

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 4 AUGUST 1987

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Legislative Assembly

FIRST SESSION OF THE FORTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT—continued
(Second Period)

TUESDAY, 4 AUGUST 1987

Under the provisions of the motion for special adjournment agreed to by the House on 9 April 1987, the House met at 10 a.m.

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

Mr Scott: It is a shame the late Kevin Hooper is not here, Mr Premier, to ask you about massage parlours.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Chair does not appreciate the honourable member's rudeness, and asks him to withdraw the comment immediately.

Mr SCOTT: I withdraw it.

DEATH OF Mr D. B. JENNINGS, MLA

Issue and Return of Writ

Mr SPEAKER: I have to report that I have received from the Registrar-General a certified copy of the registration of death, on 9 April 1987, of Douglas Bernard Jennings, Esquire, lately serving in the Legislative Assembly as member for the electoral district of Southport.

I have to inform the House that the writ issued by me on 29 May 1987 for the election of a member to serve in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Southport has been returned to me with a certificate endorsed thereon by the returning officer of the election, on 20 June 1987, of Michael Desmond Veivers, Esquire, to serve as such member.

Member Sworn

Mr Veivers was introduced, took the oath of allegiance and subscribed the roll.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Mr SPEAKER: I have to inform honourable members that I have received the following letter from His Excellency the Governor in respect of assent to certain Bills—

“GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
BRISBANE, Q. 4001

1st June, 1987
The Honourable K. R. Lingard, M.L.A.
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly,
Parliament House,
Alice Street,
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Speaker,

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that, in the period in which Parliament has stood adjourned since 9th April, 1987, the following Bills, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were, on the dates indicated, assented to in the name of Her Majesty:—

	<i>Date of Assent</i>
A Bill to amend the Adoption of Children Act Amendment Act 1983-1986 in certain particulars	15 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Building Societies Act 1985-1986 in certain particulars	15 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Chiropodists Act 1969-1984 in certain particulars and for related purposes	15 April, 1987
A Bill to ratify and confirm certain agreements made by The Harbours Corporation of Queensland with respect to the Harbour of Hay Point and for related purposes	15 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Medical Act and Other Acts (Administration) Act 1966-1980, the Chiropodists Act 1969-1984, the Chiropractic Manipulative Therapists Act 1979-1984, the Dental Act 1971-1984, the Medical Act 1939-1984, the Nursing Act 1976-1984, the Occupational Therapists Act 1979-1984, the Optometrists Act 1974-1984, the Pharmacy Act 1976-1984, the Psychologists Act 1977-1984 and the Speech Therapists Act 1979-1984 each in certain particulars	15 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Mental Health Services Act 1974-1984 in certain particulars	15 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the National Companies and Securities Commission (State Provisions) Act 1981-1984 in certain particulars	15 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Police Act 1937-1985 in certain particulars	15 April, 1987

	<i>Date of Assent</i>
A Bill to amend the Prisoners (Interstate Transfer) Act 1982 consequent on and in connection with the enactment of the Transfer of Prisoners Act 1983 of the Commonwealth	15 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Sugar Acquisition Act 1915-1985 in a certain particular	15 April, 1987
A Bill to repeal certain Acts relating to waterworks on the Ross River, Queensland	15 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Vagrants, Gaming, and Other Offences Act 1931-1978 in certain particulars	15 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Water Act 1926-1986 in certain particulars	15 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Valuation of Land Act 1944-1985 in certain particulars	23 April, 1987
A Bill to control the sale and use of certain timbers, to repeal the Timber Users' Protection Act 1949-1972 and for other purposes	23 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Survey Co-Ordination Act 1952-1981 in certain particulars	23 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Supreme Court Library Act 1968-1976 in a certain particular	23 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the State Service Superannuation Act 1972-1985 the Public Service Superannuation Act 1958-1985 the Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Act 1970-1985 the Police Superannuation Act 1974-1985 and the Police Superannuation Act 1968-1985 each in certain particulars	23 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Racing and Betting Act 1980-1985 in certain particulars	23 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the National Crime Authority (State Provisions) Act 1985 in a certain particular	23 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Medical Act 1939-1984 in certain particulars	23 April, 1987
A Bill to provide for the approval of schemes of integrated resort development, to make provision to assist in the establishment, operation and management of approved integrated resort developments and for other purposes	23 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Health Act 1937-1984 in certain particulars	23 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Clean Air Act 1963-1984 in certain particulars	23 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Canals Act 1958-1984 in certain particulars	23 April, 1987
A Bill to provide in relation to the operation of a university in Queensland under the name and style Bond University	23 April, 1987
A Bill to provide for assistance to be made available to families, youth and children; to provide for the licensing of child care facilities and for other purposes	30 April, 1987
A Bill to free and discharge certain land vested in Brisbane City Council from a trust affecting the land for the purpose of dedicating the land as road	30 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Land Act 1962-1986 in certain particulars and for related purposes	30 April, 1987

	<i>Date of Assent</i>
A Bill to validate determinations and orders made by the Licensing Court in relation to applications made to it for the transfer of spirit merchant's licenses and to amend the Liquor Act 1912-1985 in certain particulars and for other purposes	30 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Local Government Act 1936-1986 and the City of Brisbane Act 1924-1986 each in certain particulars	30 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Local Government (Chinatown Mall) Act 1984 in certain particulars	30 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Local Government (Queen Street Mall) Act 1981-1983 in certain particulars	30 April, 1987
A Bill with respect to an Agreement between the State of Queensland and the Logan Motorway Company Limited and for purposes incidental thereto and consequent thereon	30 April, 1987
A Bill to make provision with respect to the administration of the Queensland Art Gallery, to repeal the Queensland Art Gallery Act 1959-1979, and for other purposes	30 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Rural Machinery Safety Act 1976 and the Inspection of Machinery Act 1951-1985 each in certain particulars	30 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Sanctuary Cove Resort Act 1985-1986 in certain particulars	30 April, 1987

The following Bills were also assented to by the Deputy Governor in the name of Her Majesty, on the dates indicated:

	<i>Date of Assent</i>
A Bill to amend the Industrial (Commercial Practices) Act 1984-1985 and the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1961-1986 each in certain particulars	9 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Stamp Act 1894-1986 in certain particulars	10 April, 1987
A Bill to amend the Sugar Milling Rationalization (Far Northern Region) Act 1987 in a certain particular	10 April, 1987

Yours sincerely,
W. B. CAMPBELL
Governor."

PAPERS PRINTED DURING RECESS

Mr SPEAKER: I have to report that the following papers were ordered to be printed and circulated during the recess, in accordance with the resolution of Parliament passed during the session of 1901—

Reports—

- Queensland Institute of Medical Research Trust 1985-86
- Queensland Institute of Medical Research 1985-86
- Public Service Board, Queensland 1985-86
- Co-ordinator-General 1985-86.

PAPERS CIRCULATED DURING RECESS

Mr SPEAKER: I have to report that the following papers were authorised to be circulated during the recess, in accordance with the resolution of Parliament passed during the session of 1901—

Reports—

Queensland Fish Board 1985-86
State Wheat Board 1985-86
Brisbane Market Trust 1985-86
Bulk Grains Queensland 1985-86
Queensland Art Gallery 1985-86
Valuers Registration Board 1986
Queensland Institute of Technology 1986.

ACTING CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES**Nomination of Mr D. J. Booth**

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to inform the House that during the remainder of the current parliamentary session the Chairman of Committees, Mr E. C. Row, will be absent from the State on several occasions in his capacity as Commonwealth Parliamentary Association regional representative for the Australasian and Pacific region.

During Mr Row's periods of absence I have nominated Mr D. J. Booth, Temporary Chairman, to act as Chairman of Committees, pursuant to Standing Order No. 14.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE**Death of Mr D. B. Jennings, MLA**

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (10.08 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"1. That this House desires to place on record its sense of the loss this State has sustained by the death of Douglas Bernard Jennings, Esquire, lately serving as the member for the electoral district of Southport.

2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland in the loss that they have sustained."

The late Douglas Bernard Jennings, who died on 9 April this year, was a member of this House for 6½ years. He was elected to Parliament on 29 November 1980 as the National Party member for Southport.

Doug Jennings was steeped in the fine traditions of Parliament. He was the Liberal member for the Victorian State seat of Westernport from 1976 to 1979 when, on a point of principle, he refused to yield to pressure from his party to stop criticising what he saw as controversial land dealings by the Government of the day and he was expelled.

Victoria's loss was truly Queensland's gain, because he joined the National Party and, through an enormous amount of hard work, he won Southport at his first attempt. From then on he did not look like being defeated, because he gave his electors total and utterly honest service. He was an extremely hard worker who put the highest priority on the needs of his electorate. Doug's work will serve as an example to many aspiring politicians.

In this House he displayed the courage, honesty and integrity that were his hallmark in Victoria. He was fearless in debate in this Chamber and also in the party room, but

had the wonderful ability of being able to confine his attacks to impersonal matters. He made many friends on both sides of this House and served on many very significant committees because he had great experience in so many fields.

Doug Jennings was the son of one of Australia's most respected leaders of the building industry, Sir Albert Jennings.

He was born in Victoria on 30 October 1929. Before entering politics he was in the timber and building industries and for a time he was a grazier near Mount Surprise in north Queensland. We shared a common love of flying, and indeed Doug was one of the pioneers of the use of light aircraft in cattle-mustering.

Those of us who were able to attend the funeral service will recall the very sincere tribute paid to Doug by the people of the Southport electorate. They appreciated the character and sincerity of this man who was in every respect a servant of the people whom he represented. He was never afraid to stand up and be counted.

Doug Jennings leaves a fine record of service to his electorate, to this House and to the States of Victoria and Queensland.

This record, I am sure, will be of some consolation and great pride to his family, to whom, on behalf of the Government of Queensland, I offer our most sincere condolences.

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police) (10.10 a.m.): I second the motion moved by the Premier to express sympathy to the family of the late Douglas Bernard Jennings.

As the Premier has said, Doug Jennings was a strong man with strong views and a reputation for honesty that made him a credit to Parliament and to his family. After a somewhat controversial political career in Victoria he successfully re-established himself in Queensland. He was, of course, no stranger to the State, having successfully taken on the development of the gulf country cattle property Mount Surprise in the 1960s.

Mr Jennings won wide respect in his electorate for his hard work and his strong representations on behalf of his constituents. He believed that every member of Parliament has a contract with his or her electorate to see that the traditional and constitutional rights of the country are maintained. He also put the highest priority on his electorate and was tireless in his efforts to assist his constituents.

In his maiden speech, Doug Jennings spoke of his belief in the future of the Gold Coast as a leading international tourist destination. A proud Gold Coaster, he never tired of extolling the benefits of living in what he considered to be the best place in the world. Although he was enthusiastic about the growth that was occurring in the region, Doug Jennings lobbied hard to ensure that this did not detract from the natural beauty of areas such as the Nerang River and the Broadwater. He worked hard for the stabilisation of the Southport bar, which he saw as the key to further expansion of tourism on the Gold Coast.

Doug Jennings was a strong supporter of World Expo 88. He believed that the decision to stage Expo 88 typified the progress that had occurred over the years of National Party Government in Queensland. His background in private enterprise made Doug Jennings a staunch advocate of the private sector, which he saw as holding the answer to the problem of Australia's growing number of social service recipients. He believed that the development of Australia lay with enterprising, courageous people who are willing to face up to challenge and strive hard to achieve results.

Doug Jennings will be remembered for his determination to pursue what he saw as the correct course to follow in many controversial matters.

I join with the Premier in extending condolences to his family.

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate—Leader of the Opposition) (10.13 a.m.): The Opposition wishes to support the motion of condolence moved by the Premier and seconded by the Deputy Premier.

Doug was only 58 years of age at the time of his death. As all honourable members are aware, he had very extensive experience during his life-time.

I was interested to learn that Doug served in local government as a councillor on the Etheridge Shire Council. Of course, honourable members are aware that, before becoming the member for Southport on 29 November 1980, Doug served in the Victorian Parliament as the member for Westernport. That was during the period from 1976 to 1979.

I believe that it always hits hardest when a sitting member of this Parliament passes away. All honourable members can recall that it happened in the case of Denis Murphy, later with Kevin Hooper and more recently with Doug Jennings. I think that it tends to bring home to all of us the fact that long life is not necessarily reserved for everybody.

Doug was very well liked as a member of Parliament. We knew him for his great sense of humour. He was a very fit person. He was very conscious of the need to stay in shape.

I believe that Doug will be sadly missed by members of the press gallery. He was renowned for his expertise in giving background briefings when necessary to the journalists in the press gallery. Of course, his independence was well known. Perhaps on occasions such as this it is not improper to take a look at the amusing side of things. Most honourable members will never forget one particular incident involving Earle Bailey, the former member for Toowong and a close friend of Doug's. Apparently he was copping somewhat of a pasting in the National Party meeting room over the Lindeman Island issue, when a very senior member of the National Party team said to Earle, "Well, you are on your own." A voice from the back said, "No, he is not." Of course, that was the voice of Doug Jennings. That type of comment coming from Doug was indicative of his independence and preparedness to stand up for what he thought was right and proper.

The Opposition extends its very sincere sympathies to the family and friends of the late Doug Jennings.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah—Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.15 a.m.): The members of the Liberal Party wish to be associated with this motion of condolence. As honourable members have already stated, it is a considerable loss to us when we lose a contemporary. Doug Jennings was a serving member of this House and was well respected and liked by members on both sides of the House.

In 1976 he entered the Victorian Parliament and in 1980 he entered the Queensland Parliament. He was very active in both public and sporting life in Queensland and Victoria. He was a Victorian State swimming champion in several categories. He won many life-saving awards and was prominent in that sport.

He was also a trustee of the Aboriginal Advancement League, and a member of the Westernport Regional Planning Authority and the Dandenong Valley Authority. His greatest contribution in Victoria was the running of the Mornington Park Stud, which was a very fine estate in Flinders, Victoria. His love of physical exercise was so great that he had a gymnasium attached to the house. As all honourable members are aware, he was very fond of physical exercise.

His excursions into the beef cattle industry at Mount Surprise in Queensland are well known. He also served on local authorities in this State. He was a very active member of the Queensland swimming veterans association and participated in all its events. Along with many thousands of people from all over the world, he would have participated in the international events next year in Brisbane associated with the Bicentenary celebrations.

Doug Jennings was a man who was easy and comfortable to be with and, in spite of his very strong views on a number of matters, he was a very sociable person. He left his politics inside the Chamber and mixed freely with all people in the community. I

can think of no better statement than that of Alan Reid in the *Bulletin* in 1980 when, in regard to Doug Jennings, he stated—

“Jennings has a real fixation on the necessity for maintaining a high level of public morality, believing that corruption at the top percolates downwards and destroys the social fabric of a community.”

All honourable members in this House deeply mourn his passing and extend our condolences to his relatives.

Mr VEIVERS (Southport) (10.19 a.m.): Doug Jennings would never have thought of himself as a great man, but I know he was. His greatest attribute was his boundless energy, together with his practical common sense. He would have to be classed as a visionary of great note.

Douglas Bernard Jennings was born on 30 October 1929 at Glen Huntley in Victoria. His early life was relatively humble. He attended Murrumbeena State School, Ivanhoe, and later went on to Melbourne Grammar. He became State junior swimming champion and from 1945 to 1948 swam for Victoria. Additionally he was a State water polo player and as a boxer he won an Australian junior welterweight title.

He left school at the age of 18 and became the estate development manager for A.V. Jennings. He married Pat Downey in November 1953 and they had two children, Kim and Lindy. In Victoria he was a member of the Liberal Party headed by Mr Hamer and, owing to his efforts, the Gowans inquiry into Housing Commission land deals was instigated. Because of that he was expelled from the party, and that expulsion order was personally signed by Mr Hamer. Even today, question marks hang over the sordid way in which Doug was treated at that time.

Doug Jennings was honest and a fighter, as most honourable members in this House would accept. The electors of Southport held Doug Jennings in high regard. His tenacity in keeping honest the developers of the Spit and the Broadwater needs no recounting in this place. When it may have been seen to be making the wrong decisions, he even kept his beloved National Party on the straight and narrow. In other words, Doug Jennings was respected by people on both sides of the political fence. I just hope that, as the new member for Southport, I can fill the large shoes that the late Doug Jennings left.

Mr Speaker, it is with deep respect that I support the motion of condolence in respect of the late and great Doug Jennings.

Mr R. J. GIBBS (Wolston) (10.21 a.m.): This morning I would like to say some words, particularly on behalf of my wife, who had a very high regard for Doug Jennings. Since entering this Parliament, I have not expressed the attitude, as many people have done, that a member cannot make friendships with members on the other side of the House; I believe that one can. In fact, I think that it is very healthy for our democracy to do so. I am proud to say that Doug Jennings was a very close friend of mine. I enjoyed his company socially and politically. In saying that I enjoyed his company politically, I might add that he was a person who, when he spoke about politics, was not guarded about his party, although he certainly would not indulge in giving away any family secrets. He was an exceptionally honest person in that regard.

There are a few reasons why I struck up a friendship with Doug Jennings. When I first had the pleasure of meeting him in this Parliament some years ago, I happened not long afterwards to be going on a holiday to Victoria. It coincided with a holiday that he himself was going on to his property at Flinders. It might seem strange to some people that I have always had a fascination with beef cattle. Knowing that I have that interest, he invited me over to have a look at his property. From there on we struck up a friendship. He had a beautiful property that was a credit to him. He was a man who was very widely respected for his knowledge of the beef cattle industry.

