or four tractors on the farm, it is no good saying that they must find $1,500 or $2,000. They cannot find the money to put those roll-over frames on the tractors.

This Government's concern is to try to give some protection to the people who are driving those tractors. If the honourable member for Brisbane Central does not back that, then he is not genuine in his attempts to try to save the lives of Queenslanders in rural communities.

Mr Davis: Do you support saving lives?

Mr RANDELL: I support saving lives.

If the farmers cannot fit those roll-bars, what happens then? Will a policeman go out, prosecute them, arrest them and put them in gaol? That will not put roll-bars on tractors or save any lives. It must be coped with in a sensible way.

Mr Stephan: Do you know that there are an average of five deaths a year in Queensland, which is one every 70 days?

Mr RANDELL: Yes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I have to advise the honourable member for Broadsound that he may not cross the Chamber between the member who is speaking and the Chair.

Mr RANDELL: Many farmers in my electorate have good workshops on their properties which are left over from better days. If a design was given to them, they could build a frame themselves and put it on a tractor. That would help to save lives. I agree with the Minister that they should be encouraged to buy a suitable frame; but, if they cannot, surely it is better to have the protection of a home-made roll-bar. All tractors manufactured after 1978 should be equipped with roll-bars.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr RANDELL: That is a disgraceful remark from the honourable member for Brisbane Central. It shows once again his attitude towards rural communities. Those people do not do that kind of thing. The honourable member for Brisbane Central should be ashamed of himself for saying such a thing.

When the farmer does buy a roll-over frame, is it adequate? This Government is saying, "Buy roll-over frames", but I would like to quote a letter I have received from one of my constitutents. I will not name the firms concerned and I would like the honourable member for Brisbane Central to listen. The letter states—

"Dear Sir,

I am one of the farmers unfortunate enough to have purchased one of your 3 Post Roll Over Bars—Model F134, Serial No. 3636 to fit 5000/7000 Ford. Purchase was made through . . . for the price of $495.

I have a 1975 Ford 5000 and the following alterations had to be carried out in order to have the frame fit my tractor:".

He bought the frame and fitted it onto the tractor. The letter continues—

"1. Bolt holes on front mounting are out of line and frame had to be heated and bent to fit.

2. Top cross bar on back mounting on roll bar had to be completely cut out.

Bottom side bolt holes had to be cut out to fit as they were ¼" out of alignment.

3. After mounting I had to cut up to 3" from the back top angle iron so that the top linkage pins could be used, and now find that I cannot use the swinging draw bar as it hits the bottom of the frame.

4. The top mountings were completely out. The back of the mounting touched but the front was still ½" apart. To fix this longer bolts were inserted and forced to fit.

With alterations it took 2 adults 4 hours to fit this Roll Over Bar."

I emphasise that he purchased a roll-over bar of the recommended kind, did all the right things, put it on the right tractor and it took two men four hours to fit it.

The letter continues—

"We were advised that any alterations to the frames would not be approved by the Safety Standards, yet modications were necessary in this instance. Therefore, so far as Safety Regulations are concerned, this frame is now a complete waste of money. I could have constructed a safer fitting frame myself for a lot less money."

Mr Davis: What company is this?

Mr RANDELL: I am not going to give the name, because I do not do that kind of thing. I will let the honourable member for Brisbane Central read this letter afterwards.

The letter continues—

"I am extremely disappointed with the standard of workmanship of this Roll Over Bar and consider the price of $495 very overinflated for the product supplied."

I would like the Minister in his reply to advise me if that fellow will be immune from prosecution in case of an accident. Is he still liable? He has done all the right things: he has purchased the recommended kind of roll-over bar; he put it on the right tractor; he did the best he could to fit it. Will he be immune from prosecution in the event of an accident?

I commend the Minister on this amendment. He has grappled with a difficult job. Everyone concerned is trying to do the right thing, which is to save lives. I am sure that the Minister is at the forefront, doing exactly the same thing.

Mr VAUGHAN (Nudgee) (5.50 p.m.): I believe that the House has lost sight of what this Bill is all about. In order for people to understand what this Bill is about, I wish to place on record that in 1976 legislation was passed that all tractors manufactured after January 1978 had to be fitted with roll-bars. Those farmers who had tractors which did not have roll-bars fitted to them and which were manufactured prior to 1 January 1978 had up until January 1987 to fit roll-bars. Although they had 10 years to carry out the requirements of the legislation, they have not done so. From what Government members said tonight, it is obvious that the farmers have not, in the interests of their families, their workers and themselves, in a 10-year period chosen to avail themselves of the legislation that was introduced to protect them. I heard the member for Cunningham say that nobody told the farmers about that and that nothing was done to make them aware of the provisions of the legislation.

The Division of Occupational Safety of the Queensland Department of Employment and Industrial Affairs issued a document at the time that the legislation was passed. I suggest that a copy of it would have gone to all farmers. If it did not, something was wrong, because we have a farmers' Government in this place. The document states—

"R.O.P.S. save lives

Do You Know?

The Rural Machinery Safety Act came into force on 1st January, 1977

The Act requires the provision of a Protective Cab or Frame over the Driver's Seat on a Tractor for the following:—

	Exemption Period
(a) New Tractors sold on or after commencement of this Act	1 year
(b) Any other Tractor (i.e. Existing Tractor) refer clause 14 below	10 years

that is
1st January, 1987".

I repeat that farmers have had 10 years to do something about it. It is a fact of life that they have not done anything. Not having done that, they come into this place and they want to amend the legislation further to allow them to fit their own cabs. As has been said by other speakers, if a farmer wants to hop onto his own tractor and go out and kill himself, that is entirely up to him.

Mr RANDELL: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is misleading the House. Many farmers have fitted roll-bars to their tractors. The Government is concerned about the people who have not fitted roll-bars. I would like the honourable member to correct what he has just said.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! As I do not consider that it was a personal reflection, there is no point of order.

Mr VAUGHAN: If the legislation that was enacted in 1976 had been carried out, members would not be debating this Bill tonight. The fact is that people have not complied with that legislation.

As I said, if a farmer wants to drive a tractor without a cab, that is his business. Farmers employ people who, when injured, are entitled to workers' compensation.

In the early hours of Wednesday morning, the Industrial (Commercial Practices) Bill was passed in this Chamber. That legislation makes it virtually impossible for a farm-worker to refuse to drive a tractor when instructed to do so by his boss.

Mr Randell: That's not right.

Mr VAUGHAN: Under the Industrial (Commercial Practices) legislation that was passed on Wednesday morning, a worker who refuses to carry out an instruction is guilty of a breach of a provision of that legislation. Firstly, a driver cannot refuse to drive a tractor without a roll-bar. If he refuses to drive it, he can be prosecuted by the farmer, he can be dealt with under the provisions of the legislation, or he can be sacked.

I am concerned also about those farmers who choose under the legislation to install their own roll-bars of a standard that will in the opinion of the owner of the tractor adequately protect the person using it. Where does that place the farmer in the event of an injury to his employee? I would say that the farmer is leaving himself wide open. If an employee is injured and it can be proved that the farmer had not carried out the satisfactory installation of a roll-bar, the employee would not be covered by workers' compensation. The farmer would not be covered by workers' compensation and he would be leaving himself open to a civil damages claim for negligence. That is the matter that concerns me.

I know that the legislation will be passed. However, the Opposition sounds a note of warning. Opposition members are concerned about the workers who will be employed. As far as I am concerned, what Government members do to themselves is of no consequence. I am concerned about them, but if they are silly enough, for the sake of a few hundred dollars, they can go ahead and run the risks involved.

When the legislation was passed in 1976, farmers were in a favourable financial position. However, they are not doing very well now. They have had 10 years to fit roll-bars. I am concerned for those workers who are directed to drive those tractors. I am concerned also about workers' compensation claims and civil damages claims by employees.

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Leader of the House) (5.56 p.m.), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contributions and, in some cases, their most impassioned pleas. I thank the honourable member for Bulimba, Mr McLean, for his contribution. The figures that he provided to the House, outlining the number of people killed in tractor accidents, were true in 1980 but they are not true today.

Mr McLean: A lot more roll-bars since.

Mr POWELL: I was just about to make that comment. Because legislation was introduced in this and other Parliaments requiring roll-bars to be fitted to tractors, the honourable member's figures are no longer correct.

Roll-bars do not prevent people from being killed in tractor accidents. Unfortunately, fatalities from tractor accidents occur in many other ways. I believe that most people recognise the value of fitting roll-bars to tractors, particularly wheeled tractors that are used on broken or uneven ground.

The honourable member for Cunningham succinctly pointed out that, where tractors are used on level ground, there is very little likelihood of their rolling over. The Government must approach legislation governing the fitting of roll-bars in a very sensible and pragmatic way.

The honourable member for Nudgee was one of the honourable members who mentioned litigation. I point out to him that the way in which roll-bars are manufactured is one aspect to be considered in litigation. I own a tractor that is used fairly regularly on my property. The roll-bar that could be fitted to that tractor would make it difficult to carry out its functions.

Another point that must be made about roll-bars, which are made from steel, is that on tractors that are used for distributing fertiliser, the fertiliser could accumulate in the area where the roll-bar is fitted to the tractor. Fertiliser is very corrosive, and those roll-bars can rust.

Mr Vaughan: You have heard of water?

Mr POWELL: Yes, I have heard of water.

Mr Vaughan: You can hose them down.

Mr POWELL: The honourable member for Nudgee shows a total lack of understanding of farming techniques and the way in which tractors are used. Fertiliser is very corrosive. When it is mixed with water it is even more corrosive. As a result, rust will occur on roll-bars. Although a person may believe that he is totally protected by having a roll-bar fitted to his tractor, once rust has set in, that roll-bar proves to be totally ineffective. All of the honourable member's arguments can be refuted very easily.

The honourable members for Maryborough, Cunningham, Mirani, Yeronga and Condamine made the point that the Government is being practical in what it is doing. Reference has been made to tractors that were made prior to 1970. The vast majority of those tractors are used for stationary purposes and are exempt, anyway. It is nonsense to suggest that, if a tractor is being used to tow a farm implement from one place to another, is used on the odd occasion with a slasher or is used to scuffle some ground or something like that, it should have a roll-bar fitted. The proposed amendment is perfectly reasonable and sensible. I thank all honourable members for their contributions.

I ask the honourable member for Mirani to refer the letter from his constituent to the Minister so that an accurate reply can be given.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion agreed to.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Committee

Hon. L. W. Powell (Isis—Leader of the House) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5—

Mr POWELL (7.31 p.m.): I wish to move an amendment to clause 5. I think that the reasons for the amendment have been canvassed fairly adequately during the second-reading debate. I will not bore honourable members with those details again.