There are a few things that some people probably do not know about Doug Jennings. When I spoke to him about our political parties' differences of opinion on trade unions,

his views on the rights of people industrially were very good, although he certainly had some views that were different from mine. It would be unknown to a lot of people that he was one of the first people in Queensland who paid award wages—I mean proper award wages—to Aborigines who worked on his property at Mount Surprise. He was among the very first property-owners in Queensland to introduce superannuation for their workers. He employed both black and white people. He was a person of very high principles in that regard.

I know that Doug will be very much missed by many people on the Gold Coast and in Victoria. I think that the honourable member for Surfers Paradise would share the view that, even though Doug was a Gold Coast resident, in his heart he regarded Victoria as his home. It was the place that he loved, and he loved nothing more than returning to his property. He was a great personality on the Gold Coast. I know of three particular events at which he will be very much missed each year. Had the Minister for Racing been in the Chamber this morning, I know that he would have concurred that those three events would be the Prime Minister's Cup, the Gold Nugget and the Magic Million. Attendance at those race-meetings was an enjoyable day not only because of the events themselves but also because of the company provided by Doug Jennings.

I attended Doug's funeral at Southport and his interment at Flinders. It was a credit to him that at the final service at Flinders, the gentleman who was, I suppose, his partner in the exposure of the Victorian land scandals, Charles Francis, was in attendance and was very deeply moved. It was obvious that the friendship that they had struck up and the very hard time that they had gone through in Victoria had bonded them very closely together.

In closing, I might say that I was a little disappointed by the lack of attendance of members of the Victorian Parliament at the service at Flinders. Last week in Darwin I attended a housing conference and spent some time with the Victorian Minister for Housing, Mr Frank Wilkes.

Mr Wilkes expressly asked me to inform all members of this House that most of the Victorian members of Parliament were under the impression that the service on the Gold Coast was, in fact, the burial service as well. Mr Wilkes expressed to me a very strong affection for Doug Jennings. He specifically asked me to tell all honourable members that there appeared to be a break-down in communication somewhere. He assured me that many members of the Victorian Parliament would have been prepared to attend the funeral at Flinders and that they all held Doug Jennings in high regard.

On behalf of my wife and myself I pass on our sympathies to Sir Albert Jennings and his brothers. As I have said, I regarded Doug Jennings as a very good and close friend. I was very deeply shocked when I learned that he had died at this Parliament House. He was a man of great principle and personality and he will be sorely missed in this House.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise) (10.26 a.m.): The sudden death of Doug Jennings on 9 April of this year was a tragic loss for the Queensland Government, for this House and for his many close friends. It was also a great loss for the people of Southport who, on three separate occasions, embraced his very individual and unique style of parliamentary representation.

Doug had a great deal to contribute to the parliamentary system that he loved so much. As has been mentioned by other honourable members, he enjoyed a colourful and dramatic political career in two State Parliaments of this Commonwealth. As honourable members would be aware, not long after he left the Liberal Party in Victoria after disclosing certain land dealings in that State, he joined the National Party and became a member of this House.

I first came to know Doug in 1980 when we campaigned successfully in adjoining seats. Over the years, in common with many honourable members, Doug and I became very close friends.

Doug Jennings had an absolute commitment to his electorate and showed total integrity in everything that he did. He would pursue tirelessly a cause that he believed was just. He would never give up. He endeared himself to many people, and we miss him greatly.

The honourable member for Wolston, in common with me and other honourable members, had the opportunity to join Doug at Mornington Park, his property overlooking Westernport Bay, which is just outside Flinders in Victoria. That very special place was Doug's retreat on those rare occasions—perhaps only once or twice a year—when he took a break from his work. He now rests nearby.

This Parliament has lost an outstanding member whom it will remember with great affection. He made a significant contribution to government in this State. Doug had a great love of life, a concern for those less fortunate than himself, and a very real commitment to making Australia a better place. I regret that he has been denied a period of growing happiness and contentment in his personal life, which he deserved so richly.

In supporting the condolence motion before the House, on behalf of my family I extend our deepest sympathy to the Jennings family and also to Ann and her parents.

Mr SCOTT (Cook) (10.28 a.m.): I am very proud to be associated with this condolence motion. It is a sad occasion. I rose to speak for two reasons. Having listened to the remarks of those honourable members who have spoken this morning, I have come to the conclusion that Doug Jennings was a great man. I do not think that any honourable member could sit in this Chamber and listen to the very wide range of activities that he undertook successfully during his life-time without arriving at that very same conclusion.

All honourable members have characteristics that are not always obvious to others in this Chamber. Honourable members sit in this House for a rather narrow range of purposes. There are many characteristics of present and past honourable members of which other members would not be aware.

I was very impressed by the qualities that Doug Jennings possessed. It is sad that he was not able to enjoy a continued life in this Parliament and subsequently an enjoyable retirement.

I do not believe in ghosts, but, since Doug Jennings passed away, perhaps because of the strong image that I had of the man, I have had the feeling that he is still around the Chamber. Of course, that does not make his loss any easier. I have noted the comments of previous speakers who mentioned that the man died in harness. All honourable members are in harness here and we all think of that very occasionally, although we do not dwell on it. We know that we have families and other people who would mostly be quite upset if we passed on, but it is something to think about.

The role of parliamentarians in society round the world has not yet been fully clarified. Many people castigate us, sometimes with justification, but very few people, either in the media or whom one meets, are able to sum up fully the lives of parliamentarians. I do not think that we can do it ourselves. When one looks at the complexity of the character of Doug Jennings, one can well understand why clarification is difficult.

I was a member of Parliament for three years before Doug Jennings came into the House, but he was one of the first people in and around this Chamber who treated me as a human being. Honourable members might find those to be rather strange remarks, but I was here for a long period before people accepted me. Doug Jennings did it immediately.

I might say that I restrict the prickly side of my character to this Chamber, in which I believe I should be as prickly as the job requires, and I intend to continue in that manner. Outside the Chamber, I am a particularly affable person. A lot of people do not realise that, but Doug Jennings grasped it fairly quickly. I hasten to add that some other members of the Government were able to come to that conclusion. However,

I am not talking about me and my attitude towards Doug Jennings; I want to talk about his role elsewhere, and that relates to the Cook electorate.

I wish to associate the constituents of the Cook electorate with this condolence motion because, as several speakers have said, Doug Jennings owned Mount Surprise station for a number of years and was extremely highly regarded in the north. I was pleased to note that he was one of the first employers to willingly and properly pay award wages to Aboriginal people. He ran that property very successfully. I was not aware of the extent of his agricultural background. I am interested to note that the honourable member for Wolston visited Doug's property in the south and that other people have been down there to see just what knowledge he brought to bear in that one aspect of his approach to life.

Under Doug Jennings' care, Mount Surprise station was a success. He also contributed to the Etheridge Shire. I took the liberty of speaking to senior people administering that shire. They said that Doug and another person at that time brought particular qualities to bear that made the administration of the Etheridge Shire a good deal better than it had been in the past. I like to think of Doug Jennings attending the council meetings at Georgetown and providing a constructive approach and also no doubt some of the entertainment that he has provided around this House. He contributed very ably and capably to the development of far-north Queensland, which was a great effort.

In this Parliament, Doug was a member of committees dealing with subjects that also concerned me, in particular the committee relative to Aboriginal affairs in Queensland. I had numerous conversations with Doug in the Chamber. It is of interest to me that I have heard his name raised on two occasions by a junior Minister who, in his public utterances, sees some benefit in speaking about particular qualities that Mr Jennings brought to bear. I do not know that those utterances have always necessarily been made in the most constructive manner, but they are indicative of the role that honourable members can develop in this House and the way in which myths come into being.

I am pleased to note that Mr Jennings was well regarded in the electorate. That does not surprise me at all. It is all that one would expect, but it is great to know.

I did not know Doug's family. I am pleased to have learned some details of his family during the debate. On this sad occasion, I extend the condolences of my wife Jenny and myself to the family of Mr Jennings. I also extend the condolences of the people in the area in which Mount Surprise station is located, in Georgetown and in the Etheridge Shire.

Hon. R. C. KATTER (Flinders—Minister for Northern Development and Community Services) (10.35 a.m.): I will not reiterate what has been said by others this morning. However, few people realise that Doug was brought up as a member of a very poor family, which occupied a little residence above an office. It was only when Doug was a grown man that he enjoyed the sort of riches that are now associated with the Jennings family.

Doug came from a poor background, but when the family became rich he chose not to continue to be part of the family organisation. He felt that his brother and his father had achieved great things and he wanted to do something himself. He looked for worlds to conquer and he chose to go to Mount Surprise, which is located right on the very outskirts of Australian settlement. Mount Surprise is one of Australia's frontiers and is to be found in the gulf country in Queensland where the Never Never Land begins.

He bought a cattle station, which was not in a very good state of repair when he took it over, and made it into what was at that time a leading example of cattle husbandry in north Queensland. He introduced numerous cattle husbandry methods that were of enormous value to those of us involved in the cattle industry in north Queensland. I felt a great kinship with him because, in common with me, he did not have a background in cattle husbandry of any type; yet he was up there doing great things that others who

were watching him were able to follow. Hopefully, we were all far more successful as a result of following his example.

He also developed a cattle stud, which was able to provide answers to problems associated with ticks and other pests in north Queensland. Although few people in this Chamber would realise the importance of valuable breeding stock, two of north Queensland's meatworks would simply not have been able to be kept open if it were not for the efforts of cattle-breeders such as Doug Jennings. In the matter of achievement in north Queensland, he is owed a very great debt of gratitude.

He returned to the Victorian Parliament at a later date. Together with the honourable member for Wolston, I spoke to Charles Francis at the memorial service held at Mornington Peninsula at which I represented the Queensland Government. Charles Francis was deeply moved. In common with Doug, Charles Francis took a moral stand. For the benefit of those who think that Doug acted precipitately in Victoria, I mention that on many occasions Doug told me the details of what had occurred. For a story of real gutsy moral courage, one should look to what Jennings and Francis did in the Victorian Parliament.

Doug went to Rupert Hamer three times and pleaded with the then Premier to do something about the evidence that he had. Eventually, he gave the Premier an ultimatum and said that if the Premier had not done anything about the matter by Tuesday, he would go into the House. I do not think that Mr Hamer was used to dealing with people of moral courage and conviction. Doug went into the House with the evidence—and the rest is history.

Few people would realise what that action cost Doug. In my opinion—I emphasise that this is my opinion—it cost him his family; it cost him his social position, although I do not think that that mattered very much to Doug; and it cost him a large number of his friends, but I do not suppose that they were real friends anyway. It left him as a man who had very little money at all. He most certainly was no longer a wealthy man in any sense of the term.

He also lost his seat in Parliament. Doug really loved being a parliamentarian, and he was very dedicated to that role. A previous speaker said that he also loved the Mornington Peninsula. And, yes, he did. He was a person who was greatly committed to the country to which he belonged. The action that he took in Victoria also cost him his attachment to the Mornington Peninsula.

A friend of Doug's described him to me as a modern knight errant, which I thought was very true. Doug followed the action wherever there were innocents to protect and dragons to slay. He was approached by people who said, "We need you in Queensland", so he came to live in this State. He carried out his tasks in the same way as he had carried them out in the Etheridge Shire, on his cattle station and in the other areas in which he was involved throughout his life.

At the Gold Coast, he took a very public stand against a very popular figure who was a very successful developer in that area and who—quite rightly so—was well lauded for his achievements. Doug felt that the developer should not have been able to ride roughshod over anyone whenever he felt like it. Once again, Doug showed the immense and towering moral courage that was his hallmark. The developer said, "This place is not big enough for Jennings and me", and three months later the developer left.

Those of us who served with him through many long hours, days, weeks and months on the Aboriginal affairs committee of the National Party will recall graphically the many stands that he took on that legislation. I always say—I think my colleagues on that committee would agree with me—that the private-ownership element of that legislation differentiated it from any other legislation anywhere else in Australia. I think that has been the hallmark of its success. They can remember Doug quite literally thumping the table with his fists and saying, "Anything less than privately owned fee simple freehold land is totally unacceptable." Because he took the strong stand that he did, the legislation is on the statute-book. I do not say that to detract from the thousands

of people of Aboriginal descent who participated in the considerations, the members of the committee or anyone else; but I do think that everyone will agree with what I have said.

The priest who officiated at the memorial service at Southport said that Doug saw no walls, only doors. As a person who spent a lot of time with Doug, I think that is profoundly true. He saw opportunity where other people saw a solid concrete wall.

Three of the previous speakers have described Doug as a great man. I have listened to many condolence motions in this place, and I do not think that I have heard that expression used previously. I would like to be the fourth person to say that he was a great man. There is no doubt in my mind that knowing Doug Jennings was to know a great man. He was a man of great vision, towering moral courage and unparalleled intellectual capacity, with a great love for his fellow-man and his country—his mates and his land.

I would like to quote two statements, one of which is from a speech that I made in this place on the heritage legislation. I said—

“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.’”

Let the final word belong to Eric Law, a person of Aboriginal descent who has spent most of his life on the Cherbourg reserve. He travelled a thousand miles at his own expense in his own car to attend Doug’s funeral, because he believed that the man had done great things and created a whole new world for his people. When he arrived down here, I was very surprised to see him as I did not expect him. I asked him, “What are you doing here?” He replied, “What do you think I am doing here? A man would be a nice sort of a dingo to let Doug down.” I say to members of this House: if there is a lesson to be learned from Doug’s death, it is that we do not let that sort of a man down.

Mr SMITH (Townsville East) (10.44 a.m.): I rise to place on record my sympathy to the family and friends of the late Doug Jennings and to briefly add to the words of appreciation that have already been expressed.

I certainly felt a deep sense of shock and loss on learning of Doug’s death—loss because of a friendship over the past six years and shock because he shone like a beacon as a person radiating evidence of good health and vitality.

Doug and I came into this place after the 1980 election, and for the period while the Parliament was conducted in the temporary Chamber Doug and I shared the same parliamentary bench. I enjoyed many conversations with Doug, particularly after he revealed his association with the north Queensland area, where he had had quite an extensive involvement, as other speakers have already outlined this morning.

I came to like and respect Doug as a person who was naturally friendly and a member who always had his argument in the Chamber and left any disagreements within the Chamber. Outside the Chamber I think it would have been difficult for any member to have provoked Doug into any sort of political disagreement.

In fact, I was always impressed with the man’s honesty and frankness and his disregard for his own position and future when he found it necessary to take a position out of alignment with his own party. He, of course, had demonstrated that particular capacity while a member of the Parliament of Victoria and he surprised nobody when he continued to stand firm on the beliefs of his own principles while a member of this Parliament.

He will remain in my memory as an honourable, upright man whose death robbed this Parliament of one of its more worthy members and Queensland of one of its more worthy citizens.

Mr HYND (Nerang) (10.46 a.m.): I join with the Honourable the Premier and Treasurer and other members who have spoken to the motion of condolence to the family of the late Doug Jennings. I am proud to say that, since the night of his selection, I have known Doug and worked closely with him. I am also proud to say that, since the 1986 redistribution, some of those people who were previously in the Southport electorate are now within the Nerang electorate.

The late Doug Jennings was a great champion of fair play and personal effort and would go to extreme lengths to see that those objectives were achieved.

Doug believed in the private-enterprise system and that "profit" was not a dirty word. He believed that if a person worked hard he should be reimbursed accordingly.

The late Doug Jennings spent most of his life at a jog and not at a walk, but always with a cheery smile and a "Hey, buddy", which was his normal, cheery welcome to everyone. If we had a problem to solve, his welcome became, "Hey, buddy, we have a problem. When can we get together and solve it?"

Doug made his mark on Queensland and the Gold Coast in just six short years. He leaves behind a great number of close friends and associates from both his private life and his parliamentary career. The Queensland Parliament, the people of the Southport electorate and Doug's friends are the losers. I think it is fair to say that his memory and his influence will remain strong and everlasting.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (10.48 a.m.): I wish to join in this motion, which pays a tribute to the late Doug Jennings. I will not rehash all of the things that have been said. I agree with all the things that have been said about his ability and integrity and his being a man of principle. I think all of us knew that.

As I had an office that adjoined Doug's, I wish to say something about the pleasant side of the man. He was an intense man; nevertheless his company was always particularly enjoyable. He would always invite others to join him and to enjoy his company. I appreciated that. If there is one thing by which I will always remember Doug, it is that he was a pleasant guy, a very generous man and a very loyal friend.

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (10.49 a.m.): I wish to join with the comments made by other honourable members. My first recollection of Doug stems from a television interview of his when he was a new candidate for office. I did not know him at all but I saw some clown put a microphone under his nose and ask him what the main street of Southport was. In his usual, honest way, Doug gave that infectious grin and said that he did not know. I thought that was pretty good, because usually in such circumstances people try to bluff their way through and to work out how they can get out of such a situation. That was not Doug's way at all.

I suggest to you, Mr Speaker, that after he had represented the place for three years, no-one would have dared to suggest to Doug that he did not know anything about the electorate of Southport. That is the sort of representative he was.

I found great pleasure in being in Doug's company, as most members in this House did. To me his death was absolutely unthinkable. I saw the man as being almost indestructible. When I came down to breakfast that morning, I just could not believe that this incredibly strong, fit man had gone. It was just incredible. All of us were tremendously moved by that.

I am sure that Doug would approve of the selection of Mick Veivers as his successor. When I went down to the Southport electorate to work in the by-election, I was delighted to see that somebody of the calibre of Mick Veivers had been picked as the candidate for the seat. I think the House will find that Mick has that same strength of character

and that he will have an effect on the people in the electorate in the same way as Doug did.

I know that many people respected Doug very much. I know the Premier respected him for the way in which he was prepared to stand and be counted. I think it is terribly important that in this place there are people who are game to say what they think, regardless of whether the truth is palatable or unpalatable.

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (10.51 a.m.): It is with sadness and many fond memories that I join in this condolence motion.

I was fortunate to have known Doug Jennings perhaps longer than most honourable members. I first met him in 1974, just prior to going with him on an overseas study tour looking at Brahman beef cattle in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The first thing that everyone, particularly my wife and I, noticed about Doug on that tour was his humour and the way in which he mixed with others: As has been mentioned, Doug had an infectious grin. That was consistent throughout those few weeks and, of course, it remained consistent during all of his life. The second thing that was immediately obvious about Doug Jennings was his capacity to relax. No sooner had Doug set foot on the aircraft and taken his seat than he went to sleep. He seemed to be able to catnap at all stages throughout a rather arduous tour, to the envy of us all.

I believe that the part played by Doug Jennings in the Brahman breeding sphere in Australia has been much understated. In fact, during the time he served on the executive of the Australian Brahman Breeders Association, Doug Jennings did much to take the image of the Brahman breed from the yak status to the correct status that it has now achieved. Doug Jennings could be proud of the part that he played in that sphere. His family can also be proud of his very high principles and of the manner in which he conducted himself as a member of two Parliaments and as a man in general. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr RANDELL (Mirani) (10.53 a.m.): It was a great shock when honourable members went down to breakfast and learned of the demise of Doug Jennings. On the night before his death, many honourable members from both sides of the House saw Doug at his best. He was the life of the party that night. He was having a drink and a word with us all, laughing and joking. His death was certainly a great shock.

In 1980 I entered Parliament with Doug. I knew him quite well. We served together on many committees. As the Minister said, the most notable of those committees, of course, was the northern development committee.

Having spent so many years in the area, Doug had a great understanding of the north. As I said, he made an invaluable contribution to the northern development committee and to the legislation that was introduced. As everyone knows, Doug was a man of great integrity, independence and compassion. Undoubtedly he made a great contribution not only to this House but also to the State of Queensland.

Doug was a man who loved life. He had the ability to mix with all classes of people and to understand the views of the common man. Doug had a great sense of humour, and every member of this House was aware of it. However, that humour was never aimed at hurting or denigrating anybody. That is the sort of humour that all honourable members like.

Doug and I had similar interests in many things, including sport—in particular boxing—and the breeding of Brahman cattle. My first contact with Doug was at the Rockhampton stud cattle sales where he bought one of my stud cows. He was dressed in his ordinary old working clothes and he was in his element, mixing with the men, the heat and the dust. I could see then that Doug was a man of the land. He had a great compassion for the land and he knew it. Doug later on went on to breed stud Brahman cattle. I understand that he had the southern-most Brahman stud in mainland Australia.

I was always proud to be regarded as a friend of Doug's. It is certainly my privilege to be regarded as such. Along with other honourable members, I extend my condolences to his family and friends.

Hon. I. J. GIBBS (Albert—Minister for Works and Housing) (10.54 a.m.): I wish to join in the debate on the condolence motion in respect of the late Doug Jennings. Of course, when he died Doug was in his third term in this Parliament. When Doug first stood for the seat of Southport, the Government found it hard to find a candidate because nobody thought that he could beat the sitting member. The Premier produced a candidate named Doug Jennings. With his determination, he won that seat quite easily. He received a tremendous amount of backing. His integrity came to the fore and he won that seat.

Doug Jennings was a Christian. He attended St Peter's Anglican Church regularly and became very friendly with Father Smith, who was the priest at that church.

Doug was not merely a Sunday Christian. He was a seven days a week Christian. He practised Christianity throughout his life and during the time he was a member in this House. He had tremendous integrity.

After he became the member for Southport, he consolidated his position and, based on his personality and activities, Southport became a solid National Party seat. He was a very hard-working member of Parliament with his own independent thoughts. He came from a marvellous family. His father is Sir Albert Jennings. As mentioned by the honourable member for Surfers Paradise, Mr Borbidge, Doug was a good person to work with, and Rob Borbidge became very close to him whilst working with him.

On behalf of the family of the late Doug Jennings, I thank all honourable members in this House who attended the funeral in recognition of Doug as a marvellous person. I know that Doug would be particularly pleased that the honourable member for Wolston, Mr Bob Gibbs, attended the service at Southport and took the time to attend the final service in Victoria.

Doug is in good hands; he is in God's hands. He will be happy there and will be working hard. I have pleasure in speaking today on behalf of Doug's family and join with all honourable members in offering condolences to the Jennings family and to Ann Davies and her family.

Motion agreed to, honourable members standing in silence.

PAPERS

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

Report of the Public Accountants Registration Board of Queensland for the year ended 31 December 1986.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Orders in Council under—

Constitution Acts Amendment Act 1971-1983

Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977-1981

Lotto Act 1981-1984

State Housing Act 1945-1986 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984

Regulations under—

Public Service Act 1922-1978

Casino Control Act 1982

Stamp Act 1894-1987

Land Tax Act 1915-1985

State Housing Act 1945-1986
Law Courts and State Buildings Protective Security Act 1983
Notification under the Casino Control Act 1982.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coal-mining Industry

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (10.59 a.m.), by leave: I wish to offer the people of Queensland the absolute assurance of my Government that every action will be taken to protect the rights of this State in regard to the coal-mining industry.

All honourable members will have noted reports today of the disgraceful waste of \$600,000 of public funds by the Commonwealth Labor Government and the New South Wales Labor Government to buy off trade union agitators in the strike-prone Hunter Valley. I am unable to recall any precedent for this blatant misuse of public funds in such an obvious political move to keep irresponsible trade union members at their jobs—and for just a few weeks.

Mr Speaker, this is a glaring example of the total inadequacy of the Hawke Labor Government to provide stable leadership and intelligent economic policy against the Labor Party's trade union leaders.

The facts are that many New South Wales coal mines, struggling with basic operational inefficiency, have been made more uncompetitive by trade union work practices and wage demands, so that these mines have been completely unprepared for the down-turn of international coal prices. The Hawke Labor Government is now intruding into not only the market-place but also the industrial relations between mine-owners and employees.

It is of great concern to the coal industry of this nation that the Hawke Government continues to intrude ideas such as a totally unnecessary National Coal Authority and, more sinister, an implied threat to use Commonwealth powers over minerals exports to try to prop up trade unions in the Hunter Valley.

I give an assurance to this House and to the people of Queensland—and I direct my assurance particularly to the decent, hard-working coal-miners of Queensland—that my Government will use every means at its disposal to ensure that no action by Canberra to prejudice Queensland's coal industry through the withholding of export licences will succeed.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will now proceed with the Matters of Public Interest debate.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

National Party Government in Queensland

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate—Leader of the Opposition) (11 a.m.): In today's Matters of Public Interest debate the Opposition will present details of the National Party Government's damaging misrule of our State over the four months since this Parliament last sat. Those four months have seen the standard of government in Queensland reach an all-time low. It has occurred under the leadership of the man who, unfailingly, has put his own selfish personal interests first and the interests of the people he governs last.

The Premier, no doubt, would prefer to write off the last four months and pretend that they did not happen. The Opposition, however, does not intend to allow the Premier to escape responsibility or blame for the appalling standard of government that Queensland has been forced to endure over the last four months.

If the Premier was a person of integrity and principle, he would have resigned last month. Sir Robert Sparkes can trot out all the excuses, all the explanations and all the rationalisations that he likes, but nothing will alter the fact that the Premier suffered a shattering defeat on 11 July. The so-called lion of politics became the mouse that roared. First it was the Petersen for Prime Minister campaign. That was ditched as a bad joke and the new cry then taken up was: Petersen for Canberra. But when the crunch came, the Premier went to water and quickly dishonoured his solemn pledge, that unequivocal commitment to stand as a candidate in the Federal election, a pledge that he repeated on countless occasions across the nation at Queensland tax-payers' expense.

Sensing defeat, he promised to gain control of the Senate and to implement his reprehensible threat to block Supply. He flunked out there, too, as he did with his promise to gain control of the Federal National Party.

So there honourable members have it—a quitter and an all-round loser. He has been humiliated, disgraced and discredited. He has become an object of ridicule. He is so far down his own well-worn track that, politically, he has gone round the twist. Regrettably, it does not stop there. He is still the Premier. While he continues to occupy that position, he will remain an albatross around the neck of this great State.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Toowoomba North!

Mr WARBURTON: Let me examine in this Matters of Public Interest debate a few examples of how the public interest has been neglected over the past few months. As to Queensland's ongoing unemployment crisis—it does not seem to register with the Queensland Government that nearly 118 000 fellow-Queenslanders do not have jobs. What will it take to convince the Queensland Government of the need to reassess its economic management policies? Will it take 150 000 or 200 000 of our fellow-Queenslanders to be unemployed? For three years Queensland has had the worst unemployment record of any State. In addition, latest official figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics reveal a decline in employment growth. However, nothing has happened.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have no intention of again asking the member for Toowoomba North to stop. He will return to his seat.

Mr WARBURTON: The Minister for Employment, Mr Lester, complains that he cannot get funding for youth unemployment programs. However, at the drop of a hat he seems to be able to come up with \$100,000 to promote the Government's disgusting contract labour laws, which will serve to further reduce family pay packets.

Economically, this State is on its knees. It is in a mess. Private investment is down. Yet instead of providing competent economic management to revive this State, the Bjelke-Petersen Government says, "There's no problem. Aren't we a wonderful lot of people?" No other issue demonstrates this National Party Government's bungling ineptitude better than the fire levies fiasco.

Home and property-owners have been slugged with a massive 50 per cent increase in their fire levies by this high-charge, low-service, poor-value Government. Property-owners are paying a very hefty price for the maladministration of Queensland's fire insurance system. All Queenslanders are now expected to pay for this Government's mistakes and its incompetence.

In November 1985 in this Parliament, I questioned the then Minister responsible for fire levies, Mr Tenni, about a very serious deficiency in the fire insurance levies fund. He said that it was only a nightmare. What the Minister described as a nightmare has now become a reality for home and property-owners throughout Queensland.

In April last year the Opposition again questioned the Government about a serious shortfall in the fire levies fund. The then Minister, Mr Muntz, said that everything was under control. Now we have discovered exactly what this Government means by everything being under control—jack up the fire insurance taxes by 50 per cent.

The deliberate understaffing of Queensland's police force really makes a mockery of the jingle "Life is great in the Sunshine State". For far too many Queenslanders the critical shortage of police means that their lives and their property are at risk. For far too many Queensland women the fear of being attacked is a constant companion. Crime is rampant. The drug trade prospers in this State. The road toll continues. But the pleas for extra police fall on deaf ears. The Government does not care that tens of thousands of Queensland women are too frightened to go out alone, particularly at night, for fear of becoming the victims of violent assaults. The Government neither troubles itself with the tremendous surge in neighbourhood crime—home burglaries and car thefts—nor bothers to launch an all-out assault on drink-driving by the introduction of random breath-testing. It is much easier for this Government to mount some sort of a baseless propaganda campaign about how Queensland offers a stronger State and a better life. While the Government repeatedly proves itself incapable of looking after the needs of Queensland people, it excels in looking after itself.

I turn now to ministerial expenses. It seems to me that unlimited expense accounts are not enough for Ministers of the Bjelke-Petersen Government. They want them to be secret as well.

Earlier this year the Treasurer's instruction requiring details of ministerial expenses to be recorded, and the total amount spent by each Minister to be published each year, was secretly abolished. The official reason that was given for the dismantling of the limited accountability covering ministerial expenses was that some expenses of some Ministers were getting mixed up with the expenses of others. The repeal of that Treasurer's instruction masks what I suspect to be some sort of a public funds scandal. The Government's failure to satisfactorily explain why Ministers' expenses are to be regarded as State secrets leads people to the conclusion that those Ministers have something to hide.

While Queensland Cabinet Ministers are free to spend with gay abandon, more and more Queensland families are sinking into poverty. The Government's priorities are twisted. The Premier flits about in his luxury \$8m jet paying scant attention to the tens of thousands of Queensland families whose immediate concerns are food, clothing and shelter.

Last year a record 75 000 families sought welfare assistance from non-Government charities in this State. According to one emergency relief organisation, only the existence of those charities is stopping the spectacle of people begging in the streets. Callously, the Queensland Government has turned its back on those families. It continues to spend the least of any State Government in Australia on welfare and community services.

The Fitzgerald commission of inquiry into allegations of police corruption has certainly opened a lively can of worms. The Opposition does not intend to pre-empt or prejudge the outcome of the commission's investigations. However, I take this opportunity to say that the worms are certainly wriggling towards the seat of Government in this State.

To most observers it is clear that the Government has been doing one thing and telling us another. As much as the Premier might try to hide behind the shield of "No comment", he clearly has a number of serious questions to answer.

For instance, in 1978 the Premier is on record as saying that he was convinced about the link between massage parlour prostitution and crime. At that time he said—

"There is no doubt in my mind on this . . . and drugs as well. It all seems to gravitate through these areas."

The Fitzgerald commission has heard that it is the policy of both the Government and the police to tolerate massage parlour prostitution. Does the Premier no longer believe that these links exist, or is he displaying some sort of double standards?

Another matter that the Premier, a former Police Minister, is required to answer is: did he, in 1978, direct the Police Commissioner that the policing of massage parlours should be the exclusive responsibility of the licensing branch? We need that explanation.

I believe that the Premier of this State has a public duty to appear before the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry.

Mr GUNN: I rise to a point of order.

Mr WARBURTON: And so should he.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order. Point of order, Mr Deputy Premier.

Mr GUNN: I suggest that these matters are sub judice. They are before the inquiry at the present time, and I think that the honourable member should refrain from mentioning anything appertaining to the inquiry.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, it is not the role of the Speaker to stifle debate on any matter; it is his role to ensure that members may raise matters of importance and speak under parliamentary privilege. However, a Speaker must remain mindful of the sub judice convention of this House based on the Westminster practice whereby the House does not set itself up as an alternative forum to the courts, royal commissions or, in this case, a commission of inquiry.

Honourable members, I have been advised that matters related to the current commission of inquiry chaired by Mr G. E. Fitzgerald must be regarded as sub judice. I have also been given that advice by the Attorney-General.

Debate interrupted.

PRIVILEGE

Application of Sub Judice Rule to Fitzgerald Commission of Inquiry

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (11.13 a.m.): Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege. I want to understand the implications of what you have just ruled. The situation is unusual. Although I would agree totally with the ruling that we should not put ourselves in the position of arbiters and make any decisions that reflect on accepting or rejecting matters that are contentious in the Fitzgerald inquiry, we have a situation in which Parliament has not met since the occurrence and the development of the whole inquiry and the terms of reference. Daily we read commentary by the media on matters that are put in evidence to the commission. Certainly that comment is responsible. Mr Speaker, does it follow from your ruling that the members of Parliament will have no opportunity to say anything about even neutral matters that are raised in the commission, whereas people in the press and the outside world apparently are free to make comment and have not been chided or reprimanded in any way by the commissioner?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have simply told the House that anything to do with the Fitzgerald inquiry is to be regarded as sub judice. I respect the honourable member's point of privilege. However, I do not believe that it is relevant to my statement. I will rule accordingly.

However, for the information of the House, I wish to say that the House has no Standing Orders relating specifically to sub judice. Matters can be discussed at the discretion of the Speaker. I will not allow references to facts or allegations that are presently before the inquiry or that I believe should be provided to the inquiry.

I rule that the honourable member's point of privilege is not relevant at this stage.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Debate resumed.

Provision of a Commercial Television Service to Western and North-western Queensland

Mr COOPER (Roma) (11.15 a.m.): I wish to raise a matter that is very much in the public interest of western and north-western Queensland. It concerns the provision of a commercial television service, which at present is lacking in those vast regions of the State. There is certainly a lot of confusion. It is certainly a very technical subject, which I admit is very difficult to unravel.

The simple question that people in the community are asking is: when will they get a commercial television service? I, too, would like to know the answer to that question. Surely it is a very fair question, because most of Australia has had commercial television for approximately 20 or 30 years.

I will outline some of the history and background to this matter to put the position straight. The Australian domestic satellite system—Aussat—provides facilities for broadcasting television signals to homesteads and communities in four regions of Australia. It is the north-eastern region that covers the State of Queensland. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation is presently operating a satellite service in Queensland known as the Homestead and Community Broadcasting Satellite Service, or HACBSS. The satellite signal is rebroadcast on VHF or UHF bands in some communities so that it can be received directly on domestic television receivers.