I move—

"At page 2, omit clause 5 and substitute—

'**5. Amendment of s. 14. Wheeled tractors—protective cab or frame.** Section 14 of the Principal Act is amended by—

(a) omitting from subsection (1) all words from and including the words "in accordance with" to the end of the subsection and substituting the following words:—

"—

(a) where the tractor was manufactured prior to 1 January 1978—

(i) in accordance with the provisions of Australian Standard 1636-1984 Protective Cabs and Frames for Agricultural Wheeled Tractors published by the Standards Association of Australia;

or

(ii) of a standard such as will in the opinion of the owner of the tractor adequately protect any person using it;

(b) where the tractor was manufactured on or after 1 January 1978, in accordance with the provisions of Australian Standard 1636-1984 Protective Cabs and Frames for Agricultural Wheeled Tractors published by the Standards Association of Australia.";

(b) in subsection (2)—

(i) omitting from the end of paragraph (b) the expression "." and substituting the expression ";";

(ii) inserting after paragraph (b) the following paragraph:—

"(c) a tractor manufactured prior to 1 January 1970." ' "

The effect of the amendment is that those tractors manufactured prior to 1 January 1970 do not have to conform to the roll-over bars provision.

Mr McLEAN: Although the Opposition agrees that the amendment is a great improvement on the original proposal, it feels that it must oppose the amendment. The proposed section 14 (1) (a) (ii), which states, "of a standard such as will in the opinion of the owner of the tractor adequately protect any person using it", is quite broad. The Opposition feels that that sort of provision is too broad when dealing with safety. The Opposition opposes this clause. Although I appreciate some of the argument that was put as to the reason for the amendment, I do not think that it adequately covers——

Mr Gately: You admitted you didn't know what it was about.

Mr McLEAN: There is the idiot. There is always one in every Parliament, and that's it.

Although there was good argument for change and the amendment is a large improvement, the Opposition feels that it must oppose this clause of the Bill.

Amendment agreed to.

Question—That clause 5, as amended, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 49		NOES, 22
Ahern	Katter	Braddy
Austin	Knox	Campbell
Beanland	Lane	Casey
Beard	Lee	Comben
Berghofer	McKechnie	D'Arcy
Booth	McPhie	De Lacy
Borbidge	Menzel	Eaton
Burreket	Muntz	Gibbs, R. J.
Clauson	Neal	Goss
Cooper	Newton	Hamill
Elliott	Powell	Hayward
Fraser	Randell	Mackenroth
Gately	Schuntner	McLean
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherlock	Palaszczuk
Gilmore	Sherrin	Smith
Glasson	Simpson	Smyth
Gunn	Slack	Vaughan
Gygar	Stephan	Warner
Harper	Stoneman	Wells
Harvey	Tenni	Yewdale
Henderson	White	
Hinton		
Hinze		
Hobbs	*Tellers:*	*Tellers:*
Hynd	Littleproud	Davis
Innes	FitzGerald	Prest

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clauses 6 to 9, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

Third Reading

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

SUGAR MILLING RATIONALIZATION (FAR NORTHERN REGION) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 8 April (see p. 1558).

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order!

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (7.44 p.m.): The Minister got it wrong. What would you expect?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much movement in the Chamber. Honourable members will either be seated or leave or expedite their intentions. I call to order the member for Glass House. I ask honourable members to be seated.

Mr De LACY: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. As I was saying before the House was made peaceful again, the Minister got this legislation wrong. What would you expect? It was prepared——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I call to order the member for Cooroora. This is the third occasion in the last two minutes on which I have had to ask the House to come to order. There has been no result. If the House does not come to order, I will warn several members under Standing Order 123A.

Mr De LACY: Mr Deputy Speaker, this is such a riveting subject one would think that the House would be spellbound.

The original legislation was prepared in secret—in the still of the night, as it were—without consultation with the industry and was rushed through the House without full and open debate. At that time the Opposition foreshadowed that there would be problems with it. Lo and behold! Within a fortnight an amendment to the original legislation is before the House. I draw to the attention of honourable members that this is the second Sugar Milling Rationalization (Far Northern Region) Bill to come before the House this session. The first was before the House only a fortnight ago. When will the House see the third? The only reason that will be delayed for several months is that the House is rising tonight.

The Minister did everything possible to make a mockery of Parliament and a joke of the Westminster system. He prepared the Bill without consultation. He introduced the Bill to the House and, by suspending Standing Orders, ensured that it would be debated before the Opposition had time to consider it. Then the Government gagged the debate and rushed the legislation through.

I do not think the Minister is justified in saying that the anger in the Innisfail area has been dissipated. If it has been dissipated, why will the Minister not go to Innisfail and talk to the growers? He has made two secret visits to far north Queensland. As the member for Sherwood interjected during the debate on the Sugar Acquisition Act Amendment Bill, the Minister is now being referred to by the industry as the sugar Pimpernel—he cannot be found. Certainly, the growers in Innisfail cannot find him. It came as a surprise to everyone to find that he visited the area again this week. On Tuesday he made another secret visit to north Queensland and spoke with people selected by him because he knew that he could speak amicably with them.

There is a great body of growers and a great body of workers in Innisfail who have many problems and who would like to discuss them with the Minister so that they could put forward their point of view. The Minister simply cannot understand the way these people think unless he speaks to them at first hand. That is something that he has never done.

This legislation demonstrates that the National Party Government is much more prepared to listen to millers than to growers and workers. I appreciate that some problem has been found with providing easements to the Mourilyan mill and that it was necessary to bring the Bill before the House so that there would be no problems during the season. All honourable members know that if problems arise—particularly legal problems, which can never be resolved quickly—they can cause a great deal of disruption to the crushing season.

I feel confident that, had the growers said to the Minister that they had a particular problem, the Minister would have turned a deaf ear. In fact, I go as far as saying that the growers would not even have got an audience with him.

I intend to speak very briefly because I do not want to take up the time of the House. I want to leave some time for the Liberal Party to make its point of view and for some of my colleagues to make a contribution. I simply say that the Labor Party does not support the Sugar Milling Rationalization (Far Northern Region) Act at all. I appreciate that there may be a need for some decisions to be made within the industry and that the industry needs some leadership, but there is a difference between leadership and dictatorship. I am certain that the Minister is confusing the qualities of someone like Abraham Lincoln with those of someone like Pinochet in Chile. The only sensible way to work out the problems of the sugar industry is to sit down with the members of that industry and talk it through. Once all the points of view in the industry have been discussed—and Heaven knows there are enough of them—perhaps a decision should be made.

As far as the Labor Party is concerned, the Cane Growers Council is the principal body representing the sugar industry. It represents the growers. As far as the Labor Party is concerned, the growers represent two-thirds of the industry. That is a tried and true principle in the sugar industry. The Cane Growers Council is the only statutory body which represents the sugar industry.

There is concern in the industry that even the Cane Growers Council could be in jeopardy. As the Minister would be aware, the Cane Growers Council did not support this legislation. The Labor Party does not support the legislation. The reason why the Cane Growers Council does not support the legislation and the reason why the Labor Party does not support it is that for the first time in the 70 years since the sugar industry was put on a proper legislative basis, legislation has been introduced which overturns the powers of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board.

The Central Sugar Cane Prices Board is sacrosanct in the sugar industry. Two pieces of legislation, both passed in 1915, form the basis of the structure of the sugar industry. I refer to the Sugar Cane Prices Act and the Sugar Acquisition Act. Those are the pieces of legislation that are accepted by the whole industry, and certainly by the growers.

In 1987, for the first time, a National Party Government has attacked that basic underlying principle of the industry. For that reason, the Opposition cannot support the Bill, and that is the reason why the Cane Growers Council cannot support it.

Only a moment ago I was speaking with the member for Mourilyan, Mr Eaton, who told me that concern has been expressed in the Innisfail area——

Mr Eaton: There is great concern by the suppliers to the Mourilyan mill. They have been supplying that mill for years. The Central Sugar Cane Prices Board has been overridden, and they are unsure that there is any future for the board.

Government members interjected.

Mr De LACY: I thank the member for Mourilyan. Government members are saying that the member for Mourilyan is making a speech. The only opportunity some honourable members have of putting their viewpoint in this Chamber is by way of interjection.

The Labor Party did not support the initial legislation, because full consultation with affected growers did not take place. The Labor Party believes that the legislation

is discriminatory in that it discriminates against particular growers and workers in the Innisfail area. It sets a dangerous precedent in that it overrides the long-standing and highly respected powers and functions of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board.

There will be many unforeseen consequences of this legislation. However, if ever honourable members wanted evidence of the fact that problems will arise, they have got it tonight. Already the Act requires amending.

Has any study ever been undertaken into the consequences of the increased crushing season at the Babinda and Mourilyan mills? Do those growers who have been rezoned into Mourilyan and Babinda mills know what will happen to their assignments in five years' time when this particular legislation runs out?

Mr Harper: They would have to be as stupid as you if they don't.

Mr De LACY: I beg the Minister's pardon?

Mr Harper: They would have to be as silly as you if they don't.

Mr De LACY: The Minister's interjection deserves a response. If the Minister thinks that the growers are as stupid as I am, or that we are all stupid, I cannot see why the Minister cannot go to Innisfail and either tell the growers that they are stupid or tell them what the answers to their very real problems are.

All I am doing in this Chamber is passing on the concerns which the growers have expressed. And, believe me, they have expressed concerns! The Minister is not justified in believing that there is not anger and that there is not resentment in the Innisfail area. It is all very well for the Minister to sit in this Chamber a thousand kilometres away and rush legislation through, and then say that the growers do not know what they are talking about or that we are all stupid. These are people whose livelihood has been threatened and whose interests have not been fully taken into account. I and the people of Innisfail resent the comments made by the Minister just now.

These people have some specific queries and perhaps the Minister could address himself to them. They have been conveyed to me by the growers, particularly those who are currently supplying the Mourilyan mill. The questions are as follows: will the Minister give a guarantee that growers will not lose income if the mill will not agree with growers to compensation for loss of income through a drop in c.c.s. levels after the 22 weeks have expired? Will the 22 weeks be counted from the first day of crushing and not the number of actual crushing days allowed, when of course some cane will be lost due to wet weather, shut-downs, break-downs and other stoppages? Will compensation be paid for loss of tonnage in the next year if cane is stood over if the mill does not reach its peak or if cutting does not finish during this season because of inclement conditions? And, what protection will be available to those growers supplying the Mourilyan mill if the mill and the growers cannot agree on compensation?

Mr Campbell: They cannot go to the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board.

Mr De LACY: That is right, they cannot go to the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board because this piece of legislation overrode that board.

To summarise, the Labor Party opposes, as strongly as it knows how, the Sugar Milling Rationalization (Far Northern Region) Act. The Opposition believes that it reflects the point of view of the cane-growers of Queensland as has been enunciated by the Queensland Cane Growers Council and certainly reflects the very real concern of the growers in the Innisfail area. However, in all fairness, the Opposition cannot oppose this piece of amending legislation, the Sugar Milling Rationalization (Far Northern Region) Act Amendment Bill. If it facilitates the crushing of cane in this season, obviously the Opposition will support it.