Outside these communities, additional equipment is needed to receive signals directly from the satellite. That equipment consists of a dish, an antenna approximately 1.5 m to 2.5 m in diameter, and also a B-MAC satellite receiver, which costs in total approximately \$3,000. That is what it costs people to buy and install this equipment in order to receive the television signal. I might add that many people have invested in this equipment. Companies have had the equipment either imported or manufactured. However, only approximately 1 000 have been sold to a market of 90 000 people. Apparently, people are confused and uncertain as to the future; hence my decision to raise this matter as a matter of public interest.

A commercial service similar to the ABC satellite service has been licensed by the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal in each of the four regions that I mentioned earlier, including the north-western area of Queensland. The Queensland licensee is Queensland Satellite Television, which is otherwise known as QST and is a consortium of all Queensland regional television broadcasters. The regional commercial television service licensee is required to establish rebroadcasting facilities in a number of communities throughout Queensland, including my electorate of Roma.

The Aussat system consists of three satellites, two of which are now in operation. A third is due to be launched on 11 September 1987. That satellite will be launched by the Ariane company from French Guiana, and I wish the company well. A couple of problems have arisen and nothing can be certain.

Nevertheless, the RCTS requires a high-powered transponder for effective operation. On each satellite, there are four transponders of 30-watt capacity and 11 transponders of 12-watt capacity. All eight high-powered transponders presently in position are either in use or are under contract to users. No transponder will be available for the Queensland RCTS until after the launch of the third Aussat satellite.

The Queensland RCTS licensee, which is QST, was to have signed a contract with Aussat for the lease of its transponder prior to the end of June 1987. To date, it has not done so, which causes me concern. The reluctance of QST to commit itself to the establishment of the RCTS undoubtedly is caused by two major, interrelated factors. The first is the unattractive commercial prospects of RCTS. The second is uncertainty about the method by which regional television licensees will achieve the Federal Government's equalisation objectives, which involves a scheme for establishing two additional commercial television programs within existing regional markets. This is also known as the indicative plan.

It is not clear yet whether regional television broadcasters will be competing within each other's markets under the aggregation option—that is, where three current markets are combined into one large market and each licensee is expected to provide a service for the new, enlarged market—or, alternatively, whether each regional broadcaster will provide a multichannel service within its own region. The outcome of that decision will affect the relationship between existing members of the QST consortium and also the economics of the regional commercial television service. The economic influence will come through the potential use of the RCTS program as one of the multichannel service programs within existing regional markets.

The choice between multichannel service and aggregation will be made by the regional broadcasters under the following arrangements. On or about 4 August 1987, which happens to be today, the Federal Broadcasting Equalisation Act will receive royal assent. Regional licensees will have 28 days from today—that is, until 1 September—to decide whether in any one region they will operate under the aggregation or multichannel service option. It is necessary for two out of the three broadcasters in any region to choose aggregation before that option can be implemented.

Another factor affecting the prospect for a regional commercial television service in Queensland is the commitment of the Federal Government. A statement reported prior to the recent Federal election indicated that the Federal Labor Government was committed to the establishment of RCTS. No details were given on the mechanism by which that commitment would be brought into effect.

Since the earliest period in the development of the satellite system, the Queensland Government has actively encouraged the establishment of the RCTS. In 1984 an agreement was entered into with the consortium which eventually became QST and gained a licence. The agreement was for shared use of the RCTS transponder by the QST and the Queensland Government. This shared-use agreement had the effect of reducing annual costs to QST by \$2m a year. In early 1985 this arrangement was declined, certainly with thanks at the time, by QST because it believed that it could survive without Government assistance.

The Queensland Government supported the QST's licence application before the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal. New offers of shared use with Q-Net have been made since that time when QST's changed circumstances became known. The Queensland Government has also interceded for the QST in seeking deferral of the deadline for Aussat contract signature and facilitated arrangements under which local councils can establish rebroadcasting facilities shared by whole communities. In my area, councils have either put up the money or budgeted for up to \$35,000 to receive this service, but still the issue remains confused. They, too, are looking for answers.

Although the State Government has used its best endeavours to encourage the establishment of the RCTS in Queensland, it is principally a Federal Government responsibility, which is vested in the Minister for Transport and Communications. Beyond direct approaches to Federal politicians, public servants and broadcasters, there seems limited scope for further action at this stage; hence my raising the issue in this place. I intend to continue to raise it and to pursue the matter until the north-east region is receiving commercial television.

To me it is completely unreasonable that that area has been without an amenity such as commercial television when for 20 to 30 years it has been available to the rest of Australia. I do admit that the number of customers in that region is light on. The number is estimated to be 90 000. A regional commercial television service is probably not an economic proposition by itself. As everyone well knows, that problem exists in other fields, such as western air services, but the service is still provided.

I urge the QST consortium to think positively and urgently so that the opportunity does not slip from its grasp. In my opinion, the Queensland Government would be well within its rights to seek expressions of interest from other sources if that consortium finds it too difficult to come to a decision to lease a transponder.

I have no qualms about making this application and bringing the matter forward. I have no axe to grind with the ABC. Obviously everyone has a different opinion. My electorate is served by the ABC, and people are certainly pleased to have at least one television channel. All they are asking for is competition and a choice. As I said before, it is a technical issue; I admit that. It is certainly very confusing. I will continue to explore those avenues so that doors can be opened and so that people can at least plan ahead and have some understanding of the intentions of the Federal Government and, certainly, the QST.

I know through the Minister for Industry and Technology that the Queensland Government stands ready to assist in any way it possibly can. The matter is urgent. Although not many people reside in that area, as I have already admitted, the productivity of the region is certainly worthy of consideration. All Australians should share in at least the communication amenities that are available because of high technology and so on. Much has been done. Much work has been done behind the scenes; I certainly acknowledge that.

Time is running out. For about three years, people have been mucking around with decision-making. In the public interest, it is time that that was brought to an end. As I said, I have no doubt that things are moving behind the scenes, but something needs to be done now in a positive, decision-making fashion.

Queensland Government's Administration

Mr BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.26 a.m.): Mr Speaker, before I commence the main theme of my contribution to this debate—I am not defying your ruling—may I ask you to take the House into your confidence and table the ruling given to you by the Attorney-General so that all members may read it at a later stage?

At last month's Federal election the Premier suffered the greatest humiliation in a political career that is undoubtedly long, but one which is now in its terminal phase. Honourable members will recall that, after getting his nose rubbed in the dirt by Queensland voters and those in the rest of Australia, the Premier said he would not talk to representatives of the media again. He threw a tantrum worthy of John McEnroe and declared that he was taking his bat and ball home—or should I say that he was taking his racquet and ball home? He flew back to Bethany and hung out the "Do not disturb" sign.

But the Premier was disturbed—deeply disturbed. He had failed. He failed because he was playing in the big league where the rules cannot be rorted, where the electoral system cannot be corrupted and where answers must be provided to questions about what a politician is up to.

He failed because he did not measure up and because, on the Federal level, he did not have the insurance policy of the gerrymander that has been, and continues to be, the Premier's only real power base in this State. So, he blamed the media and, for a few days at least, claimed he would not talk to them again. He said he was not interested in trivia—especially trivia raised by the Labor Party Opposition. It is the job of an Opposition to raise questions and it is the job of a Government to answer them. Clearly the Premier is not interested in doing his job. He no longer stands up for Queensland. He is out to look after himself—something we have known for a long time.

I would like to outline very briefly some of the issues that have been of concern to Queenslanders since this House last sat, but which obviously the Premier finds too trivial to bother with. I will look at some examples of the poor administration this National Party Government has dished up in the last four months. The list is a long one, but it is by no means exhaustive.

Firstly, I will consider the hundreds of thousands of dollars of tax-payers' money wasted by the Premier to strut the Federal election stage. The Premier's personal political campaign was financed out of the pockets of ordinary, average Queensland tax-payers. The most visible waste of public money was the use of the State Government jet that

flew the Premier around the nation. Then there was the Premier's proposal to splurge \$2m on upgrading the Kingaroy Airport simply for his own convenience.

The Premier is yet to explain the huge jump in salary for members of his personal staff. Yet he and his Right Wing cronies claim ordinary workers are being paid too much and oppose every application for wage rises for ordinary workers. In June the salary of his pilot, Miss Young, jumped from \$48,000 to \$75,000 and that of his former press secretary, Mr Crooke, went from \$49,500 to \$58,500.

At the same time the National Party Government mounts more and more attacks on the average worker and his family's basic entitlements, such as penalty rates and leave loadings, and continues to push for a contract employment system that will see jobs go to those who will accept the lowest wages. Mr Crooke's salary increased because he was appointed to a new job even before applications for the new position had closed. What a joke! Mr Crooke's replacement as press secretary is Mr Peter MacDonald, a consultant or lobbyist who still peddles his influence to private clients even though he is now on the public pay-roll. When Peter MacDonald worked in the press gallery of this place, I found that he was one of the worst journalists. His appointment highlights the Government's total lack of any notion of proper standards of administration. Like MacDonald, Fred Maybury is another who is allowed to put his snout in the public trough.

The gaoling of another former press secretary, Allen Callaghan, also brings to mind the non-appearance of the Auditor-General's report into the entire public funds scandal. The Premier promised all would be revealed, but so far the report has not even seen the light of day.

Only last month it was revealed that since 1985 the number of quangos in Queensland has increased by 160 to 1 218, despite claims by the Premier that they would be reduced.

One example of the total lack of accountability in spending public funds was provided by the Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister for the Arts, Brian Austin, with his newspaper advertisements mourning the death of Fred Astaire. This morning I expected the Minister to move a motion of condolence.

There was more waste of public money when the Minister for Industrial Affairs mounted a \$100,000 publicity campaign trying to put a glossy face on himself and on his Government's anti-worker laws. I do not know why anybody would spend that sort of money on putting his mug on anything.

I will consider a few bread-and-butter issues that the Premier considers to be trivial. Although the Minister for Police keeps saying that the police force has enough members, it remains understaffed, underresourced and overworked. The community is facing rising crime rates and there is a genuine, cold-blooded fear about the safety of spouses, children and home and other property. This so-called law-and-order Government is letting criminals run rampant throughout the State.

There is the lack of action on gun control. Every time someone is shot by a madman, every time some poor police officer loses his life at the hands of a well-armed criminal, the Government talks about gun laws; but it does nothing. Queensland has become a self-service gun shop where it is easy to buy some of the most powerful and dangerous weapons in the world. The time for excuses and stalling is over. Action is what is needed.

The Victorian Government has ordered that every one of Victoria's 900 police cars carry two kevlar jackets to protect policemen. This Government has done nothing. It stands condemned.

Last month an alarming lack of action was revealed in relation to a report allegedly detailing links between business figures and drug-dealers in this State. What did the Government do about it? A report on this link in the drug-trafficking chain has apparently gathered dust in the Justice Minister's office since before the 1986 State election.

The Deputy Premier says that he has referred that report to the Fitzgerald inquiry. Why did he not follow it up with the previous Justice Minister, Mr Harper? Why did not the present Justice Minister, Mr Clauson, take action on it? This again highlights the shallowness of the State Government's rhetoric on law and order.

The failure of the Government to guarantee the security of Queensland prisons continues to alarm the community. The escape of dangerous criminals is now a regular occurrence. The Government's plan for a police presence at Expo is a cheap joke. Expo 88 is too important to depend on police officers who have to volunteer to come to Brisbane for one month's Expo duty without their usual transfer entitlements, leaving other parts of the State unprotected. Country stations will be abandoned. The Government has no men to replace the volunteers.

While I am on the subject of Expo 88, I ask the Government when honourable members are to be told what is to happen with the site after the sideshow ends? In particular, the Government has still given no guarantee that the former public riverside land at the Expo site will be retained for public use. The Government will sell it off to Iwasaki, or the old bloke will go overseas to sell it to Romania or some other place, as he has done with most of our other public land.

The following are a few examples of the National Party Government's arrogance and contempt for democratic standards that have occurred in the last four months—

- the planned proposed siting of a new prison at Parkinson after a promise by the National Party at last year's State election that it would not be built in the area;
- ministerial rezonings that are in the pipeline for projects at Taylor Point near Cairns and at Cannon Hill in Brisbane which override local government planning processes and the rights of citizens to appeal;
- the continued threat to local communities' rights by the Integrated Resorts Development Act;
- the garage sale of public lands on our foreshores and beaches to cronies;
- the planned abolition of the Mining Wardens Court outlined in the Government's Green Paper on the Mining Act, which is another example of a National Party attack on the democratic process;
- the admitted blatant politicking by the State Government over the siting of a chlorine plant at Lytton; and
- the planned changes to the Education Act concentrating power in the hands of the Minister.

In the last four months there has not been any action by the National Party Government to ease the financial burden it has placed on average Queensland families. In fact, the Government has significantly increased that burden in the following ways—

- A huge rise occurred in domestic and commercial fire levies for no good reason other than Government mismanagement.
- No action was taken by the Government to bring some sanity to the system of petrol-pricing in this State.
- Milk prices rose again last month to be the highest in Australia, thanks to a secretive and overregulated pricing system that gives nothing to the average dairy-farmer and nothing to consumers. All the Government is interested in is helping its big cronies in the dairy industry.
- Rail fares went up during the parliamentary recess, and again the Transport Minister was not there to announce the bad news because he was off overseas.
- The railways also introduced a new volume freight charging system in May, which means higher freight rates for a whole range of goods. It is part of a continuing campaign by the National Party Government to allow the rail services to country areas to deteriorate while private road transporters pick up the business.

- Small business has been thrown to the corporate wolves by the Minister for Small Business himself, Mr Lester. The report of the trading hours committee he set up gives big business everything it ever wanted and will deliver nothing but bankruptcy to many small-business operators.

The list of examples of simply rotten government that have been suffered in the last four months goes on and on. There has been inaction and useless moralising by the National Party on the AIDS issue. I challenge the Premier to tell honourable members that he has confidence in the Health Minister to do his job. Yesterday he said that he has taken that job away from the Health Minister. The Ministers of this National Party Government ran away. They let the Premier take that job away from the Health Minister. The Premier really said, "I have no confidence in Ahern. He can go. He can leave the Cabinet if he does not want to do as he is told." All the other weak, spineless Cabinet Ministers let that happen.

Queensland continues to have the worst environmental record in the nation, and it is no wonder when one considers the scaremongering that the National Party engaged in during the Federal election campaign in relation to the World Heritage listing of our tropical rainforests. Downright lies were told.

The National Party Government again made similar noises about mining Moreton Island. It has continued to threaten mining at Shelburne Bay. In the months since the House last sat, there have been some revealing examples of this National Party Government's priorities——

Time expired.

Allegations of Corruption in Townsville City Council

Mr BURREKET (Townsville) (11.35 a.m.): I wish to draw the attention of this Parliament to a matter in Townsville concerning corruption of the law by the Townsville City Council, protection of a member of the Federal judiciary, and the consequences for the many people in Townsville who continually appear before the courts on similar charges.

A red cattle dog owned by a Federal judge in Townsville was reported for a number of offences, and council health officers received information that the dog had bailed up a 13-year-old girl and left her screaming, attacked and frightened two women on separate occasions in the adjacent park, and behaved aggressively towards a man walking his dog in the park. Because it was a guard dog, it was allowed to roam the parks freely. Subsequently, it bailed up a 9-year-old child who was riding a bike, causing that child to be visibly shaken even though he had a great deal of exposure to dogs because his father is a veterinary surgeon. This is shown in appendix 1 of the documents I will seek leave to table.

As a result of the last incident, on 21 November 1986 the chief health surveyor recommended to council that the owner of the dog be prosecuted. This appears in appendix 2. Despite the objections of two aldermen, the health committee took an unusual step for such a routine matter and referred the concern to the City Solicitor. On 4 December 1986 the council health committee received a report from the City Solicitor supporting the chief health surveyor and also recommended that prosecution proceed. This is shown in appendixes 3 and 4.

On 7 March 1987 the matter was dealt with in the Magistrates Court by a magistrate from outside Townsville, who, after taking a written submission from the judge into account, discharged the defendant without conviction, yet ordered him to pay \$35.25 costs of court and \$40 for professional costs. In itself that order seems questionable. The findings contradicted the findings of all other magistrates dealing with similar charges.

On 16 March the City Solicitor wrote to the council administration outlining the circumstances of the hearing and recommending that the council appeal against the

magistrate's decision, referring especially to the onus on the defendant—the judge—because of his knowledge of the law, to show an even higher duty to confine the dog to his property. The City Solicitor also pointed out that the defendant's argument about fencing was immaterial to the plea. He argued that the defendant had the responsibility to fence his property, construct a run, or, because the dog was kept for personal security purposes, keep it on the property.

In the same submission to the council, the City Solicitor recommended seeking legal counsel's advice regarding an appeal to the Supreme Court, pointing out at the same time that the council had 28 days to appeal from the date of the magistrate's finding, which was 7 March, and recommended seeking direction from the health committee about legal counsel's advice. This appears in appendix 5.

When the health committee met on 19 March, the chairman was called into the Mayor's office. On returning, he informed the committee that he had not had time to read the City Solicitor's report and instructed that the matter would be held over for a fortnight. Two of the sitting aldermen protested strongly and forced discussion on the issue. A vote was then taken on the City Solicitor's submission to appeal and was lost three to two. The Mayor of Townsville, Alderman Mike Reynolds, the Deputy Mayor, Aldermen Tony Mooney, and the chairman of health, Alderman Dave Parker, voted against the motion, while Alderman Lorraine Blades and Alderman Delma Benson voted in favour of proceeding to an appeal.