I will conclude at this point and hope that two or three other members will express their point of view.

Mr MENZEL (Mulgrave) (7.58 p.m.): Naturally, I rise to support this amending legislation. It is quite a simple Bill to ensure that the easements that were previously Goondi easements will be legitimate, cannot be challenged and are watertight. That is extremely important.

The previous speaker asked the Minister several questions and no doubt the Minister will answer them, but I believe common sense should prevail. One of the questions referred to the 22-week guarantee. Certainly the Goondi growers, before they were supplying cane to the Goondi mill, often crushed cane up to about Christmas-time. There was never any talk about guaranteeing a maximum of 22 weeks. It is ridiculous to ask, "What about the beginning of the season with the rain at the beginning of the year?"

Mr De Lacy: These are the Mourilyan growers I am talking about.

Mr MENZEL: I am talking about Mourilyan growers as well. I will forget about the Goondi growers and will talk about the Mourilyan growers. Over the years one has always had to accept that there is a likelihood of rain at the beginning of crushing and growers have never asked for any guarantees at that time.

Mr Eaton: Some of those clauses in the Bill refer to unforeseen events that let the millers off the hook.

Mr MENZEL: I do not believe that. I have seen the guarantees that have been given by both mills. I am certain that the Minister has spoken to the mills and the mill suppliers' committee recently and received their assurance that the 22-week guarantee for the c.c.s. calculation will be carried out. Other problems have been referred to.

Today, the representatives of the Goondi Mill Suppliers Committee, or what is left of it, and the Babinda Mill Suppliers Committee had discussions. I understand that they are quite happy and that they are working out an amicable solution to their problems. Many of their fears have been based on hysteria, lies and political propaganda.

Mr Harper: Political manipulation.

Mr MENZEL: There is no doubt that there has been political manipulation.

Mr De Lacy: By whom?

Mr MENZEL: By the Labor Party and by agri-politics. Unfortunately, positions in the sugar industry are being lost.

Mr Eaton: Will the 22 days start from the first day of crushing, or will they take in a week's closure for wet weather?

Mr MENZEL: The Minister will answer that question. Anyway, I think that the honourable member should be able to work that out for himself. A decision must be made at some time. As I have been in the industry for a few years, I would say that it would be from the day that the mill begins crushing. I would be very surprised if there was any change to that. One accepts that in the first couple of weeks the mills do not usually crush a great deal of cane. That is regarded as an acceptable standard.

As to easements—one has to make sure that the legislation is watertight. Different individuals are stirred up by different matters. They will argue whether or not an easement is legal. Effectively, that could stop harvesting. If a cane-farmer had an easement or a loco line passing through his property that fed out to many other farms, the orderly harvesting and crushing of other people's cane could be stopped. It is okay for someone to say, "I don't want a loco coming onto my property and picking up my cane. That is my business." If other people are affected by that, it is in the interests of the Government to make a decision. The Government will probably cop a certain amount of flak because people will say, "You have rushed in." The Government did not rush in.

Following the drafting of legislation, it is nothing new for problems to be found when Bills are checked and examined by the parties involved. It has happened in the

past and it will happen again. It does not matter whether the gag was applied, whether the legislation was introduced on the same day or whether it laid on the table for one or two weeks. It is most likely that the problem would not have been noticed until the legislation was passed. The Labor Opposition, which says that it must oppose everything, did not pick up that matter even though the Bill was not very large.

Mr De Lacy: Be fair—you never showed it to us.

Mr Innes: Don't be ridiculous; they had no time to do it.

Mr MENZEL: It is my understanding that the Opposition saw the Bill on the afternoon before it was introduced. One would think that the illustrious lawyer in the Chamber would have picked that up at a moment's notice.

Mr Eaton: If we're bush lawyers, he's a kerbstone barrister.

Mr MENZEL: Is that so?

Mr Innes: We wanted time to consult people.

Mr MENZEL: I do not know about consulting people; the honourable member is supposed to be good enough to advise people on the law.

With tongue in cheek, I would say that the majority of the members of the Cane Growers Council are happy that it is over. It is a relief to them. Having spoken to a number of them privately, I can say that they are happy that it is out of the way. I suppose that they had to oppose any interference publicly with the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board.

Mr De Lacy: You used to support that board come hell or high water.

Mr MENZEL: I still support it 100 per cent.

Members of the Cane Growers Council realised that a solution had to be found. A great deal of consultation can take place in the industry. As more consultation takes place, new ideas are put forward. The 28 mill areas would have about 50 different ideas. In one area the mill will have one idea, the mill suppliers will have another idea and the growers will have yet another idea. If everyone was consulted, it would be possible to end up with a hundred different ideas. Consultation is not always practical.

I commend the Minister for having the guts and the foresight to do what is right, to make a decision and to be prepared to stick by it. There is no doubt that he made the correct decision. I believe that Opposition members made a fuss about this simply because they thought the Government would back down and that they would get their own way. However, Opposition members are now accepting it. There is no doubt that there is general acceptance within the community, particularly amongst the farmers.

The real losers have been the mill-workers of the Goondi mill who may not get jobs. I understand that, because of the expansion that is going on at Mourilyan and Babinda mills, those mills will be taking on additional workers. I have been led to believe from reliable sources that the sacked workers from the Goondi mill will be employed at either the Mourilyan or the Babinda mill. If any mill employee is displaced, he will be the real loser.

Before this legislation was considered, the Goondi mill was going to shut down, anyway. No matter what happened, Goondi mill was going to shut down. It is incorrect for the media, the Labor Party and other people to suggest that, by the introduction of sugar-milling rationalisation legislation, the Government shut down the Goondi mill. It did not shut that mill down at all. Goondi mill was going to shut down of its own accord. It was simply a matter of where the cane from that area would be crushed.

The Government acted with the interests of the community in mind. That was endorsed by the SMAC committee. As the judges said during the hearing, the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board does not have the power to make decisions that are basically

in the interests and the common good of the State, the community or the nation. Those decisions are made by Governments. In this case, it has been made by the State Government, which must be commended.

From time to time, Governments—whether they are Labor, National or Liberal—must make unpopular decisions that are, nevertheless, the correct decisions. In this particular case the Government has made the right decision. It cannot be ridiculed because a flaw existed in the legal technicalities of the legislation. Of course, lawyers are in business to make money, and the Government has probably had a dozen different opinions on that aspect.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr BEARD (Mount Isa) (8.07 p.m.): A scribe, who shall remain unnamed, penned a few pearls of wisdom as follows—

The Minister who rules sugar-cane,
Gave the growers of Goondi a pain.
With a stroke of his pencil
He repaid Max Menzel,
But he got it wrong—and had to do it again.

It is not my intention to treat this matter lightly. It is a serious matter. However, with gags, guillotines and the sausage machine, seven pieces of critically important legislation have been passed by this House in just a few hours tonight. This is not lightweight stuff. Many honourable members have treated it as a joke. Sometimes I feel that there is not much that we can do about it other than to have a bit of a laugh. Legislation is thrown on the table. We barely have time to read it, let alone understand its complexities and debate it a couple of hours later. Now we have this.

After pushing the Act through under the guillotine a couple of weeks ago, the Government found it necessary to make a few corrections. This is typical of what happens when things are rushed. When anything is rushed, mistakes happen. I will bet that some poor public servant is looking right down the barrel as a result of this.

I have been advised, and I have reason to believe—my source being impeccable—that, in a previous Parliament when this Minister was Minister for Justice, he ignored advice and warnings about the poorly drafted amendments to an Act. As a result, that legislation had to be presented two or three times in order to get it right.

With experience such as that behind him, surely it would not have been too much to expect that a little less haste would have been in order on this occasion.

We all make mistakes. I have made plenty of them, and I will make plenty more. I do not want to harp on this matter too much, because it might be thrown back at me in the future.

The impact on the Goondi growers and workers has been so severe that it is now adding insult to injury for the Government to have to admit, "Look, we mucked up this legislation that threatens the livelihood of those people. We are going to have to fix it."

I was at Mission Beach on 28 March. At that time, Mr Joe McAvoy, chairman of the Goondi growers, informed me at a meeting that the Government had mucked up the legislation about easements. He said that it would have to be fixed. Here we are, two weeks later, fixing it.

Obviously, although we strongly opposed the original legislation and the gag that pushed it through, the Liberal Party has to support this Bill so that the mill can get the season's crushing done. The horse has been mortally wounded. We might as well put a bullet in his head and finish him off.

Mr CAMBELL (Bundaberg) (8.11 p.m.): The Sugar Milling Rationalization (Far Northern Region) Act Amendment Bill has effectively taken away all protection from cane-growers under the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board and given windfall profits to

CSR. I agree with the sentiments expressed tonight about the way that the Government treats the sugar industry. As a representative of an area that represents roughly 20 per cent of the sugar industry, I point out that this is the first time since 1984 that I have had the privilege to be able to speak in a sugar industry debate. The reason is that they have always been gagged. That indicates the contempt that the National Party shows for the sugar industry.

The sugar industry is probably the greatest rural industry in Queensland. It is the one that has the greatest impact on history and it is the one that has received the least amount of time, effort and good decision-making by the Government.

The Government has shown that it is prepared to sell out the Goondi growers to CSR interests. This is 1915 revisited. At that time, the Labor Party had to break the power that CSR had over the growers and the sugar industry. Now the Government has been prepared to sell out the interests of cane-growers, not only at Goondi, but all over Queensland to the interests of CSR.

I will refer to some aspects of the contracts by which Goondi mill has been sold and broken up into the different areas for Babinda and Mourilyan Mills.

So far as Babinda mill is concerned there are two proposed agreements. The first provides for the sale of certain CSR lands and equipment to Babinda mill and Howard Smith for the sum of $2.002m, of which $2m is apportioned to the land and $2,000 to the equipment. It is to state the obvious to point out that this apportionment should result in maximum income tax advantage to CSR, and maximum income tax disadvantage to Babinda, the purchase price being capital gains to CSR and undepreciable capital investment by the purchasers. Out of this sum of $2.002m, Babinda is contracted to pay $647,000.

In the second contract, this time between CSR and Babinda Co-operative alone, Babinda agrees to pay for certain land, including tramline land, having an aggregate of slightly more than five hectares, the sum of $2.3m and also agrees to pay $451,000 for a certain part of the Goondi mill plant. Thus far Babinda is contracted to pay CSR the sum of $3.4m for a few hectares of land and some outdated and fully depreciated equipment.

However, Babinda has also contracted to pay CSR what is called the goodwill purchase price over a period of three years. This sum, which depends for its calculation on the sugar price, will be, if calculated in accordance with the predictions contained in the rationalisation study, $1.407m, which means that Babinda will have to pay $4.8m to CSR, before it can even start to expend money on expanding its mill to be able to crush the cane of the new Goondi growers. However, a most interesting situation is created by the goodwill purchase price sections of the second agreement.

Nominally, the State Government, under the Sugar Acquisition Act, determines the price of No. 1 pool sugar. In practice the price is determined by the Government's selling agent for sugar, CSR Ltd, while the Sugar Board performs some sort of rubber-stamp function in relation to CSR's decisions.

The sugar price is not set necessarily, or very often for that matter, by simply subtracting costs from sugar income and dividing the balance among producers. In times of low sugar prices, such as presently prevail, money has been borrowed, on the recommendation of CSR, and used to provide an increase in the sugar price. The sugar industry as a whole repays such borrowings over time out of sugar proceeds when the industry becomes more buoyant.

Presently, if the Government, CSR or the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board was to recommend the borrowings to increase the price of sugar, short-term considerations within the industry would result in overwhelming support for such a proposal. The situation is, therefore, that, so far as Babinda and CSR contractors are concerned, CSR is in a position to inflate the price of sugar for the term of the contract, thereby ensuring that the great proportion of the industry's grant funds will be diverted away from growers

and struggling mills and piloted swiftly through the industry and into its own coffers, without being of the slightest benefit to the sugar industry.

In terms of the contract, the goodwill purchase price can rise to $4.035m, leaving Babinda to find approximately $8.8m before it can even contemplate expanding its factory production to accommodate its new growers. When that $8.8m is added to its present debt of $7.035m, it makes a total of $15.085m that will have to be serviced over two years. The Goondi growers, along with all other growers, will have to service that debt. This is the aspect of the Bill that I believe all cane-growers should reject.

The honourable member for Mulgrave said that this was a great decision, a good decision, the right decision by the Government. I have got to say that this is a bad decision and that it is based not on economic rationality but on political expediency.

When it was indicated that Goondi mill would close, a decision was published by the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board in the *Queensland Government Industrial Gazette.* That board represents decades and decades of experience within the sugar industry; yet this Government, with its Minister who would not know which end of the sugar-cane is the top, has the audacity to say that the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board is inept and not capable of telling the sugar-cane industry what should be done.

In the decision dated Saturday, 14 June, the following was said. I ask the Minister and the Government to take note of the aspects covered by the board and the chairman in relation to the proposed Goondi closure and rezoning. The decision reads in part—

> "There was failure to recognise, or to give effect to, the inter-dependence of a mill and its growers and the growers in the Innisfail area were afforded no opportunity, apparently, to express opinions or viewpoints."

Over six decades, the basis of the sugar industry has been to ensure that all members of the industry are given a chance to express their views. In this case, the Government was not prepared to do that. The chairman goes on further to state—

> "I say 'unfortunate' because Babinda has, among other things, been plagued by low productivity and high costs. In terms of sugar per hectare, it has been consistently the worst producer in the State and its debt position compares unfavourably with all other mills."

I believe that that statement indicates the lack of managerial experience on the part of certain members of the National Party.

Mr McPhie: Have you read the Bill?

Mr CAMPBELL: The decision made by the chairman goes further. I believe that the chairman has much more experience than the honourable member for Toowoomba North. Although the honourable member may be able to fly in the clouds, the chairman of the central board obviously has both feet on the ground. He went on to state—

> "When one considers the various options which would be open following upon closure of Goondi Mill I think it would be both unjust and improper to re-zone Goondi growers to Babinda unless it has been clearly demonstrated that with the Government assistance referred to during the hearings, Babinda Mill will continue to operate and will do so profitably."

The chairman continues in a way that indicates that the decision made by the Government is a bad decision. I quote again from the decision, as follows—

> "If Babinda is to carry on it will do so by gambling on improved sugar prices and Goondi growers should not be asked to shoulder the risk of its doing so.
>
> . . .
>
> Moreover, to accede to the suggestion that Goondi cane be sent to Babinda would not be in the industry's interest. The cane would be expensive."

The chairman goes on further to state—

"... I see it as grossly unfair to South Johnstone Mill that, if Goondi cane is to be available, it is to be available only to others and not to South Johnstone."

That quote indicates two things: South Johnstone has not been heard in relation to the decision made concerning the closure of Goondi mill, and the Goondi growers, the Innisfail growers, have not been heard.

Further on in the decision he says—

"Economics of scale are accepted as being of vital importance but to achieve them it would be much less expensive for the industry if the larger and more efficient mills are expanded to achieve those economics and one is forced to consider the real prospect that, in the long term, but two mills will operate, one in the Cairns district and one in Innisfail. In my opinion, if this eventuated these mills will be Mulgrave and South Johnstone."

What was said on that occasion is a key indication of what should have been contained in a good decision. However, I do not believe that the Government even considered that alternative. If the decision was to be a good one, that aspect should have been considered.

The economist member of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board said, concerning the closure of the Goondi mill—

"Notwithstanding revisions of the future Babinda cash flow estimates presented by both Messrs Edwell and Langdon in line with updated versions of the government's proposed assistance package, the indications are that not only does the cash flow position deteriorate in the latter years of the five year projections but the debt position at the end of the period shows little or no improvement. The final submission by the Crown with the most optimistic sugar price scenario shows essentially the same trends. Thus, in spite of the substantial injection of government support and regardless of the Crown's optimistic price scenario the inescapable conclusion is that the future of Babinda mill is at best very shaky.

None of the parties to the hearings adequately assessed the economic worth of their proposals in the traditional investment appraisal sense. If benefit-cost appraisal techniques had been applied, then it would have been apparent that the least attractive proposition was to inject funds into Babinda as proposed by the Crown. In my view this assessment reinforces the case against Babinda."

Why does the Minister go against the basic information given by experienced people in the sugar industry? Why does he sell out of CSR? As I have a quoted before, in the purchase price a goodwill sugar price is shown. That indicates that the Goondi growers will have to pay to supply sugar to the mill that they do not wish to supply to.

This Government has a very poor reputation in relation to many aspects of the sugar industry. I would like to perhaps refer to some of those.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I advise the honourable member for Bundaberg that this Bill deals with an amendment that refers to a rather specific matter. I also suggest that he is indulging in a great deal of repetition of matters concerning the principal Act. I therefore suggest that his speech is irrelevant. On those grounds, I ask him to discontinue his speech. I call the Minister.

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Primary Industries) (8.23 p.m.), in reply: This House has seen a typical example of the self-indulgence and self-interest of the member for Bundaberg, who took the platform while his colleague the member for Mourilyan, who really has an interest——

Mr Campbell: For four years I have wanted to speak on sugar, but I haven't had a chance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Bundaberg under Standing Order 123A.

Mr HARPER: It is a shame that the self-indulgence of the member of Bundaberg is jeopardising the opportunity of the legitimate member, the member for Mourilyan, to address this House. Let me just very quickly——

Mr De LACY: I rise to a point of order. Is the Minister finishing this debate?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have given the call to the Minister.

Mr HARPER: For the benefit of the honourable member for Cairns and the member for Bundaberg, I will read into *Hansard* part of a media release from the Federal Minister for Primary Industry. Selected paragraphs from the media release of 30 March read—

> "All parties knew it would be a difficult process . . . As people accept the reality of the need for change and discuss its implementation sensitively, I hope the fears will disappear.
>
> The Commonwealth has always recognised that the long term viability of the sugar industry depends on it achieving maximum efficiency.
>
> It is now crucial that the work begin on implementation so that the 1987 crush can be handled under the new arrangements.
>
> The Queensland Industry Development Corporation has received detailed implementation plans from Babinda and Mourilyan mills to give effect to the recommendations of the Sugar Mill Adjustment Committee."

I remind the House that this is a media release from Mr Kerin. It continues—

> "I am confident that, with industry consideration, these operational plans are likely to address the concerns raised by growers who had been supplying the Goondi Mill.
>
> . . .
>
> The Queensland Government's decision to legislate for change has brought the matter to a head and we must now act quickly in an endeavour to finalise the operational aspects of the rationalisation."

Now I will read to the House the press release from the president of the Queensland Cane Growers Council. Referring to Mr Kerin and me, he said—

> "Both Ministers supported moves for rationalisation provided that appropriate arrangements could be worked out which recognised in a sensitive way, the concerns of the majority of the industry participants in those areas—canegrowers, millers, employees and dependent communities.
>
> . . .
>
> Now that the Governments are firm in their decision to proceed with the rationalisation programme for that area, there is a need for all the interested parties to co-operate to ensure successful implementation of the necessary changes.
>
> Mr Soper and Mr Deicke said it was important that the work programme necessary to give effect to the new arrangements for the Innisfail district not be impeded."

Last Tuesday in Cairns, which is in the centre of the electorate of the Opposition spokesman, I had a meeting of some four hours with the chairman and deputy chairman of the Mourilyan Mill Suppliers Committee and two representatives chosen by the Goondi Mill Suppliers Committee. What better representation could the growers get? The honourable member's friend the secretary from Innisfail and two representatives of the mill were at the meeting. For some four hours we had a rational, meaningful, constructive debate and discussion. Probably all of the questions that the honourable member for Cairns addressed to me were answered in those discussions. I suggest that he keep in touch with the people in that area. In that way he would realise that the questions that he asked were answered at least two days ago and, in many cases, many weeks ago.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

BOND UNIVERSITY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 1 April (see p. 1210).

Mr UNDERWOOD (Ipswich West) (8.30 p.m.): The Bond University Bill reminds me of the fairy-tale about the emperor's new clothes. All honourable members know the tale well. The emperor was conned by a con man into paying out a great deal of money to this fellow who was to spin him an invisible suit of clothes, which required a great deal of attention.

This Bill deals with what might be described as the emperor's new university. It is the university that is not really a university at all. One only has to read section 11 of the Bill, which quite clearly outlines that the Bond University is not really a university at all. It is nowhere near being a university.

The matter that really concerns the Opposition is the ability of the Bond University to be a university, to have the academic standard required of a university and financial viability independent of all public funding and assistance.

When this Bill was first debated earlier in this session, I queried the Minister about the financial independence of the university, and he assured me that it would be financially independent.

The Opposition will be moving an amendment to clause 8. I foreshadow the following amendment to add to clause 8——

> "(3) sections (1) and (2) above notwithstanding, the University Company is not competent to receive, directly or indirectly, any government funds in the form of grant, gift, subsidy or any other form whatever."

Mr Powell: What about if the Government wanted them to do some research?

Mr UNDERWOOD: Oh, yes, money for research. That is an open-ended thing, is it not? How would the Minister define "research"?