On 26 March 1987, at the full council meeting, a separate vote was taken on the appeal and lost seven to four. This appears in appendix 6.

Other factors have come to hand which suggest that the council has some sort of patronage towards the defendant, the Federal Court judge. The defendant had purchased property in the area and applied to council for subdivision into residential allotments. The plan was approved, but the applicant was not satisfied, as he wanted to gain an extra block from his development.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members may not pass between the Chair and the member on his feet. The honourable member for Tablelands has done so twice.

Mr BURREKET: As there was no provision in the by-laws for the type of extra hatchet-shaped block, council took the unusual and expensive process of altering its by-laws to accommodate the applicant.

The dog is still at large and terrifying people. That appears in Appendix 7. On 1 April a letter was written to the chairman of health, Alderman Dave Parker, by Mr Dick Murray, a veterinary surgeon in Townsville. Mr Murray, father of the boy terrified by the dog, implored the council to take action against the same red cattle dog, as it was still at large and harassing people. He wrote—

“It is extraordinary that a man in his position (the judge) should have to be classified as an actively irresponsible owner. Unfortunately he is—and prompt effective action needs to be taken before it is too late.”

It will interest you to know, Mr Speaker, that Mr Murray had been commissioned by the Townsville City Council to study the characteristics of the Townsville dog population and their social impact. Only recently, yet another attack occurred, but no action has been taken. Residents in the area are frightened to walk in the park.

This matter is raised here, Mr Speaker, for, on behalf of the people of Townsville, I seek justice through this Parliament in the administration of the law. The law must be applied equally to all. I call on the Government to resolve this matter and to protect the citizens of Townsville from the favouritism being given by the Mayor of Townsville to the Federal judge. I believe that an investigation is warranted.

I further speak on behalf of the many people who have been prosecuted by the Townsville City Council for similar offences and who have suffered the conviction of the court on behalf of their offending animals. In justice to all of those who were

prosecuted, I condemn the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and the chairman of health for not allowing the appeal to proceed, for using their influence to impede the proper legal test of this case and for not taking action to have the dog properly controlled.

I seek leave to table documents relating to the matter.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents on the table.

Federal Election

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (11.42 a.m.): The member for Townsville has presented a hard act to follow. I suppose that many members have more trouble with their wisdom teeth than their canine teeth.

There is an old maxim that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. That was what we witnessed in the recent Federal election. The ALP emerged with a majority of the Queensland representatives in the Federal House of Representatives. Tragically, the non-Labor parties failed to recover power nationally. The only solace for non-Labor politics in Queensland is that the combined vote for non-Labor parties is still a little greater than that for Labor.

The feature of the election in Queensland from the non-Labor side was an increase in votes for the Liberal Party, but a greater loss of votes for the National Party. In my own area, an outstanding member and personal friend, Professor David Watson, increased his vote by 10 per cent, or 3.5 per cent in total terms. However, the National Party vote collapsed by 33 per cent, or 5 per cent in absolute terms. There was an overall desertion caused by the rejection by the voters of the politics of dissension.

The Federal election was blighted by the same power arrogance as has blighted Queensland politics and public life for many years. It has its core in this Parliament. That is why the matter should be raised. There has developed a corrosive power obsession and style of politics in which ideas are treated as dangerous if they are thought of by others. No credit is given to others. Education is ridiculed. There is no belief in maintaining people who do not first swear loyalty to the power structure. If they do not, they are not listened to or respected. It has reached its height with the personal abuse of John Howard, who never played the man, and who, in the field of conservative economic ideas, was light-years ahead of anything else produced in Australia or anything demonstrated by the Queensland National Party. It was exactly the same attitude as that which lacerated the Federal Liberal leader, a Federal National Party leader, a cousin political organisation in the Northern Territory and the National Party in its main strength areas in the States of Victoria and New South Wales.

It is a style which, in this State, has led to the shameless support of an unending line of sycophants—many of whom were shady—such as Wiley Fancher, Milan Brych, Mr Horvath, Dr Oskar, Mr David Pan Meni and Mr Michael Gore. The list is endless. A feature that was common to all of those people was an unbelievable sycophancy to the existing power structure, which manifested itself in the extraordinary support that was given to them and their crazy or greedy ideas. It has led to a myopic and selfish junta demanding the exclusive right to determine and represent all non-Labor parties in this State and, indeed in crazier terms in recent times, throughout Australia. It also destroyed a State coalition.

Certainly mistakes were made by members of the Liberal Party, including myself, in actions and timing. However, they were the symptoms, not the cause. The cause was the inevitably self-destroying attitude that was expressed in the coalition party room—“Give them nothing. Allow them no credit. Oppose anything that they want. Use the numbers.” The ultimate party shame came when the elected National Party members of one Parliament—who represented the people, after all—strongly believed in one course of action and were threatened into another course of action by an organised structure that was dominated by members of another Parliament. That is the reality.

In common with many other late converts, the new chums of the National Party do nothing to temper the worst features of this use of power. In fact, they encourage it.

Where are the old level-headed members of the former Country Party? Have they been corroded, too? That almost instinctive sense of decency and courtesy, which was typical of people from the country, is increasingly absent from politics in Queensland. It has led to a viewing of people who are to be vetted for public appointments within and without the public service by the first requirement—“Are they right?”, which means, “Do they support and belong to the party?”

It is a symptom rather than a major cause of complaint, and one that I have touched upon before, but I have seen recent instances of the failure of the Government to give respect to people in other parties or structures. I refer particularly to the ignoring of the Lord Mayor of Brisbane at the opening of the Wivenhoe Dam, despite the fact that she represented those people who had funded the major portion of the project. No special car-parking arrangements were made. She was ignored in acknowledgements by the Premier and the Deputy Premier. She was acknowledged only by the old roughie, the guy who gets some respect—the Minister for Local Government.

At function after function in this State members of the Liberal and Labor Parties who are present are ignored, in contrast to the recognition that is given to members of the National Party. It is all right to leave people out of acknowledgements sometimes as a mistake. However, this is such a repetitive course of action that it is part of an organised attitude—an infected attitude—because there are honourable members on the Government side of the House who, if left to their own devices, would choose to be civil and would act in a normal manner. The Government's attitude is cancerous and corrosive. It has corroded public life in this State. It is time that those people of good sense in the National Party restored some of those old country virtues in the power structures.

We look forward to getting ourselves out of the situation in which we have found ourselves converted in one decade from being the top performing State in a top performing developed nation to the bottom performing State in a bottom performing developed nation. We need attitudes that embrace ideas of another, which emanate from whatever part of the community. It needs a respect for others. It needs a respect for people of intelligence or qualifications. It requires an attitude that is totally different from that which has led to increasing examples of incompetence and maladministration and such an obsession with power that it is prepared to destroy not only the great benefits and developments of this State and destroy its political opponents, but also its own party structure. It is catering for a receding base. It is something that has to stop in the interests of a private-enterprise future for this State.

I call upon the sensible traditional members of the National Party to exert their power in this House and in the party in the interests of the future of this State and this nation.

Funding Cuts by Federal Government

Mr SIMPSON (Cooroora) (11.51 a.m.): I rise in this place, which surely must be the place that protects the rights of the people of Queensland, to expose the tyranny that is ahead and has been experienced by Queenslanders at the hands of the Hawke Government. Recently, speakers who are not interested in State rights have been denigrating the Premier, who would have to be seen in anyone's eyes as being an exponent of the rights of this State. The cut-backs to Queensland in the funding of education, roads and hospitals have to be answered for. Why are Queenslanders being made second-class citizens by the Labor Party?

The members of the Opposition are the people who must answer for the way in which their colleagues in Canberra are treating this State. It is a disgusting performance and one that comes from jealousy and envy, which is the basis of Marxism and socialism. I can provide a number of examples of that having taken place. The Labor Party does not apply the same economic restraints against itself as it places against the State of

Queensland. The Federal Government cut back State funding but did not cut back its own funding. It continues to employ additional staff and waste money.

I turn now to the Moscow card, which will be the pimp system that is part of the Marxist system. An amount of \$35m will be wasted by allowing the Federal Government to pimp on other people round Australia. That is just one example of the way that the Federal Government discriminates against people.

There are many examples of the Labor Party's discriminating against people, but the insidious ones emanate from the Federal Government's being told by the Labor Party organisation to infiltrate the growing concern in conservation and environmental matters and move into organisations and set them up to destroy this State and to destroy jobs, the standard of living and the way of life in this State.

The Leader of the Opposition had the gall to talk about 118 000 jobless in Queensland, yet every time he makes an utterance and he and his colleagues support a greenie move to stop development in Queensland they are killing the opportunity for those 118 000 people to have a job, and they are forcing down the standard of living, breaking up marriages and forcing—

Mr Milliner interjected.

Mr SIMPSON: Yes, that is right. The honourable member might laugh, but many times in my electorate I have examples of the economic pressure and lack of jobs resulting from that organised program. I have documents to support the claim that the Labor Party has issued documents showing how to go about stopping a development. It has set out to misrepresent the issue. I will give an example. A company known as Twin Waters is proposing the development of 20 hectares of Crown land north of the Maroochy River. The total area consists of 250 hectares, three-quarters of which is always inundated with water. The total area is planned as a recreation reserve.

I am concerned for the standard of living of the people in the community and tourists to the area and wish to ensure that they have decent roads, decent amenities and playing fields for their children. I want to see that recreation reserve developed so that the children have the opportunity to kick a football, ride a horse and have active recreation in that community. It will not be possible to achieve that with the diminishing resources that the Australian Labor Party provides for the community through the policies imposed by the Hawke Government.

Mr Milliner: Hawke?

Mr SIMPSON: Yes, Hawke with his high interest rates. What has the average person left after the payment of high interest rates? It is Hawke with his increased majority that was won by his having gerrymandered the Federal electorates in Australia.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SIMPSON: Opposition members can laugh, but the fairest electoral system in the world is the one that operates in Queensland. The Opposition will not even acknowledge that.

Opposition members believe that Hawke is a guru. I suggest that they should read the Boyer lectures, which indicate that Hawke would do away with State Parliaments. Part of his program is to do away with the State Parliament in Queensland and officially bring in his ACTU cronies to run this country. Yet Opposition members say that the Hawke Government does not have a detrimental effect on the standard of living of everyone in the community!

When the opportunity arises to provide over 700 jobs by developing playing areas and providing facilities, such as safer beaches patrolled by members of surf life-saving clubs and fire protection amenities, the Opposition disseminates misleading information in the community and denigrates those who provide the opportunities.

Mr Yewdale interjected.

Mr SIMPSON: The honourable member can laugh, but can he laugh at the parents whose children cannot get a job? Large numbers of people at public meetings tell me that they have to leave the beautiful Sunshine Coast and go somewhere else to get a job.

Mr Burns: You are the member for the Sunshine Coast.

Mr SIMPSON: That is right. That is why I hate to see members of the Labor Party destroying jobs. Dr Matthews, who sets himself up to provide a fair go for Maroochy, is an insult to his profession because he is destroying job opportunities. Mr Barber, an official of the Labor Party, sets himself up as a spokesman and says, "Save this and save something else." What should be saved is the community's standard of living. Job opportunities can be provided in the community through balanced development. Queensland's standard of living can be raised for the people who reside here. They certainly deserve it.

The "Ambassador to Greece" has the gall to sit in this Chamber. He ought to go to Greece, where his mates would send him. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition cannot take the heat, which is why he should go to Greece. If the Federal Hawke Government pursues its socialist policies, the people of Queensland will suffer a reduction in their standard of living, their rights and their liberties, as any Marxist system would demonstrate.

The Australia Card is a form of pimping and is a criterion of the way in which the Federal Labor Government works. To implement the Australia Card system, the Federal Government will have to undermine the free-enterprise system, the security of people and their ability to stand on their own two feet. That is what the Canberra colleagues of Opposition members are guilty of and they should hang their heads in shame. By imposing high taxes and forcing interest rates up, by pimping and by imposing other controls on the average citizen in Australia, the Federal Labor Government has made Australia a second-rate nation in the eyes of the world, which has had an effect on Australia's ability to compete internationally. Shame on them! They should know better.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Death of Senior Constable P. Kidd in Raid by Police Tactical Response Group

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police) (12 noon), by leave: I wish to inform the House of the precise situation and events surrounding police action involving the State's most-wanted criminal at Virginia on the morning of 29 July 1987.

I have received a detailed report on this matter from the Police Commissioner, Sir Terence Lewis, and I am satisfied that the police action was soundly based and competently conducted, particularly considering the high risk which police knew would always be associated with apprehending the criminal, Paul James Mullin.

At the outset, I would like to formally place on record the State Government's sincere condolences to the wife and family of Senior Constable Peter Kidd, who lost his life as a result of five gunshot wounds sustained in the operation. While nothing can replace or substantiate the deep feeling of loss suffered by family members and the force as a whole over this incident, regrettably it reminds us all of the constant danger inherent in police work.

Senior Constable Kidd and the other police officers from the tactical response team, the police dog squad, the armed hold-up squad and others who were involved in the conduct or planning of the raid knew of this danger.

On behalf of the Government I pay tribute to them all for their brave efforts and I take the opportunity to wish Detective Constable First Class Stephen Grant a successful recovery from serious gunshot injuries he sustained in the operation. They all acted

without regard for their personal safety and in the finest traditions of the Queensland police force.

Paul James Mullin was No. 1 on Queensland's list of most-wanted criminals. He had a history of armed violence, having shot a security guard during a bank robbery in Sydney and a chemist during an armed robbery of a chemist shop in Western Australia.

Interstate police information, together with Queensland police intelligence on him, indicated that Mullin would not hesitate to use violence and shoot it out if he was in danger of being captured. Information gained since the raid indicated that he had said that he would not be taken alive in any circumstances, because he had no intention of spending the rest of his life in gaol. Because of the sensitivity of the information I do not propose to elaborate on the details made available to me by Sir Terence and Assistant Commissioner McMahon. I am able to say that for two days prior to the raid police had information which indicated a serious threat to the life of members of the public in the very near future. These threats were so serious that an immediate operation had to be mounted to apprehend Mullin.

In planning the operation to apprehend Mullin, information was checked, detailed surveillance and photographs were taken and rehearsals were carried out. Alternative means of apprehending Mullin were considered as part of these planning procedures.

After consideration, those alternatives other than an assault on the residence, were rejected because of risks presented to persons other than Mullin or police officers.

The alternatives considered by the tactical response team were—

- (i) The interception of Mullin while he was in a motor vehicle or on foot. Rejected because it was established that Mullin at all times had in his possession a Ruger firearm, and such a course of action would heighten the risk of a pedestrian or bystander being injured.
- (ii) Surrounding the house and creating a possible siege situation. Rejected because of the risk which existed with respect to the other occupants of the house, including two young children.
- (iii) The use of stun grenades or tear gas and other methods of rendering Mullin temporarily incapable of reaction. Rejected on the basis that stun grenades invariably result in fire, which would have been particularly probable in relation to being used in Mullin's bedroom. Tear gas was ruled out because in a confined area it can be fatal to a person with respiratory problems, and because two young children were present.

The decision to carry out the operation in the residence was made because the confined area minimised the risk of harm to persons other than those engaged in the raid. Evacuation of neighbouring residences without alerting Mullin also was impossible.

The actual assault on the residence occurred on 29 July 1987 at 5 a.m. after Walter Street, Virginia had been sealed off.

Pertinent facts about the action which followed are—

- (i) Immediately upon the first blow being struck to knock down the back door, which opened outwards rather than inwards, a six-foot step ladder was thrown through Mullin's bedroom window on the eastern side.
- (ii) Not more than two seconds later, Mullin was firing through that window.
- (iii) Even if the door had been opened on the first blow, the assault team led by Senior Constable Kidd still had to traverse the kitchen, turn into a hallway and enter Mullin's bedroom where the door was closed but not locked. Thus even if the back door had been opened on the first blow, the situation would have been no different to that which actually confronted police.
- (iv) Senior Constable Kidd, moving down the hallway, was struck by a firearm projectile which had travelled through the closed door. Despite this, with a combination of momentum and deliberate choice, Senior Constable Kidd gained

entry into the bedroom, sustaining four gunshot wounds through a protective vest to his chest area.

- (v) Detective Constable Stephen Grant was also struck by a projectile from Mullin's weapon below the line of the protective vest being worn.
- (vi) During the exchange of gunfire, the fact that the woman with Mullin was uninjured was evidence of the accurate firearm performance of the police participants and, under no circumstances, could be attributed to luck.

In the wake of this raid, the level of training and equipment of the tactical response group has been questioned by the media.

A needs assessment conducted in 1986 resulted in the tactical response group being formed in April/May this year. This group superseded the emergency squad, which had functioned since 1968 without loss of life. The tactical response team has an authorised strength of 50 full-time and part-time members in the metropolitan area. The membership of the team is presently 44, including 11 full-time. Suitable replacements are being sought but, because of the high standards set, the majority of applications to join this team are rejected.

Tactical response teams, each of 10 part-time members, are also attached to Townsville and Cairns Police Stations. The Brisbane based tactical response team trains two full days per month and all members of the Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns teams undertake an annual two-week training camp. All members who participated in this operation were trained to a very high national standard.

The teams are equipped to a very high standard. The teams are equipped with machine guns which were purchased four years ago and are described in the context that "there are a number of firearms as good but none better".