Mr Powell: You haven't even thought about it.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Earlier this session the Minister gave the Opposition a guarantee that no Government assistance would be provided. The Minister is already backing down from that assurance. Now the Opposition is told that the Government will provide funds for research. No mention of research is made in the Minister's second-reading speech. It was a wordy speech which went on for some nine pages. No mention was made of——

Mr Powell: I didn't say anything about research.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Of course the Minister did not say anything about it. Now he is telling honourable members that the Government will provide public funds to keep this university afloat.

Mr Powell: You are philosophically opposed to giving an institution money for research.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Research as such would be fine. However, is it research in the guise of something else?

The Opposition is told by the Minister, the public relations people and the Bond Corporation that this university will be funded substantially by research moneys. If that is a fact, research money from industry would provide substantial funds which would therefore reduce the fees to students. The Minister is now telling honourable members that the Government will make funds available to reduce the fees.

Mr Powell: Do you know that they have already got $50,000 from private industry?

Mr UNDERWOOD: That does not concern the Opposition at all. The Opposition is concerned about the expenditure of public funds and the other institutions which are deprived of funds. This Government should be making funds available to those institutions to provide tertiary places, yet it is helping Mr Bond and his colleagues in business.

Mr Powell: I always thought the funding of higher education was a Commonwealth responsibility.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Under this Government, up until the Whitlam years, it was not, was it?

Mr Powell: The Whitlam Government took it off us.

Mr UNDERWOOD: The Minister agrees.

Mr Powell: I agree that they took it off us.

Mr UNDERWOOD: The Minister is always telling honourable members that he wants that responsibility back.

Mr Powell: I will take it back.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Let us see the Minister take the first step and make the first move, as the Victorian Government has done, and provide 1 500 extra tertiary places. This Government will not do that because it will not spend the money.

Mr Powell: The Federal Government takes all the money off Queensland. How can we?

Mr UNDERWOOD: In what area? Queensland is a beneficiary from the Commonwealth and States agreements.

Mr Powell: In what area?

Mr UNDERWOOD: Queensland gets more back than it gives and the Minister should know that because he is a member of Cabinet. One of the problems is that the Government believes its own publicity.

Mr Powell: We pay for the deficits of New South Wales and Victoria.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I hope that the Minister does not believe that.

Mr Hamill: I do not think the Minister realises that Queensland gets $200 per head in tax-sharing grants more than they do in New South Wales. They subsidise us.

Mr UNDERWOOD: That is a matter of public record. I concur with the comments made by the honourable member for Ipswich. It is a matter of public record as to where the money has come from and where it goes to as far as Commonwealth/State relations are concerned. Quite clearly Queensland is a beneficiary. The Minister's argument is a spurious one in order to try to cover his own tracks.

This Parliament has been asked to approve a piece of legislation for the Bond University and quite clearly from the start the whole exercise has been a publicity stunt of varying degrees for the benefit of various people. Everyone recalls how the grand announcement was made at the National Party conference and then went on to become one of the main planks of the National Party's education platform during the State

election campaign. The campaign was quite successful on the Gold Coast. The National Party candidates achieved a 100 per cent result on the Gold Coast.

The National Party has always been short on substance. Even the Minister's speech was short on substance. The Bill itself was short on substance. The Minister covered that in his speech by saying that the substance is contained in various company registration documents. That is not good enough, because this Parliament is actually legislating to help the financial arrangement between the Bond Corporation and others. In doing so this House should have the full details before it, as well as having more detail in the legislation. This House has not been given any sort of detail. The Minister made a nine-page speech which did not really tell this House a great deal. That in itself was another piece of publicity in an attempt to dress up the whole operation. Almost two pages of his speech were taken up with listing the members of the advisory council and including some of their curriculum vitae. That is the kind of substance that the Minister used to fill out his speech.

Mr Powell: I thought you might like to be enlightened as to the quality of the people who are involved.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Everyone is well aware of who has accepted positions on that particular council. Everyone has been following the newspapers and the publicity trail that this Government and the operators of this proposed university have been laying. The Opposition does not mind this detail being included in the speech, but it really is after some detail as to how the university will work, both financially and academically.

Mr Powell: You are not questioning the credibility of those people, I hope?

Mr UNDERWOOD: The Opposition accepts who and what they are. That is no problem. What the Opposition does have trouble with is how the university is to be financed. The first lot of publicity that was released referred to fees of $7,000 per student per year. A little later on some further publicity referred to a fee of about $15,000. The Opposition can only assume from the oblique references in the publicity that the additional amount was to cover accommodation costs. Initially everyone was told that the students were to live off as well as on campus. All that can be relied on are press reports, because the Minister has not gone into any detail in his speech and neither the Bond Corporation, the advisory council nor anyone else has presented any documents which this Parliament is entitled to see.

Mr Hamill: There is a report in the paper today talking about scholarships worth $10,000. It gives an idea about the fees that will be charged.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Yes, that is true. I accept the word of the honourable member for Ipswich when he says $10,000, but that is still $5,000 short. People are still going to have to find an enormous amount of money over and above anything that has ever been charged by a tertiary institution before. Many stories have been put out about various fees.

Mr Powell: Did you approach the council to find out anything about those sorts of things?

Mr UNDERWOOD: The Minister is obviously liaising with it. The Minister has presented the Bill. Why has he not told the Opposition about that? That is the Minister's responsibility as the Minister for Education and as sponsor of the Bill.

Mr Wells: The council hasn't even approached CTEC or the Federal Minister.

Mr UNDERWOOD: The council has been living in glorious isolation from everybody who matters.

Mr Powell: You should know better that that.

Mr UNDERWOOD: The council has been living in glorious isolation from everyone who matters, so it does not have time for even the established institutions to talk to it.

They have spoken only to the Minister and to people who have nothing to do with this Parliament. I would be surprised if Government back-benchers know anything more than Opposition members have been told in this Chamber and what the Minister has been told by the Premier at National Party conferences.

Mr Newton: I know all about it.

Mr Hamill: Bill Newton knows all about it.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I will look forward to his speech. It is no wonder that we have this Bill with all its detail! It is absolutely empty.

Mr Hamill: He is doing grade 7 by correspondence.

Mr UNDERWOOD: He grows green papaws. We do not mind those. We will leave him alone.

Of serious concern is how the university will pay for itself. No substantial documentation has been produced. All we have are press releases suggesting various amounts of money. People will have to find money to attend the university. We have been told by the people involved in the promotion of the Bond University that over a three or four-year period the cost of gaining a certificate or degree will be enormous.

All honourable members know how long it takes to save a deposit and to pay off a home loan or other major borrowing. People will need to borrow in the vicinity of $15,000 a year for three years, or between $45,000 and $50,000. In Ipswich, a person can buy a house for less than that. I know that that is not possible on the Gold Coast. People would take a life-time to pay off such a large amount of money.

Members have been told that the intent of the university is to provide extra places in tertiary education. People ask questions about where the money will be obtained and how it will be paid back. It really comes back to the story about the poor little rich kids who could not get the right score to gain entry to another tertiary institution. They will be the only ones who will be able to pay to go to the Bond University. Automatically, detrimental factors are built into the university. The value of any education certificate or accreditation issued by the university will be lowered.

If one looks at clause 11, one can see that the university will confer degrees without reference to anyone else. The Bill legislates for that. It puts the Bond University on a tiny island on its own without reference to anyone.

Mr Powell: So does every other university.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Yes, but other universities have references to other organisations, national bodies and so on. These people will be isolated totally.

Mr Powell: Queensland University does not refer to any other body in the conferring of degrees.

Mr UNDERWOOD: No, but the universities relate to one another. Under the guide-lines of the national organisations, the vice-chancellors and others get together. However, the Bond University will be totally isolated from that. The Minister can giggle and cackle as much as he likes; that is his standard defence technique. It is a very good one.

Mr Powell: I am not defending it.

Mr UNDERWOOD: The Minister is defending it. The Minister's speech is very defensive. There is nothing in the Minister's speech, only a few platitudes.

Let us look at the actual costs. On the costings of current university education, the available figures show that by 1989 the cost per year, including the capital component, will be in the vicinity of $25,000. By 1992, after the economies of scale and as extra students enter the university, the cost decreases. The cost will be $20,800 per student. Those figures do not correspond with the publicity that suggested that the cost will be

$7,000 per year. After four years of operation of the university, the students will be still $13,000 short per year. Over a three-year term, the figure will be almost $40,000.

Answers should be provided on those matters. The Minister has not provided those answers and we are not going to hear them tonight. The publicity officers from the Bond University will not provide the answers; they will keep the matter under wraps. The Opposition suspects, and other persons have said, that it is really a fancy real estate deal under which the tertiary institution is to help in the overall project.

When one starts reading statements such as the one which appeared in the *Sunday Mail* of 8 February 1987, it really reinforces the notion that this is all about making money out of real estate. In that article, which was written by education reporter Judy Mishinski, a Mr Daryl Jackson is reported as being the university master planner. The article states that—

> "Mr Daryl Jackson, estimated stage one of the development, on a 313-hectare site at Burleigh Forest Estate, would cost between $70 and $100 million."

A figure of $125m has been bandied around as well.

Mr Hamill: That is the Minister's speech.

Mr UNDERWOOD: It has come from the Minister's speech, as well as other sources. They cannot even agree upon that particular figure.

What is $20m here or there? It can make or break any form of business. That shows how nebulous the whole economic proposal of the Bond University really is.

The article in the *Sunday Mail* continued—

> "He said the first stage, including accommodation for 2000 to 2500 students, would be completed by the end of next year, before the university opened in 1989."

Mr Powell: Do you support the Bill?

Mr UNDERWOOD: No, we do not support the Bill.

The article continued—

> "Stages two and three would then be developed within five to seven years, subject to student enrolment. 'The ultimate plan is to house 10,000 scholars and about 1500 staff,' he said.
>
> Mr Jackson said the Bond University would be 'quite unique'. Plans include a lake and canal development."

That is going to be some university, when the students will be able to afford to have their own private lake and canal installed!

Mr Sherrin: Have you been out to the University of Queensland? There is a lake out there.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I have visited the duck pond at the Queensland University on many occasions. It is hardly a canal system.

Mr Powell: Do you like eating your words?

Mr UNDERWOOD: We will see. We will give it a couple of years and we will see. If the honourable member is prepared to put a wager on it, we are happy to do that as well.

The article to which I have been referring went on to state—

> " 'No other university in Australia is built right on the edge of the water,' he said. 'Some of the student housing and other buildings will be on the canals . . . ' "

Mr Hamill: Perhaps they will be offering a degree in surf-board riding.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I was just about to mention that. They are going to install facilities for that particular degree. As is further stated in the article—

"All the common facilities will be grouped around a small harbor at one end of the lake.

'We expect the lake and waterways to be used for recreational activities including yachting, wind surfing and punting.' "

Mr Hamill: TAB?

Mr UNDERWOOD: No, that is not quite right.

It is stated that—

"The lake will provide a 2000 metre international rowing course."

Why would that be needed at a university? Mr Jackson explains that by saying—

"The university will include six faculty buildings, lecture theatres and common buildings such as a library, administration centre, student union and recreation centre.

The student union building will have a cinema, art gallery and pub, as well as cafeterias, lounges and other recreational facilities."

There is nothing wrong with that.

Mr Hamill: Pubtab?

Mr UNDERWOOD: Yes, they might have Pubtab there.

The article continued—

"Mr Jackson said the university would be like a town, 'in the sense that Oxford and Cambridge are towns'."

That explains the reason for the proposed 2 000 metre rowing course. The Bond University will really be like Oxford and Cambridge universities. Is it not all very Edwardian?

Mr Hamill: Oxford has got a motor vehicle construction plant as well.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Perhaps the Bond University will have one of those as well.

The Bond University is buying itself a reputation rather than earning an academic reputation. How is it doing that? Firstly, it is buying a vice-chancellor. It has offered him $150,000 per annum, which is double the normal salary that is paid to a vice-chancellor. It is no wonder that, with that sort of a hand-out—that sort of a blank cheque that it is handing out to its staff—the academic associations, who initially made noises against the proposal, have now fallen suddenly silent. Many of those academics are now seeking posts at the Bond University, especially when they might be able to double their income. Most people would say, "Let's go for the money." That is exactly what has happened.

Mr Powell: What are you talking about?

Mr UNDERWOOD: It will have very serious effects. If the Minister does not understand what I am talking about, he has not been properly briefed.

Mr Powell: Are you doubting the qualifications of Don Watts?

Mr UNDERWOOD: No. What I am doubting is the technique that the Minister's friends are using——

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr UNDERWOOD: They are not the Minister's friends?

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Yes, but the Minister is sponsoring the whole project. One of the aspects of the project is doubling the salaries, which will have a significant effect on other tertiary institutions. Firstly, they will lose staff that they should have held.

Mr Powell: Maybe an element of competition will be entered into, and that's what they are dead set scared of.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Of course there is competition. People are scrambling over each other to get double the salary. Those who miss out will be campaigning back on their own campuses for massive increases in salary as well. They will be saying, "Bond's got it. Why can't we?" The Minister is agreeing. Good.

Mr Powell: They will be paid on performance at Bond University.

Mr UNDERWOOD: They will be paid on performance at Bond—fine. Is the Minister recommending that performance-testing for academics be introduced at the other tertiary institutions as well?

Mr Powell: It sounds a great idea to me.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Fine.

Mr Hamill: Tertiary fees; that's what he is on about.

Mr UNDERWOOD: We will need tertiary fees, of course, to pay. There is no way that the public purse can afford this exponential increase in fees that the Minister is advocating and supporting down at the Bond project. If those exponential increases in salaries and conditions occur, there will be less and less money for courses and for student places.

The whole thing is self-defeating. One of the arguments that has been put is, of course, "Is the Bond University going to provide extra places?" That is a major selling point for the public. It is why the election campaign was successful on the Gold Coast.

If honourable members look at the financial arrangements, 99 per cent of the public will not be able to afford to attend anyway. To return to the point that I was making before the Minister interrupted me—only the poor little rich kids who cannot achieve a satisfactory ranking order to gain entry to the other tertiary institutions will be able to afford to attend, because Daddy or Mummy can pay their way.

It is all very well for the Minister to say that people will be able to work in their holidays or work before they go there to obtain money. As I pointed out, in the initial year it will cost $2,500 a term. When the university has a full complement of students, it will cost $2,800 a term over a three or four-year degree course. That is a massive amount of money. It will take people their whole working life-time to pay off qualifications received from the Bond University.

What will really happen is that the public purse will be called on to bail this group out. That is what the Opposition is concerned about and that is why it is not supporting the legislation tonight. The public will be called on at some later date. The ordinary workers of this country will be called on to bail out the rich of the country again—to bail out an academic institution that has not earned its keep or its academic merit but has tried to buy it.

The Opposition will be moving the amendment that I have foreshadowed in an endeavour to test the Government's word. Through this legislation, the Opposition will ensure that no Government funds either directly or indirectly in any form of grant, gift, subsidy or any other form will be available. This university will have to sink or swim on its own merits.

Mr Hamill: The Minister would support that though, wouldn't he?

Mr UNDERWOOD: The Minister has said that, but he is trying to get round it now by talking about giving them research grants.

I turn now to the economic management record of the Bond Corporation. Some honourable members will remember the Darwin shuffle, which was a tax minimisation or avoidance scheme, in which the ordinary tax-payers of Australia were stripped of millions of dollars in a business deal. They are the sort of people that we are relying on. We are relying on their word. No information of any substance has been placed before the House. We have been told that everything is going to be hunky-dory. Bond's track record in so many cases just smells and cannot be relied on.

All honourable members remember when Bond took over the Waltons company. The people were working one day, Bond took over and the next day they were locked out of the store. Honourable members should ask the people of my electorate in Ipswich what they think about Waltons' techniques. Poor people cannot really afford to shop anywhere else. Bond, through the Waltons store, will give them paper money to shop in the store. They will give anybody credit, no matter whether he has a credit-rating or not. People spend the rest of their lives paying off credit that is given by Waltons.

Mr Powell: Under a Labor administration, what happened to the Director-Generals of Education in Victoria and South Australia?

Mr UNDERWOOD: I fail to see how this relates to the Bond University. This is how wide and how adrift the Minister is in terms of the reality of what is being done.

Mr Powell: It relates to exactly what the honourable member is saying because they came into their offices one morning and told them that they were not needed.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I fail to see how that relates to this Bill at all. That is the game of politics, and Government members do it all the time. If a head of a department does not agree with the Government of the day, he gets dismissed. Look at what happened to Brian Cahill. The National Party promised him the world and then dumped him.

The people of Queensland are being asked by the Government of the day to trust Mr Bond and his group of business associates. The track record speaks for itself and indicates that they cannot be trusted unless everything is written down in black and white.

The Minister has listed what will actually be done as far as academic courses are concerned. I would not call it going into detail. First we were told that only a limited range of activities would be undertaken and that the university would be dealing only with basic and advanced business communication, advanced technological training, international commerce skills, cross-cultural communication, and advanced tourism management. Now the Minister is expanding that list. He has referred to a business school that offers degrees in business and accounting, etc., a division of arts and humanities, a school of law, a division of computing, a division of engineering and a division of science. Although all those things are listed, there is no substantive information on what is proposed. The list is all ifs, buts and maybes.

Mr Powell: You are boring.

Mr UNDERWOOD: The Minister can wind me up if he likes, but he cannot hack the detail. The Minister will not even allow himself sufficient time to tell the Parliament how the Bond University will be financially viable. It is all very well to say that $50,000 from some business corporation is in the tin already: that is great, that is fine, and there is no problem with that; but where will the remainder of the $124.75m come from? The Government has only 18 months to get it together.

Mr Hamill: Why do we have a Bill in here, anyway?

Mr UNDERWOOD: The reason was alluded to by the Minister in his second-reading speech. He said, "The purpose of this Bill is to give recognition and support to the new Bond University."

Mr Hamill: It is an imprimatur. Is that what it is all about?

Mr UNDERWOOD: That is right—for a private-sector venture.

Government members: Time, time!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have been advised that the clock was not set correctly for 90 minutes previously. The member, if he wishes, could speak through until quarter past 9.

Government members interjected.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Government members were the ones who voted for the gag. The motion to gag the debate was moved by the Minister himself and it was accepted by the Speaker. Government members voted for the gag to be applied but now they are getting upset.

This Bill is a major piece of legislation that will have extremely important ramifications in the future; but Government members do not want to get up in this Chamber and debate it.

Mr Hamill: The Minister's little mate up there, he wants to talk as well.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Poor old Craigie—the man who would be Minister for Education—wants to get up and speak. Well, why does he not move a motion for the extension of the debate? Let us have another hour of debate so that the honourable member for Mansfield can make a speech and so can all his other mates on the committee. The honourable member should move for an extension of time.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Ipswich West is being repetitive now, and tedious. The member for Ipswich West will continue.

Mr UNDERWOOD: That is a matter for the House to decide, Mr Speaker, but I think that I am being very informative and so do all of my colleagues in the Opposition.

The honourable member for Ipswich asked what was the purpose of the Bill. The purpose of the Bill is to help the salesmanship of the whole exercise. It is a bit similar to Mike Gore's Bill. He is able to go around saying that he has the imprimatur of the Queensland Parliament. The financial groups that are promoting this concept will be able to go round the world saying. "Here we are. We are established by an Act of Parliament. We are a real university. Like all the other universities that have the necessary legislation, we have too." That will be very important for selling the university.

We are told that 50 per cent of the students will be from overseas. Without that 50 per cent, the thing will go down the financial gurgler. I suggest that more than 50 per cent of students from overseas will be required, because the majority of Queenslanders and Australians will not be able to afford the minimum $60,000-plus required to do a three-year course there.

Mr Gygar: Tell us whether you think the legislation is worth the $400,000.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I reckon it is a bargain. They got the money for the nickel operation outside Townsville and other sorts of deals.

An Opposition member: Channel 9.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Channel 9. All of that. For $400,000, it would have to be a bargain.

Mr Gately: They are all getting a free ad tonight.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Yes.

Seriously, what really concerns me is clause 10, which provides for lending moneys to students. The legislation—and this is a very serious part of it—actually provides for people under legal age to be lent moneys. There is no limit on the age. There is no definition; there is no explanation by the Minister. As has been seen with the loans that

have been under discussion in this House over the last couple of weeks, it actually has to be written into the legislation. The intent of the Bill is now worthless. It actually has to be written in. The legal limit for lending moneys to people has been withdrawn. That is a matter of grave concern. What this legislation proposes is that the Bond University financial group will actually make those loans to students.

Mr Hamill: To 16 and 17-year-olds.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Yes, 16 and 17-year-olds; people who are going to school will be lent money. All of us remember that at that particular age we all needed a little bit of guidance, and people do make mistakes.

Mr Gunn interjected.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I might need it, too, but the Deputy Premier needs it a lot more than I do. I will not go into that discussion, as it would take too long to explain all of his faults.

In relation to loans—I have quoted the instance of the Waltons group, which until recently was in the Bond camp, and its treatment of people who could not help themselves, who did not know better and who signed on the dotted line to get all sorts of credit and who were pursued by that group. The situation arose in which that group's debt-collectors went round to Housing Commission homes and told people that they would have them thrown out of their homes if they did not pay their Waltons' account. Because of that, the people do not pay their Housing Commission rent. Instead, they attempt to pay off their Waltons' account—which, because of the rate of interest and the terms of the loan, they will never achieve. They then put themselves into extreme financial difficulty and at risk with the Housing Commission. Because of submitting to that tactic of being threatened to be thrown out of their Housing Commission home, they run that risk.