Of particular concern is the contention expressed by the media and other professed experts since Wednesday, 29 July, that negligence, or even apathy, existed because police were wearing inappropriate, or ineffective, body armour. When the tactical response team moved to the Queensland Police Depot at Alderley on 4 May this year, Senior Constable Kidd was appointed equipment officer, which includes responsibility for assessment of the suitability of team equipment. Body armour primarily used by the team, and previously the emergency squad, was the American-made Morgan Magnum Armour Bullet Resistant Vest. This was purchased about five or six years ago and was the best available at that time.

Better quality vests came into production about 18 months ago and technology has been improving ever since. The department has been examining the matter of new protective vests for the past year and, indeed, on Monday, 27 July 1987, two days before his death, Senior Constable Kidd had proposed further examination of vests used by the New South Wales Police Department and the Australian Federal Police.

There are a number of varieties of protective vests but no-one can yet categorically state that any of these would have prevented the death of Senior Constable Kidd. Mullin was using a cut down .223 Ruger rifle, one of the most dangerous weapons available on a commercial basis. No application has been made at this stage for new vests and claims that either the Police Department or the Queensland Government have rejected purchasing upgraded equipment are totally incorrect.

I am advised that evaluation to find more suitable body armour will continue, I trust, with a degree of urgency. I can assure tactical response team members that if they see a need for better quality, more modern body armour that suits their purpose, their recommendations will be adopted, irrespective of cost.

I thank honourable members for their patience in allowing me to report on this operation. I hope that it will put an end to the many erroneous claims and adverse comments surrounding the police action. I am thoroughly convinced the police did their best in the situation that confronted them. Indeed, one of them lay down his life in the

performance of his duty, and no Government or society could ask more of its police force.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Marine Safety

Hon. M. J. TENNI (Barron River—Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services) (12.09 p.m.), by leave: I wish to advise the House of the progress by the Queensland Marine Board in the investigation into the fire on board the fast tourist passenger vessel Reef Link II which occurred off Townsville on Sunday, 5 July. As honourable members would be aware, thanks to the excellent work of the water police, the coastguard and local pleasure craft, all 53 passengers and eight crew were safely rescued, despite the severe damage to the \$2.7m vessel.

Following the fire, I made it very clear that whatever lessons were learnt from a searching inquiry by the Marine Board of Queensland would be applied as quickly as possible. As a result of investigations already completed, a number of significant changes will be made to improve the already high safety standard of fast aluminium catamaran vessels serving our tourist industry on the Great Barrier Reef.

The board has directed that the relevant passenger vessel safety procedures, which previously were recommended to owners, will now be considered a mandatory requirement. In future, before departure a briefing will be given to all passengers on key safety requirements, including the location and use of life-jackets, the use of emergency exits and the assembly points for life-rafts. It will also be mandatory for the owners to pay closer attention to crew training with weekly drills dealing with the safe evacuation of their vessels in an emergency.

A number of general safety requirements, including the clear marking of exits and life-jacket locations and the preparation of a safety emergency procedures brochure for passengers will now also be mandatory.

In addition to these measures, the Marine Board will require a number of technical modifications to the engine-room and equipment on fast tourist passenger catamarans built in the future. These measures include changes in the engine-room design, the protection with fuses of heavy duty cabling and the safe storage of potentially hazardous cargo. In the case of existing vessels, these modifications will be implemented where practical and reasonable at the time of the annual survey of the craft. All owners will be advised of the above changes once the Marine Board has completed its full inquiry into the fire.

I am confident that these changes and other recommendations which may flow from a further inquiry by the full membership of the Marine Board in Townsville on 8 and 9 September will considerably reduce the risk of a similar fire occurring again.

The main purpose of the inquiry on 8 and 9 September will be to narrow down the three most likely causes of the fire—namely a possible leaking oil gauge, the possible arcing of power cables or the possible ignition of fuel lying in the bilge.

A similar searching inquiry is now under way into the engine-room fire aboard the steel-hulled vessel, Noel Buxton, which, with 47 passengers aboard, was disabled north of Cooktown on Saturday.

In recent weeks, the Merchant Service Guild of Australia, encouraged by the ALP, has repeatedly made the dishonest claim that the State Government is more interested in looking after the interests of tourist boat-owners than the safety of passengers.

Instead of playing cheap politics, I would ask anybody with information critical of the safety of particular tourist vessels to put those details before me as quickly as possible.

I give the firm undertaking that any genuine complaints will be fully investigated by the Marine Board and the appropriate action taken.

The information I have given the House more than shows that the State Government is taking seriously its responsibilities to tourists visiting the Great Barrier Reef.

I seek the leave of the House to table the procedures in design, passenger safety and crew training which I have outlined in this statement.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Port Authority Boards

Hon. M. J. TENNI (Barron River—Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services) (12.14 p.m.), by leave: In the last few days honourable members have witnessed a prime example of the ALP's inconsistent and illogical approach to good government in this State. I refer to the absurd claim by the member for Cairns, Mr De Lacy, that the proposed restructuring of the boards of Queensland's port authorities is the greatest assault on democracy that this State has ever known.

Under the proposed changes port authority boards will be limited to a maximum of seven members appointed by the Governor in Council.

Mr Burns: You don't need any of them.

Mr TENNI: The honourable member had better tell his friend that.

Presently most northern port authority boards have 11 members, of whom between two and four are State Government appointees, while the balance are local authority representatives. The selection of appointees to smaller boards, which will result in savings of more than \$100,000 a year in board fees, will be based on ability and relevant port knowledge and not on the automatic right of being an elected council representative.

Mr De Lacy: What rubbish!

Mr TENNI: I suggest that the member for Cairns listen. He is about to learn something.

Less than two weeks ago another ALP spokesman, the member for Murrumba, Mr Wells, was shouting from the roof-tops about the need to save hundreds of millions of dollars a year from the rationalisation of quangos in this State.

At the first opportunity the honourable member for Cairns has contradicted that policy and is condemning the State Government for doing its best to save tax-payers' money in the operation of Queensland ports. It is obvious that the honourable member for Cairns, Mr De Lacy, is totally out of touch with ALP policies and, worst of all, knows very little about the real needs of major ports such as Cairns. He is endorsing the outdated system of selecting port authority board members, dating back to the last century, when Queensland's ports were the only transport link between vast areas of this State. At that time it was relevant that the boards be dominated by council representatives in order to protect the interests of each region.

Unlike the honourable member for Cairns, times have changed. Today it is critical that boards have a high level of expertise and local industry knowledge. The election of a person to a position in a local authority does not automatically guarantee that that person has the skills which are appropriate to the running of a major port operation. The honourable member for Cairns has made the equally absurd claim that the boards will be stacked with Government-appointed yesmen. I assure all honourable members that this Government has no intention of following the lead set by the ALP in Canberra and sacking or displacing competent people from boards because they happen to belong to another party. This House will recall exactly what the ALP in Canberra did in regard to Telecom and Australia Post. It sacked everyone who was not a card-carrying member of the ALP. I assure this House that people will be selected for the port authorities in

Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone and Bundaberg because of their ability to do the job and not because of their political affiliations. That is precisely the case with the Port of Brisbane Authority and the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, two Government-appointed boards which have been operating for many years and are working extremely well. I do not need to remind the honourable member for Cairns that the chairman of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, Councillor Bill Laver, is also chairman of the Albert Shire Council. That fact makes nonsense of the stupid claim by the honourable member for Cairns that local authority people will not have a say in the future operations of Queensland's ports.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (12.19 p.m.), by leave: I wish to reply to some of the comments made by the Minister. He has misquoted me and brought my good name into disrepute. I did not at any stage say that the port authorities in Queensland did not need rationalising. What I did say was consistent with the approach by the Opposition regarding the rationalisation of quangos in this State.

I take exception to the way in which this Government goes about its so-called rationalisation. There are ways of rationalising boards without making all of the members Government appointees. It can be done in a democratic way. Local people can elect board members, the numbers can be rationalised and it can be ensured that the people on the boards have the necessary expertise.

I reject all of the comments made by the Minister about me. He said that the fact that members of a port authority come from local authorities did not mean they had the necessary expertise. I would say that just because they are members of the National Party does not mean to say that they have the expertise.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There will be no debate. It must be a personal explanation.

Mr De LACY: In conclusion, if the Minister would give me a guarantee that Max Hodges or Max Hooper is not appointed to port authorities in the future, then I will accept at face value the commitments he has given to this House.

FORESTRY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 17 March (see p. 770.)

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (12.20 p.m.): In his second-reading speech, the Minister said—

“The cut of Crown timber in the northern region of the State has markedly declined over recent years to a stage where current allocations to mills represent only about 30 per cent of that available in 1978.”

That reinforces the argument I have advanced previously that the Forestry Department could find itself in serious financial trouble. I issued a statement about the large forestry debt and the non-payment of interest since 1965-66. In reply, the Minister said that by making such a statement I would be lucky to hold my job. I was merely quoting from the Government's *Departmental Accounts Subsidiary to the Public Accounts 1985-86*, which shows that the figures that I quoted were correct. I argued that because the quota to the millers had been cut by two-thirds, the income of the Government also had been cut by two-thirds.

Over the years, from time to time honourable members have heard statements about projects that would be commenced by the Queensland Government, such as the pulp and paper mill projects at Maryborough and Gympie.

I refer to a paper that was presented by Mr P. J. Hawkins, a forestry officer. In that document reference is made to marketing policy. Mr Hawkins stated—

“Maybe we are not so profit orientated, although we must remember that our prime responsibility is to our share-holders—the people of Queensland.”

That is the whole crux of my argument.

The Opposition agrees with the intent of the Bill because it will do away with three quangos and replace them with only one. The Opposition can understand the need for the legislation. As the Minister stated in his second-reading speech, the production of timber in north Queensland has dropped considerably—by two-thirds or a bit more. The income that resulted from the stumpage collected was to keep the marketing—

Mrs Nelson: You'll drop a lot more in the next few months if Hawke's got anything to do with it.

Mr EATON: I am quite prepared to take interjections. Later I will be mentioning Mr Hawke and the Labor Government's scheme. I will refer also to the national heritage. That is something that the Opposition is prepared to debate.

Problems have arisen because the Queensland Government failed to negotiate with the Federal Government. The Federal Government had to take the bit between its teeth. Shortly, it will produce a defined area map and make it available in north Queensland.

Mr Glasson: When?

Mr EATON: I hope that that will occur in the next few weeks. However, as yet it has not been possible to obtain the forestry map of north Queensland.

Mr Glasson: No it's not, I am sorry. It is what the Federal Government proposes to put on the National Estate. That's all going on the World Heritage list.

Mr EATON: That is the first time I have seen it. No members of the Opposition have seen it yet. I would like a copy of the map at which the Minister is pointing so that I can compare them when the other one comes out. I will then be able to see who is correct.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! There are too many persistent interjections.

Mr EATON: The Government has failed many times to take the advice of its forestry officers. Honourable members knew in 1981 that the quotas would be introduced over a five-year period.

Mr INNES: I rise to a point of order. I ask that the document, which has been referred to in the debate and demonstrated by the Minister, be tabled.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Is the Minister prepared to table the document?

Mr Glasson: I have not discussed the document in the debate. I will table it, but not before I have discussed it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Sherwood is not correct. The Minister has not referred to the document. He referred to it only by way of interjection.

Mr EATON: I refer now to a position paper, issued by the Queensland Department of Forestry and dated September 1981, on timber production from north Queensland rainforests. Before I was interrupted, I said that the Queensland Government had failed to take the advice of its forestry officers. The Opposition does not attack the officers of the Forestry Department. It has among its ranks many qualified men. I emphasise that many times the Queensland Government has failed to take the advice of its officers. Earlier I referred to the reduction in forestry licences given to sawmillers. It was

recommended that the quota be reduced on a sliding scale over a five-year period so that the effect on employment and marketing in north Queensland would be minimal. However, the Government took more notice of the sawmillers and it went for a grand-slam scheme under which millers could cut normally for five years and that after that time a sudden cut-off would then apply. Honourable members can see the chaos that has been caused in north Queensland by that decision.

During my time as a member of this House, I have witnessed the closure of the El Arish sawmill in 1981, the closure of a ply-mill in El Arish, and a reduction in the work-force of mills throughout my electorate. Before the announcement of the introduction of the national heritage listing, another mill, which is situated just outside my electorate, was closed.

Lots of figures have been quoted around the ridges. Work-force figures have been given in documents that have been issued by the Minister's department at his direction. At one stage, in reply to an accusation, the Minister stated that, if the national heritage listing came to fruition, 2 000 north Queensland workers would lose their jobs. I intend to contradict that figure.

The people who are directly employed by mills in north Queensland number approximately 600, although the figure could be 50 either side of that number. It is impossible to determine the exact figure.

The announcement of the national heritage listing, which was fed into the community by the media and the State Government, caused fear within the community. Had I been one of those people who are involved in the timber industry, I would have been concerned. Those people were reacting to hypothetical propositions that were put to them in an endeavour to knock the Federal Government. As I said, the Millaa Millaa sawmill was closed down prior to the announcement of the national heritage listing.

I turn now to page 11 of a 1981 State Government report. I am prepared to table the reports to which I will refer. In 1947 in Queensland there were 51 unrestricted licensed mills and 67 private licensed mills. However, on 1 October 1981 only 19 mills held unrestricted Crown licences. That represents a reduction from 51 to 19 mills. During that same period the number of private licensed mills fell from 67 to 14, there was an overcutting in mill numbers, and the Government was totally unprepared for the day when those mills would reach their so-called sustainable yield.

According to Government figures, north Queensland mills have a sustainable yield of 60 000 cubic metres. On page 18 of the Forestry Department's report the figure of 80 444 cubic metres is given for the total sustained yield. Although I do not have the evidence to back up my claims, I am led to believe that the figure of 80 000 cubic metres was given to the Forestry Department. A reassessment was made, and it was found that that sustainable yield could not be maintained. An investigating party was sent out, and it arrived at a figure of 30 000 cubic metres. That is the reason why the figure of 80 000 cubic metres was reduced to 60 000 cubic metres. That is the sort of propaganda that members have to contend with.

I have mentioned the employment situation. Not only are the mill-workers concerned about their future employment in the timber industry——

Mr Glasson: Wouldn't you be if you were a mill-worker in north Queensland?

Mr EATON: Admittedly I would, particularly if I were to read the propaganda that has been disseminated by the State Government.

The majority of mill-workers and millers in north Queensland readily admit that they cannot continue to harvest at the previous rate.

Mr Glasson: Never intended to be. We have now just reached the sustainable yield figure, and that is a rationalisation program of the process of the Bill to which you refer. They knew that was to be put into place up to eight or nine years ago.

Mr EATON: I am not going to hold that against the Government. I have read facts and figures that show that the other States did exactly the same thing. There was an overcut to try to keep up the supply. Now these States are paying the penalty for it. The mill-owners and workers recognised the problem. They knew that without any interference by the Federal Government there would have to be mill closures.

The Millaa Millaa sawmill was closed prior to the announcement of the national heritage listing. Now we find that all the blame for the Queensland Government's mismanagement of the timber industry and forests has been placed on the national heritage listing by the Federal Government. In the long term, that will not work out. A genuine fear and concern exists among the millers. The Federal Government said that any areas that have to be phased out of the industry will be compensated.

Mr Glasson: You and the member for Leichhardt have been completely dishonest. First of all, you said \$15m. The \$15m which was quoted by the member for Leichhardt the other day, that was for the whole of Australia, not for just Queensland.

Mr EATON: That has nothing to do with national heritage. That was a previous announcement that was made about the whole of Australia. The Minister is trying to hang his hat on a peg that belongs to the Federal Government.

I am prepared to table the paper that Mr Hawkins delivered. I mentioned earlier that he was not so profit-oriented. I am citing his advice at a seminar. On another page he states—

“Greater attention must be placed on both short-term and long-term planning in the marketing field. This requires district involvement, as well as Head Office who do not have a monopoly over planning.

We need to be fully aware of likely short and long-term changes in forest resources, of demands for wood-based products, and of price movements for the various products, not only on the local and interstate scene, but particularly on the world scene. (For example we, as well as Industry should be aware that the current recession in the U.S.A. could lead to large quantities of Douglas Fir being exported to Australia at prices strongly competitive with locally produced timbers.) Some mechanism should be established to ensure that this information is collected, collated and distributed.”

Before the national heritage listing, 50 per cent of Queensland's timber supply was imported. The Labor Party knew that Queensland would face a shortage of supplies of timber.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! Persistent cross-fire is not allowable.

Mr EATON: Moving from this debate and onto the subject of the national heritage, I point out that the Opposition is saying that the Government should sit down and negotiate. It should send some of its forestry officers to negotiate. In his press release, the Minister stated that forestry officers in north Queensland could lose their jobs. Those people could be transferred to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, which would welcome them. A staff shortage exists in that department throughout north Queensland. Those 50 forestry officers would have all the expertise that is needed in the National Parks and Wildlife Service. All that would be required would be a transfer from one department to another. Workers in the timber and forestry industries will not lose their jobs. They will be transferred to other departments.

I have spoken to the forestry officers in north Queensland. When the Windsor Tableland project ceased, the surplus of men had to be transferred, but there was no mention of any redundancies in the Forestry Department. No redundancies should occur because there is a great need for skilled people in the Forestry Department.

The paper by Mr Hawkins further states—

“We need to be aware of the environmental consequences of any proposed actions in the marketing field, and communicate with other responsible members of the conservation movement to avoid or minimize major conflicts.

We need to actively improve our communication with industry, to discuss proposed amendments to policies with Industry, and to seek their co-operation in the implementation of these policies.”

The sawmillers are not happy at the moment. Although in the past they have been looked after by the Government on many occasions, some now are turning on the Government. I obtain input from all round the ridges. I have received deputations from workers and sawmillers and others who are involved. I am fully aware of the fears and the worries faced by sawmillers and workers and others involved in the timber industry.

The document also states as follows—

“As I have recently become painfully aware, our knowledge of current and future forest resources cannot be regarded as one of the success stories of the Department. I take no pleasure in telling Industry, at relatively short notice, that they face major reductions in allocations of Crown log supplies. Some steps have been taken, and hopefully further necessary steps will be taken, to correct this position.

There are of course reasons why our knowledge of resources has not been as good as it should be, not the least of which are:—

- re-development without replacement of resources staff to provide accurate assessments of timber volumes and valuations urgently required after the introduction of free-holding legislation in Queensland in the late 1950's. There has been some spin-off in that we now have a broader knowledge of the overall resource position, and have acquired substantial areas for State Forest reservation in the process.”

The Australian Labor Party is opposed to freeholding large areas of land but the Queensland National Party Government has always been in favour of it. It is part of the Queensland Government's policy to sell land as freehold. Government members talk about free enterprise. Although a policy of free enterprise and freeholding might be a vote-catcher in agricultural areas, it is plain to see that it has a detrimental effect on some Government departments. The Forestry Department is only one.

The document goes on further to state—

“If we are unable to plan correctly to market the resources which we have developed and nurtured over the past sixty years then how can we validly ask the public for further investment funds to continue with our work programmes.

- Unfortunately we still seem to be preoccupied with growing trees, rather than selling them. If we continue with this pre-occupation we may find that we have no markets for the trees we have grown so successfully; our competitors will have captured our markets.”

That statement may appear to be contradictory, but I point out that the loss of markets is associated with a shortage of the right types of trees.

Over the years, the Government has made statements about paper-manufacturing plants in Gympie and Maryborough. Where are those pulp and paper manufacturing mills?

Mr Newton: Don't talk about hoop pine.

Mr EATON: Nobody can replace the two-thirds reduction in the quota that applies to licensed sawmillers. Many sawmillers do not wish to take the thinnings from many of the pine plantations. Additional incentive, such as increased quantities of timber from State forests, should be provided as a trade-off to induce millers to accept the thinnings.

Recently I saw timber being milled at a sawmill located somewhere between Roma and Miles that could only have been used for matchsticks. It was probably the thinnings from a forestry plantation.

Mr Glasson: They were cypress. That was not plantation timber at all.

Mr EATON: It was the smallest timber that I had ever seen in my life in any sawmill or sleeper-mill.

Mr Glasson: That was cypress pine.

Mr EATON: By the time the heart has been taken out and the bark stripped away, not enough substance would be left in the timber for it to be utilised.

Mr Glasson: They were not thinnings—that's how much you know. They were not plantation timbers.

Mr EATON: I accept the Minister's word on that.

What about the proposals put forward by MIM-SGIO-APM? A great noise was made about the proposals and the Government planted some afforestation timber for pulp and paper milling. What will that timber be used for? It is not suitable for sawmilling and Queensland does not have a pulp and paper mill. A great deal of money has been spent on these plantations but they are useless. The Government has not announced any plans for the establishment of a pulp and paper manufacturing mill for which that timber could be used.

Everyone knows that the forced growth of timber leads to a product that is without substance or texture. Everything that is forced to grow rather than allowed to grow naturally ends up being unsuitable for the purpose it was to be used for. Everyone ought to recognise that as an established fact.

Mr Glasson: That is not true. What timber are you talking about?

Mr EATON: Natural hardwood and softwood species. Officers of the Forestry Department say that if timber is forced to grow, it is more suitable for pulp and paper milling than it is for structural use.

Mr Glasson: I feel sorry for you if that is the extent of your knowledge of the timber industry. And you are the Opposition spokesman!

Mr EATON: If a tree is forced to grow more quickly, it loses its texture and substance.

Mr Glasson: What do you mean by "forced"?

Mr EATON: Quick-growing timbers that are planted in richer country or fertilised. At the moment there is talk of culture breeding of quick-growing timbers. Because of that the timber will lose part of its texture. As Government members continue to learn more about the game, they will find out for themselves. They have a lot to learn yet. The unfortunate part about it is that in the next few years most of the Ministers in the Government will retire or fade out and another breed will cop the flak. That is exactly what will happen in Queensland. The Government knows about the cut-backs in timber production. It has occurred through the years. The Government has been in office for 30 years now and it has known all about it.

Mr FitzGerald: Thirty years yesterday, they tell us.

Mr EATON: That is correct. I acknowledge that. For 30 years the Government has been holding the industry's reins, and if there is any trouble it is because the Government has steered it into that trouble. It has not been able to look far enough down the track to avoid some of the hurdles that have been in the way.

In regard to plantation area, of all the States, Queensland has the lowest productivity figures per hectare of plantation. Queensland has 2 per cent, New South Wales has 3.7

per cent and Victoria has 4.7 per cent. South Australia, which one might say is the desert State of Australia, has the highest with 11.1 per cent. Tasmania has 6.7 per cent, Western Australia has 4.9 per cent and the ACT has 13.5 per cent. The ACT is a small area and it might be fortunate that it is in good country that is suitable for plantations.

The document states further—

“Even allowing for these differences need I say any more than that we are selling less softwoods per hectare from our plantations than all other Australian States, and that the differences indicated in Table 1 are substantial and dramatic. If we continue in this fashion we may find ourselves in the position of the A.C.T. where funding of their programmes is almost solely dependent on income received from the sale of forest products.”

Mr FitzGerald: Before you said we were forcing them in Queensland, now you are saying we are not.

Mr EATON: The Government is talking about introducing fast-growing timber and culture breeding. At present more than 50 per cent of Queensland's structural timber is imported. If the Government had planned 30 years ago, Queensland would be a rich State. The Government refers to recouping the benefits.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr EATON: The Government refers to harvesting forest wood. It has only just started to plant some of the plantations that should have been started years ago.

Mr Littleproud: You wanted to lock up the forests we took our hardwood from.

Mr EATON: The Government did not think far enough ahead; that is what I am complaining about.

The document states further—

“The Plantation Clear-Fall Task Force is currently assessing the resource available for marketing within the next 2-3 years, and they are developing various options in relation to sales procedures and pricing. Our current objective is to have proposals fully developed in the near future so that propositions can be called prior to the end of 1980.

There are major developments in pulpwood sales, and you will now all be aware of the feasibility studies being carried out by the A.P.M./M.I.M./S.G.I.O. consortium, with the object of establishing a pulp mill in South East Queensland by mid 1984 to produce about 200 000 tonnes per annum of bleached kraft pulp.”

One of the Government's own forestry officers was saying that in the late 1970s or early 1980s. Has that mill been established? Is that consortium still in operation? Where is the consortium?

Mr Glasson: Do you know why the mill did not go ahead?

Mr EATON: No.

Mr Glasson: The environmental conservationists lobbied to stop it.

Mr EATON: If the Government says that the plantation was in the right place, why could it not shift the site of the mill?

Mr Glasson: What do you term “the right place”?

Mr EATON: Some of the plantations are there, so why did the Government not put the mill there?

Mr Glasson: Because of the lobby and pressure from the environmental conservationists, some of your political friends.

Mr EATON: If the plantation timber that was being taken was only required to produce 200 000 tonnes of pulp, there was no need for any other timber. I cannot see why the mill could not have gone there. It was because the Government's figures were wrong. The consortium got windy; they received a good price for their land and they took off. That is what happened there.

The document also states—

“If both these proposals reach fruition we will see a massive increase in the volume of plantation material being harvested over the next 5 years. This will require advance planning in harvesting and marketing on a scale not previously considered. There will need to be very close co-operation between the Marketing Division and the Districts involved to ensure successful implementation.”

I am quite happy to table that document if anybody asks me to do so.

Mr Glasson: It is an internal report from the Forestry Department by an officer who is now deceased.

Mr EATON: I am sorry about that. I do not know where the document came from.

I wish to speak about incidents that occurred in the lead-up to the Federal election. Some forestry people demonstrated and called meetings. On election day they used placards and other signs on timber trucks—some signs were carried by children—to try to sway voters against the Government of the day, the Federal Labor Government.

Mr De Lacy: They did not do any good.

Mr EATON: No, they did not do any good.

The people would not accept that because the millers, the workers and even those who are worried—

Mr Glasson: I used to think of you as an honest man.

Mr EATON: I am still an honest man. I am saying only what is true and I am dealing only in facts.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! Multiple interjections will not be allowed.

Mr EATON: Government members will have plenty of opportunity to express their views. I repeat that I have not expressed one thing that I cannot back up. I have quoted from Government documents. In his second-reading speech the Minister acknowledged that there has been a cut-back of more than two-thirds in the supply of timber. As I said before, that cuts back the income by two-thirds.

I have a document here that states that the debt of the Forestry Department is \$328,822,963. The footnote reads—

“The amount available to meet interest and redemption due is applied firstly to instalments due to the Commonwealth and Special Projects Fund and then to interest charges on Loan Fund indebtedness and the remainder, if any, paid to the Loan Fund in reduction of indebtedness. The debt service charges on Loan Fund Advances have not been met in full since 1965-66. Unpaid interest amounting to \$114 365 987 has not been capitalized.”

That is a matter for concern. If the Labor Party becomes the Government of Queensland, it will have to handle those debts.

Mr FitzGerald: Don't you worry about that.

Mr EATON: I am worried about it.

With the economic troubles around the world, the Government of this State is fortunate to have a Labor Government in Canberra that has stabilised the economy in

Australia. That will help the country when the world's economic troubles hit our shores. When that happens the Ministers of this State Government will hightail it for the backblocks. They will grab their superannuation and go for their lives so that they can say, "It was all right when I left."

Mr De Lacy: What did Doug Anthony do?

Mr EATON: He saw the writing on the wall. It got too big for him and he went bush.

I will now give the House an example of Government mismanagement. The Southedge cattle station, which has the largest private dam in Australia and is a grazing block which comes under the Lands Department, has now been freeholded. The Water Resources Commission, which granted the property-owner permission to build the dam, is now wondering why it did not build the dam itself. In his application the property-owner said that he wanted to use the water from the dam for irrigation. However, now he wants to undertake a lakeside development and to construct a road through Forestry Department land.

Mr De Lacy: He has done it already.

Mr EATON: He has a licence to cut a track and to have traffic use it.

Because the Douglas Shire Council will be left to pick up the tab, it is opposed to the development. That is an example of the mismanagement in this State. He started to bulldoze a track until he came across a mining lease. The miner stopped him. He still intended completing the track but he found that, under the Act, he could not do so.

Mr De Lacy: The Forestry Department didn't stop him.

Mr EATON: No, the Forestry Department did not stop him at that time. It has given him permission to traverse the land. Everyone in that area is now waiting to see if the Forestry Department will pay for the road to help further the property-owner's development.

Mr Newton: Another employment project you want to knock on the head.

Mr EATON: That is not the case at all.

One of the problems in north Queensland at the moment has occurred because this Government has allowed people such as the property-owner I have just mentioned to freehold land. Once that happens they can do what they like with it. That has been the history of this Government's freeholding policy.

Although in some places many people have been allowed to freehold their land, applications by people on cattle stations in my electorate to freehold land have not been granted. Why are other people allowed to freehold land?

Mr FitzGerald: How close to the coast?

Mr EATON: He is inland—well inland.

Mr FitzGerald: 150 kilometres off the coast?

Mr EATON: More than that.

Mr Glasson: Did you ever inquire why one could freehold and the other couldn't?

Mr EATON: There were several reasons; I know that.

Mr Glasson: Just look at the main reasons. One would be the Forestry Department. Another would be the Mines Department. If it's a mining reserve, the position is clear.

Mr EATON: Some funny things happen. I can cite an example between Ravenshoe and Mount Garnet. The Minister can check this. His department could not do anything

as it was in a mining field. The size of the mining field was reduced, then the Lands Department allowed freeholding so that the land could be developed. Some of that country that the developer wanted to cut up is very poor. It was previously grazing country, but it was not suitable for grazing purposes. 20-acre and 100-acre blocks will be sold to some poor fellows who want to live in the bush. There is no surface water. Underground water will have to be used. What will happen is that the people on that land will not be able to pay their rates. They will ask the council to provide roads and facilities, and they will get into more trouble.

I am not opposed to the development of suitable country. In fact, some of the areas that have been developed are quite suitable. However, that does not apply to all of it. That leasehold grazing land was freeholded. Anyone driving from Ravenshoe to Mount Garnet, or just round Ravenshoe, would see it. I admit that the developer has done a great job with some of it. However, he is being allowed to develop that white-ant country. That is all one can call it. It is white-ant, granite country. There is no surface water anywhere within miles. When I asked the Water Resources Commission about the availability of water, I was told that it would have to conduct a survey and some tests. The commission would not commit itself.

This matter is of concern to the Opposition. The Opposition wants even-handed decisions to be made in relation to all Queenslanders. The Forestry Department has some great people working for it. They have made some very good submissions to this Government. Those submissions have been knocked back. Sometimes the excuse used is that there is a lack of finance for those projects. These documents and many more documents that I will obtain prove that forestry officers have made recommendations to this Government so that it can plan for the future and ensure a long-term good income to the Forestry Department. That has been of concern to the Opposition for a long time. The Opposition is aware of the shortage of timber and it believes that one day a sustainable yield will have to be reached.

In conclusion, I ask the Minister to negotiate on even ground with the Federal Government over the World Heritage list. If the Queensland Government approaches the Federal Government in the right way and negotiates with it, much of that timber will be allowed to be harvested.

Debate interrupted.

PRIVILEGE

Serving of Writ of Summons on Leader of Opposition

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate—Leader of the Opposition) (12.54 p.m.): I rise on a matter of privilege. At 9.50 this morning an attempt was made to serve upon me a writ of summons by use of my facsimile machine within the precincts of Parliament House. There is no doubt that that attempt constitutes a very serious breach of parliamentary privilege and is in contempt of this House.

The writ by Mr Peter MacDonald, the Premier's press officer, claims damages for defamation from me. It would seem to be a very clumsy, improper attempt to stifle me or to stifle any criticism of Mr MacDonald that I may have made today in the House. As such, this action, as I indicate, is a very serious breach of privilege, and I therefore move—

“That the matter be referred to the Privileges Committee for investigation and report.”

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 38

Ardill	Scott
Beanland	Shaw
Beard	Sherlock
Braddy	Smith
Burns	Smyth
Campbell	Underwood
Casey	Vaughan
D'Arcy	Warburton
Davis	Warner
De Lacy	Wells
Eaton	White
Gibbs, R. J.	Yewdale
Gygar	
Hamill	
Hayward	
Innes	
Knox	
Lee	
McElligott	
Mackenroth	
McLean	
Milliner	<i>Tellers:</i>
Palaszczuk	Comben
Schuntner	Prest

NOES, 45

Ahern	Lane
Alison	Lester
Austin	McCauley
Berghofer	McKechnie
Bjelke-Petersen	McPhie
Borbidge	Menzel
Burreket	Muntz
Chapman	Neal
Clauson	Nelson
Cooper	Newton
Elliott	Powell
Fraser	Randell
Gately	Sherrin
Gibbs, I. J.	Simpson
Gilmore	Slack
Glasson	Stephan
Gunn	Stoneman
Harper	Tenni
Harvey	Veivers
Henderson	
Hinton	
Hobbs	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hynd	Littleproud
Katter	FitzGerald

Resolved in the negative.

Sitting suspended from 1.03 to 2.30 p.m.

FORESTRY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed.

Mr McPHIE (Toowoomba North) (2.30 p.m.): I am pleased to rise to speak in support of the Bill.

An Opposition member: What would you know about it?

Mr McPHIE: If the honourable member wants to know what I know about it, he should stand by and he will hear quite a bit.

The Bill itself is not very large. It is designed to streamline, in line with the Savage inquiry's recommendations, an industry that is controlled by the Government in this State. It amalgamates the Timber Research and Development Advisory Councils of south and central Queensland and of north Queensland into one council to carry out much the same functions as the two councils have carried out.

The gains in efficiency and cost-effectiveness are obvious. I do not think that there is any debate in this House as to whether or not the Bill should be passed. However, Opposition members have raised a number of points on which I would like to touch. They deal with many factors affecting the timber industry and the forestry industry in Queensland.

The Minister said that one of the reasons for the introduction of the Bill was to amalgamate two councils into one because there had been a cut of about 30 per cent in the amount of timber logged and processed in north Queensland over the past 10 years. The honourable member for Mourilyan, Mr Eaton, harped on that matter to some extent. I could not decide whether he was in favour of closing down the timber industry or of expanding it further so that more employment and earnings could be generated in north Queensland. If those were the points that he was making, I would be in favour of them and I would support him.

Later in my speech I shall deal with north Queensland. Firstly, I would like to make some comments on the timber industry as a whole. It is a significant contributor

to the Queensland economy, to jobs in Queensland and, of course, to earnings for the State. I agree with the comments made by the Minister recently on a *Queensland Unlimited* program, when he said that the State Government has a most impressive record in managing the State's forests.