Honourable members may chuckle about this and think that it is an irrelevancy. It is very important. If this legislation is introduced, people under the adult age will be seduced into signing up for Bond finance. There are no limits on the rates of interest. The rate will be the market rate, and everyone knows that that is very high. There is nothing in the legislation to protect the students; nor is anything written into the clause to give the students some few weeks' grace after signing on the dotted line, in case they have a rethink about their circumstances, receive an offer to attend another university or another tertiary institution or pull out of their course and get a job somewhere. If they do that, they are lumbered with the loan for whatever amount of money they have taken out. That is a very serious provision that has been put in the Bill. That is another reason why the Opposition cannot support the legislation that is before the House tonight.

Those matters are of grave concern to the Opposition. Surely some members opposite can recognise the reason for that concern. As many honourable members learnt today, like many of his colleagues, the Minister is racing for the premiership and cannot be seen to back down or back away from these sorts of things. The Minister and his colleagues cannot be seen to be upsetting the applecart and they cannot be seen to be upsetting the friends of the Government and of the Premier. That is the reason for such things as clause 10 of the Bill.

Mr Hamill: Why doesn't the Queensland Government do what other Governments do and actually create real tertiary places?

Mr UNDERWOOD: That is the challenge I put to the Minister. He chose to ignore it by laughing it off.

All honourable members know the record of the Victorian Government in this regard. It created 1 500 extra tertiary places. That Government resumed some of what was its role prior to the time when the Whitlam Government took over tertiary funding. Queensland hears the National Party Government bleat about State's rights ad nauseam,

so let it take over that role instead of putting forward the furphy that is the Bill under debate. Earlier in my contribution I drew the analogy with the emperor's new clothes; this is the story of the emperor's new university.

Mr SHERRIN (Mansfield) (9.06 p.m.): As I rise to my feet, I am numb. I can only say that, after that performance, the member for Ipswich West has killed any chance that he had for the job of deputy leader of the Australian knockers party.

Mr Simpson interjected.

Mr SHERRIN: No, he is history. In 40 minutes he killed any chance he ever had of getting a privately funded university in Ipswich.

I support the Bill and wish to emphasise that one of the main, underlying reasons leading to the establishment of the Bond University in Queensland is the large number of secondary students who, because of the progressive underfunding of Queensland's universities and colleges by a Labor Government over the past few years, are unable to gain entry into Queensland's tertiary institutions.

At the risk of being repetitious—I have emphasised this to the House and the Minister for Education has done so over many years—I should say that it is important for members to realise that, with 16.5 per cent of the Australian population in Queensland, its colleges and universities have been progressively underfunded over some years. For example, universities receive only 14.4 per cent of the total Commonwealth recurrent grants for universities, CAEs in Queensland received only 15.5 per cent of Commonwealth recurrent grants and TAFE received only 12.4 per cent of Commonwealth recurrent grants. An allocation to Queensland based on its proportion of the Australian population—that is, 16.5 per cent—would have provided an increase in funding as follows: Queensland universities would have gained an additional $24.5m; CAEs, an additional $7.1m; and TAFE, an additional $5.5m.

It is important to state that there is wide bipartisan support for the concept of the Bond University. The Federal Minister for Science, Mr Barry Jones, has acknowledged that engineering, technology and science in this country are funded at a dismally low level. Now the State of Queensland is relying on private enterprise to supply funding to make up for the tremendous shortfall in tertiary places in these areas that are crucial for economic recovery. I thank the Minister for Science for that comment. Honourable members know that on at least one other occasion that has been well publicised, he has also been truthful. It is good to see that he has come to the aid of the Queensland Government on this issue.

The rush for tertiary places in Queensland has been very marked, especially last year when more than 35 000 Queensland young people applied for a tertiary place—that was about 1 000 more than the previous year—but, because of the shortfall in Commonwealth funding, only 15 000 of them were able to gain a tertiary place. When the Commonwealth Government provided a miserable number of additional tertiary places, Queensland received only 560 of them. Victoria and New South Wales, with declining populations, received increases of 25 per cent and 35 per cent respectively.

Mr FitzGerald: Shame!

Mr SHERRIN: Yes, shame indeed! It is an example of feather-bedding by the Commonwealth Government of its Labor Party cronies in those States. On top of that, when the boot is into the Queensland people, particularly its young people, what does the Commonwealth Labor Government do? It imposes a $250 fee on tertiary students.

It is interesting to note that the University of Queensland assistant registrar, Mr Les Page, said that 17 500 students were enrolled at that university, which is 1 000 fewer than last year. That was attributed directly to the $250 fee imposed by the Commonwealth Government. That shows the incredible hypocrisy of the Commonwealth Government in the area of education.

In my remaining few minutes I wish to lay to rest some myths about private universities that have been spread by the Opposition spokesman. He has cast aspersions on private universities. Of course, honourable members know that what he has said is not the experience in America with private universities.

Many people say that people should not be allowed to buy an education. In the present circumstances in Queensland, to deny tertiary education through privately funded universities is to deny qualified students the opportunity of developing their full potential. If that happens, Queensland and Australia will lose, as well as our students.

It has been asserted by members of the Opposition that only the rich benefit from private education at the expense of the poor. This, of course, is another Opposition half-truth.

The truly rich who cannot enter Australian universities can and do go abroad to receive their education. Once overseas, some of those students often do not return and Queensland and Australia lose their expertise.

It has also been asserted that private institutions will lower the quality of university education in Australia. What an incredible claim! Non-Government schools have pre-dated State schools in Australia, and, of course the standard in non-Government education in Australia is excellent. That is the experience in the United States as well.

I commend the Bill.

Mr WHITE (Redcliffe) (9.13 p.m.): Initially, I convey my appreciation to the Minister and the member for Mansfield for providing me with the opportunity of indicating the support of the Liberal Party for the Bill. It is one of the better initiatives in education for a very long time. If the performance of the Opposition spokesman was any indication of the Labor Party's interest in education, all one could say is that it was an appalling, rambling effort.

I find myself in agreement with the sentiments that were expressed by the member for Mansfield. I think it is regrettable that some members of this Parliament do not seem to want competition or diversity in education. It has been accepted for so long in the primary and secondary schools sectors.

Why should there not be some competition at the tertiary level? Why should there not be private universities? Have Opposition members not heard of the great Ivy League universities of Princeton, Stanford, Columbia and Pennsylvania? They are all magnificent institutions. There are many other religious institutions and the other non-Government university and tertiary institutions throughout the United States.

Mr Sherrin: They strive for excellence, that is the trouble.

Mr WHITE: The member for Mansfield is quite right. They are universities of excellence: excellence in terms of research, excellence in terms of academic attainment, excellence in terms of the development of industry and commerce and, in particular, excellence in relating to industry at large in the development of technology.

I am conscious of the time. I simply reiterate the very strong support of the Liberal Party for this Bill. The Liberal Party congratulates the Government, the Minister and all of those people responsible for the introduction of the Bill.

I wish Mr Bond the very best of luck. I hope that he does make a quid. If he does make a quid out of education, he will be travelling very well indeed. Why knock him because he wants to have a go? Members of the Labor Party are the very people who should be encouraging education——

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mr WHITE: The member for Ipswich is a Rhodes Scholar and he is knocking education.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Under the provisions of the allocation of time-limit order agreed to by the House, the time for debate has now expired and I will put the question.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 50		NOES, 23
Ahern	Katter	Braddy
Alison	Knox	Campbell
Austin	Lane	Casey
Beanland	Lee	Comben
Beard	McKechnie	D'Arcy
Berghofer	McPhie	De Lacy
Booth	Menzel	Eaton
Borbidge	Muntz	Gibbs, R. J.
Burreket	Neal	Goss
Clauson	Newton	Hamill
Cooper	Powell	Hayward
Elliott	Randell	Mackenroth
Fraser	Row	McLean
Gately	Schuntner	Palaszczuk
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherlock	Smith
Gilmore	Sherrin	Smyth
Glasson	Simpson	Underwood
Gunn	Slack	Vaughan
Gygar	Stephan	Warner
Harper	Stoneman	Wells
Henderson	Tenni	Yewdale
Hinton	White	
Hinze		
Hobbs	*Tellers:*	*Tellers:*
Hynd	Littleproud	Davis
Innes	FitzGerald	Prest

Resolved in the affirmative.

Committee

Hon. L. W. Powell (Isis—Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

Preamble—

Mr POWELL (9.20 p.m.): I move—

"That the preamble be postponed."

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 49		NOES, 23
Ahern	Katter	Braddy
Alison	Knox	Campbell
Austin	Lane	Casey
Beanland	Lee	Comben
Beard	McKechnie	D'Arcy
Berghofer	McPhie	De Lacy
Booth	Menzel	Eaton
Borbidge	Muntz	Gibbs, R. J.
Burreket	Neal	Goss
Clauson	Newton	Hamill
Cooper	Powell	Hayward
Elliott	Randell	Mackenroth
Fraser	Schuntner	McLean
Gately	Sherlock	Palaszczuk
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherrin	Prest
Gilmore	Simpson	Smith
Glasson	Slack	Smyth
Gunn	Stephan	Underwood
Gygar	Stoneman	Vaughan
Harper	Tenni	Wells
Henderson	White	Yewdale
Hinton		
Hinze		
Hobbs	*Teller:*	*Tellers:*
Hynd	Littleproud	Davis
Innes	FitzGerald	Warner

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Mr Chairman, I wish to move an amendment to clause 8 as circulated.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member to resume his seat.

Question—That clauses 1 to 11, as read, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 49		NOES, 23
Ahern	Katter	Braddy
Alison	Knox	Campbell
Austin	Lane	Casey
Beanland	Lee	Comben
Beard	McKechnie	D'Arcy
Berghofer	McPhie	De Lacy
Booth	Menzel	Eaton
Borbidge	Muntz	Gibbs, R. J.
Burreket	Neal	Goss
Clauson	Newton	Hamill
Cooper	Powell	Hayward
Elliott	Randell	Mackenroth
Fraser	Schuntner	McLean
Gately	Sherlock	Palaszczuk
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherrin	Smith
Gilmore	Simpson	Smyth
Glasson	Slack	Underwood
Gunn	Stephan	Vaughan
Gygar	Stoneman	Warner
Harper	Tenni	Wells
Henderson	White	Yewdale
Hinton		
Hinze		
Hobbs	*Tellers:*	*Tellers:*
Hynd	Littleproud	Davis
Innes	FitzGerald	Prest

Resolved in the affirmative.

Preamble, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Minister for Education) (9.35 p.m.): I move—

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

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 50		NOES, 23
Ahern	Katter	Braddy
Alison	Knox	Campbell
Austin	Lane	Casey
Beanland	Lee	Comben
Beard	McKechnie	D'Arcy
Berghofer	McPhie	De Lacy
Booth	Menzel	Eaton
Borbidge	Muntz	Gibbs, R. J.
Burreket	Neal	Goss
Clauson	Newton	Hamill
Cooper	Powell	Hayward
Elliott	Randell	Mackenroth
Fraser	Row	McLean
Gately	Schuntner	Palaszczuk
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherlock	Smith
Gilmore	Sherrin	Smyth
Glasson	Simpson	Underwood
Gunn	Slack	Vaughan
Gygar	Stephan	Warner
Harper	Stoneman	Wells
Henderson	Tenni	Yewdale
Hinton	White	
Hinze		
Hobbs	*Tellers:*	*Tellers:*
Hynd	Littleproud	Davis
Innes	FitzGerald	Prest

Resolved in the affirmative.

Title

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Minister for Education) (9.41 p.m.): I move—

"That the title of the Bill be agreed to."

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 50		NOES, 23
Ahern	Katter	Braddy
Alison	Knox	Campbell
Austin	Lane	Casey
Beanland	Lee	Comben
Beard	McKechnie	D'Arcy
Berghofer	McPhie	De Lacy
Booth	Menzel	Eaton
Borbidge	Muntz	Gibbs, R. J.
Burreket	Neal	Goss
Clauson	Newton	Hamill
Cooper	Powell	Hayward
Elliott	Randell	Mackenroth
Fraser	Row	McLean
Gately	Schuntner	Palaszczuk
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherlock	Smith
Gilmore	Sherrin	Smyth
Glasson	Simpson	Underwood
Gunn	Slack	Vaughan
Gygar	Stephan	Warner
Harper	Stoneman	Wells
Henderson	Tenni	Yewdale
Hinton	White	
Hinze		
Hobbs	*Tellers:*	*Tellers:*
Hynd	Littleproud	Davis
Innes	FitzGerald	Prest

Resolved in the affirmative.

CULTURAL RECORD (LANDSCAPES QUEENSLAND AND QUEENSLAND ESTATE) BILL

Hon. R. C. KATTER (Flinders—Minister for Northern Development and Community Services) (9.45 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to provide for the preservation and management of all components of Landscapes Queensland and the Queensland Estate; to foster dissemination of knowledge of Landscapes Queensland and the Queensland Estate; to promote understanding of the historic continuum evidenced within Queensland and for related purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. R. C. KATTER (Flinders—Minister for Northern Development and Community Services) (9.46 p.m.): I move—

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

This State was established in 1859. Before that its land area had been part of New South Wales and, before that again, either the home or a pathway to the south for the waves of people who, in the remote past, inhabited and used it.

In the Torres Strait the Islanders settled and adapted their way of life to a reef and island environment; yet the area, before their arrival, was terrestrial and perhaps a means of access into what is now Queensland for other people of different racial and cultural

origins. I speak of an age a millenia from the present when both the land-form and climate would be unrecognisable to people of our generation, even though this land has been peopled for about 40 000 years.

Pre-history is the antecedent of history which is, in its turn, a systematic record of events. In this continent our pre-history, which is a vast sweep and diversity of unrecorded events engaging both land and people, is only a few years in the past and those few years are only a negligible part of the duration of human habitation. It is, however, the land itself that made this habitation possible, has supported peoples and their cultures and spins, as it will continue to spin, a common thread of descent and relationship between them and us.

The Bill before the House is both an acknowledgement of this relationship and a recognition that the people of any State are primarily the children of the land and the inevitable inheritors of the continuum of use and occupation of it. It is in keeping with this philosophy that the Bill repeals and replaces the existing Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1967 and the Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act Amendment Act of 1976. The Bill achieves the ultimate Queensland Government policy, the architects of which were two Ministers for Aboriginal Affairs, the late Jack Pizzey and Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, both of whom laid the foundations of a policy no less valid today: that we are one land, one people and one heritage.

The objective of the Bill is to throw a causeway from the culture and heritage of the first Queenslanders to the culture of the successive tribes, be they Vietnamese boat people, Anglo-Saxons, Germans or whatever. It has to be more than passing chance that the quintessential hallmark of the culture of the first Queenslanders was their aggessive egalitarianism. It is also the hallmark of those who have followed. This is a country where the cutting down of tall poppies is a national sport, the only a country in the world where the taxi passenger rides in the front beside the driver.

The thrust of this Bill is to ensure that continuity with the past is not dislocated by the great changes of the present and that the sense of belonging to the country which is bounded by the State of Queensland is not lost. I firmly believe that our development and contemporary culture are a product of the bringing together of all of the different strands of people who were here earlier or came later.

Our history is not, therefore, a record of who came and who left; it did not, for example, start or stop with Captain Cook, the voyage of Torres or Victory in the Pacific Day; but each of those events was simply an addition to our common, enduring and dynamic heritage. It combines the pre-history and colonial history of Queensland in a single law that expresses the sense of continuity that is central to the principle of a common legacy which combines an understanding of the past with a unified vision of the future.

This Bill differs totally in philosophy from any similar legislation in Australia. It is also an expression of the Government's commitment to conservatism. But, having said that, I must reiterate that it is a dynamic Bill both in its philosophy and in its intention to preserve material contribution and creativity so that they may augment our living resources for future use.

The Bill seeks to foster knowledge, understanding and conciousness of our past, and to provide a firm foundation for the creation of the future.

The preservation and protection of a small number of examples of the inheritance of the people of Queensland is a statement of what the Bill is. Let me also state clearly what it is not. It is not legislation that places people's property in jeopardy.

The Act honours one of the great concepts upon which western civilisation is built, that foundation-stone of personal freedom and protection against Government excess—the principle of private property. Some members of the Opposition might find this offensive. This principle remains inviolable and sacrosanct but in cases where someone, somebody or some institution, Government or non-Government, has given and had accepted an item or place as part of the Queensland Estate, honourable members will

find that the sanctions set down in the Bill are very real indeed. Either way the Government should not be just a mechanism of appeasement. The Bill represents our conviction that we will not be balked by either the difficulty of the task or its complexity.

I appreciate that the Bill will provoke a diversity of comments and I agree with the remarks extracted from the second-reading speech to the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981 by the United Kingdom's Secretary of State for the Environment, the Right Honourable Michael Heseltine, who said—

> "I acknowledge that there is a balance of argument. It sets out the position to which the Government now believes it is right to move. It will not be the last Bill. It does not in any way seek to create a Maginot Line. It seeks a balance between the often conflicting and deeply held views of people whose motivation and sincerity are not in question, although they line up on opposite sides of many arguments".

In order to give the opportunity for the many people interested to express themselves, it is my intention to allow the Bill to lie on the table of the House until the next session of Parliament.

For the further advantage of interest groups, a variety of viewpoints can be represented on committees advisory to the Minister responsible for administering the legislation. The skills and energy of those with a particular interest in our colonial and earlier past are also encouraged to play a part as protectors, advisors and administrators of it. I must, however, praise the excellent work of the Aboriginal Relics Committee and assure them of their continued existence and activity.

The Bill also provides the means for the general public to become involved in the preservation of the State's material culture through the establishment by the Minister of regional advisory committees, in order to represent the views of all Queenslanders.

The Bill refers to the Queensland Estate as being the evidence of man's past occupation and contribution to Queensland today and this evidence is contained within the broad sweep of the Queensland landscape.

Items of the Queensland Estate which are of significance to our lengthy past and of value to future generations can be preserved. Allowance is also made for the inclusion on a register of items which are shown to be of high scientific and historic significance.

Queensland's history would not be so remarkable without the considerable skills and talents shown by our forebears, whether they be stonemasons, brickies, architects or entrepreneurs. Many of these skills and talents remain known today and allowance is made within the proposed legislation for these attributes to be recognised, rewarded and passed on to future generations.

The Department of Community Services keeps a computer record of the State's pre-history and history, one of the more comprehensive in Australia. This work will be enhanced for the benefit of Queenslanders.

This Bill will overcome anomalous situations such as we currently face at Somerset at the tip of Cape York, where pre-history is protected but the more recent ruins of Jardine's fort and the Government residence are not. Both will be protected under the legislation I propose. Mr Speaker, I think you would be one who would appreciate what I am saying. Other examples which leap to mind are the hand-made rock homestead on the Cambridge River and the Block and Windham mine shaft at Charters Towers.

The artificial distinction between one group of Queenslanders and another will be removed with this legislation.

In pursuing the aims of the legislation, initiatives of people from the National Trust will be invited, will be expected and, I hope, will be greatly honoured by future Ministers, without impinging upon the excellent legislation and aims of my colleague the Minister for Local Government.

The Bill will support excellent initiatives, such as those undertaken by Brisbane members of the National Party, Earle Bailey, Leisha Harvey, Ian Henderson and the

former Minister for Works and Housing, Ivan Gibbs, in preserving the Old Printery. More particularly, one-off action such as that taken by Mrs Harvey, whose driving determination in preserving Queen Alexandra Home created a building that is not only of historic value and beauty, but also is of public utility. She turned it into a self-funding operation. Such actions will be facilitated and, hopefully, repeated as a result of this legislation.

This Bill would not be before the House without the excellent work of two officers of my department, Mr Burless and Miss Sutcliffe, and I give them my very sincere thanks. More particularly I thank the National Party members of the Northern Development and Community Services committee, Mr Menzel, Mr Randell, Mr Stephan, Mr Gilmore, Mr Burreket and the late chairman, Doug Jennings, three of whom were the architects of landmark legislation of national importance, the community services and Aboriginal land-holding legislation which are now being copied in the Northern Territory and Western Australia and which, incidentally, are also the policy of the Opposition party in Victoria.

Finally I salute the undiminishing drive and energy of one of the great ladies of conservation, restoration and heritage in Queensland, Mrs Ann Garms, who has also been skilful enough to make heritage pay and not demand a tax-payers' hand-out for personal indulgence.

This Bill is a major initiative. It does not confine history to nostalgia, deny the advantages of change and enhancement, nor does it confine the Queensland Estate to the four walls of a museum. I will end with a quote that very aptly describes one of the architects of this Bill, the late Doug Jennings—

> "It is only when we have pride in who we are and where we have come from that we can decide with confidence where we are going to. There never was a man with a clear vision for his country's future who did not have a deep love and understanding of his nation's past."

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Braddy, adjourned.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR MR D. B. JENNINGS, MLA

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Leader of the House) (9.57 p.m.): I take this opportunity of reminding honourable members that a memorial service for our late colleague, Mr Doug Jennings, member for Southport, will be held at St Peters Anglican Church, Southport, at 2 p.m. next Monday, 13 April 1987.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Leader of the House) (9.57 p.m.): I move—

> "That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 10 o'clock a.m. on a date to be fixed by Mr Speaker in consultation with the Government of this State."

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.58 p.m.