Mr De Lacy: You don't want to start talking about that program.

Mr McPHIE: The member for Cairns knocks everything that has anything to do with the Queensland Government and its performance. He will not agree with me on that. However, honourable members know that they have to discount significantly what the honourable member says, as they did recently in Toowoomba when the honourable member was out in the west for about the first time in his life.

The Forestry Department employs professionals who are men of great integrity, experience and ability. They have the responsibility for implementing Queensland's forest practices and management programs in this State, not the vocal, motivated few who proclaim themselves as experts and appear so readily and frequently in the media. Those professionals in the department have achieved standards of management that are recognised and envied round the world. I congratulate them on their performance. One has only to look at the record. Right across the State Queensland has a strong, well-run program for the management of its forests. It is a multipurpose program that provides employment not only in the forest itself but also in a number of supporting industries and areas. It brings great earnings into the State. Queensland has a modern and up-to-date controlled logging and sustained yield program to ensure that forest assets are renewed for the future and that they are not depleted.

Access is provided for the public and the tourists. Control policies exist in the forests in relation to fauna. The Government co-operates with the various scientific people who want to be involved and carry out research into trees or fauna. It is of note that the United States zoologist of some considerable standing in his own country, Mr Harry Recher, was very complimentary of the Forestry Department about its fauna management programs in the forests. A host of associated industries benefit from Queensland's forest industry. More importantly, it should be noted that Queensland's enlightened program has very large areas of forest which are locked up and will never be logged.

Mr De Lacy: Of course they won't. They are on the hillside.

Mr McPHIE: That is a credit to the Queensland Government. The honourable member for Cairns would want to lock up unnecessarily whole areas of land just to kowtow to his conservative people so that he could gain a few votes. That is all the honourable member has been doing. He has no interest at all in the creation of jobs. He believes that they can go by the board as long as he can kowtow to some people to gain a few more votes. The honourable member for Cairns might like to reply to my comments when he speaks later.

Many timber plantations have been established by the Queensland Government. The honourable member should be aware that the first timber plantations were established at Atherton in 1916. Over \$20m per year is allocated by the State Government to the forest plantation program. The area in Queensland under softwood forests totals 159 000 hectares. That figure will increase steadily to approximately 200 000 hectares.

Mr De Lacy: What about the rainforest?

Mr McPHIE: I ask the honourable member to wait. I intend to say quite a bit about rainforests. I visited the honourable member's electorate recently on an inspection tour of rainforests.

The benefits of timber plantations will soon be apparent. The first crops are to be harvested in the not-too-distant future. The Forestry Department is programmed for 52 State forestry group management plans, such as the release in March of the plans for the Pomona forest north of Brisbane and the release in July for the forest at Tully.

Those ongoing programs are very comprehensive. They give a total area overview and they co-ordinate the development. The department is to be congratulated on those programs.

Those are the answers to the questions of the honourable member for Mourilyan—the “What ifs?” He asked, “What if Mount Isa Mines was allowed to go and do a bit of development here? What if a developer is allowed to put a bit of a road through a bit of forest?” If the honourable member took the trouble to obtain some of the State forest management plans he would have the answers. He would not have to come into this House with “What ifs?” and raise fears in people’s minds.

The State Forestry Department has built up assets in excess of \$1.3 billion. Those assets belong to Queenslanders. The State Forestry Department employs over 16 000 people who support families. During the last 10 years the department’s revenue has been multiplied fourfold up to \$25.4m at present. It has been confidently predicted that during the next decade that figure will be multiplied by three. That is a record to be proud of, and yet concerted efforts are being made by the ALP and organisations such as the Queensland Rainforest Conservation Society to destroy much of this by closing down vast areas of rainforest.

This is all connected with the World Heritage list, which is an idealistic concept. Much has been said in the press lately about the National Estate listing of rainforests and the wetlands area of north Queensland. The World Heritage convention, which was adopted by the UNESCO general conference in 1972, is relevant to what I am saying. Australia signed that convention in 1974. Its aims are to promote co-operation among nations and to protect worldwide heritage, which is of such universal value that its conservation is of concern to all people. This Government has no objection to those aims. In fact, it supports them. However, it disagrees with the way in which those aims are being achieved.

Public concern about rainforests does not stem from what is occurring in north Queensland rainforests. It stems from the alarming rate of destruction of rainforests throughout the world.

I am sure that honourable members have read the documentation of the United Nations, which states that the alarming rate of destruction of rainforests throughout the world is not primarily connected with forestry work. It relates principally to the gathering of wood, fuel wood and agriculture. None of those matters relates to the plantations in north Queensland.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr McPHIE: I will have more to say on rainforests.

I do not understand how people can selfishly suggest a total lock-up of a vast area of north Queensland to the detriment of a thriving industry that will benefit the people of Queensland. If such a lock-up project were to be undertaken, I suggest that it would be regarded as criminal negligence in the management of the State.

Mr De Lacy: I think that you fellows are jealous of our assets up there. You are trying to get out of it.

Mr McPHIE: If the honourable member were aware of what is involved in the World Heritage listing, he would know that Queensland will retain that land. It will not be magically transferred to the control of the Commonwealth Government. However, the Commonwealth Government will be dictating the use to which that land is put. All honourable members have witnessed what occurred in Tasmania when the Federal Government started dictating the use to which rainforests in that State were to be put. The Federal Government has taken the common right away from the State. It has taken away from the State a right that was agreed at Federation. It has no right to do that. I am not interested in listening to lawyers from the Opposition who are talking to me about High Court decisions and international accords. That is not what we are talking about today. We are talking about State rights. If the Labor Party takes those rights

from the States by sly means, which it is doing, the members of the Opposition are not fit to be in this House.

I turn now to the rainforests in Queensland. Australia imports some \$300m worth of timber products each year. Over \$100m worth come into Queensland. Yet members of the Opposition are advocating the closing-down of some parts of the industry. That is not sensible. I agree with the honourable member for Mourilyan that we should be building up the timber industry in his electorate; we should not be closing it down. We have a tremendous capacity to provide more jobs in the north and to earn much more money for this State. The idealistic arguments that are being used for closing the industry down should be swept to one side. I support the honourable member in his objective of providing more industry and work for the people in his electorate and for all Queenslanders.

Under the Queensland rainforest management program that was set up after World War II, only mature and over-mature trees are harvested on a 40-year cycle. That has allowed for regrowth and controlled management so that the forest areas are not denuded and future generations will always have an asset there.

It is of interest that last year the north Queensland rainforest logging quota was cut from 130 000 cubic metres to 60 000 cubic metres for the next five years. That gives the lie to the misinformation that was put out by the ABC not long ago, in which it claimed that the Queensland rainforest management program provided for a fivefold increase in logging. It is not a fivefold increase in logging. The program has reduced it by more than one-half, and it will maintain that reduction for five years. That program is to be complimented. The sooner that people such as the spokesman on the ABC are told to toe the line and put out only the truth, the better.

I will now provide some data. Queensland still has 53 per cent of the rainforest that was here in 1788 when the first white settlement took place. Queensland has 54.9 per cent of Australia's rainforest. Some rainforest areas are expanding. The area on the Cape Tribulation to Bloomfield road that we have heard so much hullabaloo about was open forest 90 years ago; it was not rainforest. Yet it is claimed that the Government is destroying rainforest and it can never regenerate. In the last 90 years, that open forest has changed into rainforest, and what a magnificent rainforest it is. When it is completed, that road will be one of the great tourist roads of the world. I compliment the Government on that accomplishment.

Over 25 per cent of Queensland's rainforest is in national park or nature reserves and more is being added annually. That 25 per cent represents 313 000 hectares, which is many times more than the rainforest in national parks in New South Wales.

The Queensland Government has strict control over logging that is carried on in rainforests. It controls when and where logging can be carried out. In some cases, it specifies which trees can be logged.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr McPHIE: Yes, I agree that big trees are taken, because they create shade, which prevents the smaller trees from growing. When the big trees are taken away, not only do they provide timber, which creates jobs, prevents unemployment and generates income, but also the smaller trees that were in the shade are able to prosper and grow into bigger trees, and the forest is regenerated.

Seventy-six per cent of rainforests in Queensland, or 850 000 hectares, will remain unlogged and locked up for ever for future generations. The Minister and the Conservator of Forests can be congratulated on that.

I turn now to the area of rainforest in north Queensland that is included in the heritage legislation. North of Townsville, only 18 per cent of rainforests, or 160 000 hectares, are available for selective logging. Yet that area earns \$33m a year and provides 1 200 jobs. The timber industry and supporting industries round Townsville provide 2 000 jobs. However, the honourable member for Mourilyan said that only 600 people

were employed in that area. I wonder where the honourable member got that figure of 600 from, because two weeks ago the Australian Labor Party quoted a figure of 350. That figure was disproved. The National Party Government showed that the Labor Party was wrong. The Labor Party doubled the figure but it got its sums wrong, because if 350 is doubled, the result should be 700. The point I make is that 2 000 is the correct figure.

I turn now to the World Heritage proposals. As I understand it, 1.25 million hectares is to be nominated. The rainforest area north of Townsville amounts to only 856 700 hectares. I ask: what will happen to the other half million hectares? Where is that area? Why is it included? If the Federal Government wants to nominate that rainforest area, why does it not keep to the exact area? I would say that the Federal Government in Canberra and people involved with conservation societies have made a guesstimate because they do not know the area that should be nominated.

The honourable member for Mourilyan, Mr Eaton, was caught out this morning because he had not done his homework. He had not seen the map that the Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying had with him, although the map had been obtained from the Federal Government. Why did the honourable member not get one? Has the Federal Labor Government no faith in him? Is the Federal Government giving him the mushroom treatment? Although the Federal Government will not give information to the Queensland Government, I would have thought that the information would have been provided to the honourable member. It is obvious that Opposition members have not done their homework, because when they are asked for information they can only respond with silence.

The national park area in north Queensland covers 198 700 hectares. This is 23 per cent of the 856 700 hectares that I mentioned earlier relating to rainforest north of Townsville. The Crown owns 810 700 hectares, which represents Government-controlled and managed land to the extent of 94 per cent. It is being managed in a far better way than it would if it came under the control of Federal heritage legislation. Of the total of 810 700 hectares owned by the Queensland Government, only 160 000 hectares, or 18.7 per cent, can be logged, which is a pretty small amount when one has regard to the size of the industry.

I have asked the Minister what the Federal Government proposes to do for north Queensland. He told me that he was unable to say anything about it because the Federal Government would not tell him. The Queensland Minister has heard nothing firm from the Federal Government, because it talks in circles. I am aware that the Federal rainforest conservation program originally proposed that \$22.25m would be made available. The Queensland Government has not been able to find out what Queensland's share of that sum will be.

Mr Comben: Queensland's share is \$17m.

Mr McPHIE: If members of the Opposition have that information, they should give it to the Minister because he wants to know. That share is vital to the management of the resource. In June 1987 the Federal colleague of the honourable member for Windsor, the former Minister for Arts, Heritage and Environment, Mr Cohen, announced that the Federal Government would give Queensland up to \$50m by way of compensation for a World Heritage listing of 750 000 hectares. I want to know what 750 000 hectares he is referring to, because he is 500 000 hectares short. What about the rest? Which piece of land is he referring to? I do not think the former Minister knew, because he had not done his homework.

The Federal Government provides no details, yet its Ministers throw away figures and say, "We will give you up to \$50m." I would say that \$10 is part of an amount that could be described as being "up to \$50m", but there is a bit of a shortfall. That is the way the Federal Labor Government operates. It is not doing its job properly. It is simply buying votes. It is a shame that members of the Labor Party are acting as

Ministers of the Federal Government. It is no wonder that Australia is broke when the Federal Government uses throw-away figures in that way.

What would the Federal Government do if the Queensland Government were to take up its offer of \$50m? Would Queensland see much of an amount of up to \$50m? Not on your life! Queensland would receive as much compensation as the timber industry north of Port Macquarie and east of Armidale received. I believe that very little, if any, compensation has been paid in respect of the timber industry in northern New South Wales. If Opposition members have any information on that compensation I would like to hear about it. To my knowledge, no compensation has been paid, despite the fact that it is nearly three years since the closure of the timber industry commenced.

In north Queensland, the closure of the timber industry will result in the loss of 2 000 jobs and a loss of earnings of \$33m or more to this State. I have much more to say, but time is running out. I wish to know what the two responsible Federal Government Ministers—Mr Brown and Senator Richardson—will offer now. Which Federal Minister will talk to the Queensland Minister, and which one should he talk to? Is it the Minister for the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories, Mr Brown, or is it the Minister for the Environment and the Arts, Senator Richardson? Who is the responsible Minister? How on earth can anyone do business with that set-up?

Will they make the same offer when they come up, or will they make different offers, from which the Government can choose the better one? I would bet that confusion is reigning down there and that confusion will be reigning in the whole of the Hawke Ministry while they carry on with this rot of having two Ministers responsible for one job. It just does not work. How does the Federal Government decide who is the junior Minister? Is Richardson the junior Minister because Brown appears higher up on the list? If Richardson is an ambitious man, I would bet that he gets to work and white-ants Brown and gets his office desk moved out. Richardson might like to use that office desk in his own office. It just will not work.

If any honourable members opposite can help me, I would like to know when the Federal Government will come clean on proposals to close down the forestry industry in north Queensland. I want to know when it will put a firm proposal to the Government, because it has not done it yet. I want to see concrete figures of areas of Queensland's rainforest that will be put on the World Heritage listing, along with figures for compensation and proposals for management. If the Opposition can provide those figures to me, I will hand them over to the Minister because he is the man responsible in this State and he is not being told anything. It is a shame and a discredit to the Prime Minister and his Ministers that they have, over a number of years, been able to just talk and not come up with anything concrete.

I would like to change tack now a little and pay tribute to another section of the Government that is heavily involved in the management of forest areas of Queensland, that is, the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service, which is very relevant to any debate about forests and forest-management procedures. I think that everyone knows that the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service came into being in 1975 when the fauna part of the Department of Primary Industries and the national parks part of the Department of Forestry were amalgamated. That service has a fine record. It is intricately linked to the State's forests and their management. The department's budget is \$30m. The total area of national parks—and much of it is forest—is 3.5 million hectares. There are 313 parks. That area of 3.5 million hectares is three times the figure in 1975, when the National Parks and Wildlife Service came into being. Its officers are concerned with the management of large areas of the State's forests. They are doing an excellent job, just as the Forestry Department is with the management of another section of large forest areas. The Forestry Department is doing an equally good job. The officers of those departments should be allowed to go ahead unhindered, without any idealistic nonsense and kowtowing to overseas groups and that rotten UNESCO outfit in the United Nations, and without the ratification of agreements with overseas mobs.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr McPHIE: The people down in Canberra are interfering, and while they interfere with the management of these things in Queensland, more job opportunities will be lost to the people in the electorates of Mourilyan and Nudgee.

Other sections that are concerned with forestry in Queensland should also be acknowledged. I refer especially to the Forestry Department, which has given assistance to the private sector and to land-holders—the people out on the land. The department does an excellent job by giving assistance in the growing of trees, promotion and giving assistance and logging to private sawmills. The Greening Australia program is excellent. The department has ideals which are far more sensible and far more realistic in the implementation of conservation programs. Two of them are right on our back doorstep. I refer to the Brisbane forest park, which is one of the great forest areas in Queensland. I hope every member has taken the opportunity to see it. It is a magnificent piece of forest area.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr McPHIE: I am glad that the honourable member has one of the diaries. I hope that he has been out there. The park is an example of enlightened management taking over and looking after it. Why does not the Opposition put that on the heritage list and lock it up so that nobody can go in there either? That is a place of great credit. It is used by all people of south-east Queensland. It is a place we should be proud of, and we are. There is no reason for locking it up, any more than there is a reason for locking up the rainforests in north Queensland that have been so effectively managed.

I wish to pay tribute to the department for the extensive program that it has undertaken in China. The press has not given it full credit or full exposure. It is quite an exceptional program.

Because it is very relevant to the whole forest program and to many of the arguments that I anticipate being raised by the Opposition, I wish now to read an extract from Bill Ord's Green Scene in the *Sunday Mail* of 28 June. Bill Ord is a well-known and well-respected conservationist.

Mr Comben: And a member of the National Party.

Mr McPHIE: I do not think he is. In fact, from some of the things he says, I often wonder whether honourable members opposite might have him in their pockets.

The article was about conservation and forest management and the conflicting interests of those who want to manage forests, those who want to use them and the conservationists who want to lock them up. He wrote—

“There are misunderstandings, even enmities, between them that must be resolved for the nation's economic and ecological benefit.

We cannot allow the bickering and bitterness that exists in relation to all industry that generates more than \$4 billion-worth of products ranging from lumber to furniture, employs 108,000 people and exports goods worth \$320 million a year.

... conservationists ... must allow the industry to continue and grow if possible—on the basis of resource-renewability and preservation of the general biological integrity of our native forests.

... the industry must accept reasonable constraints on those of its activities which do not square with those concerns.

Our forests must be harvested, not mined. Forests which will not regenerate in their own right and kind after logging must be left alone.”

Mr De Lacy: We agree with that.

Mr McPHIE: I am glad the honourable member agrees, because that is precisely the Queensland Government's program.

In conclusion—I wish to say that I see this small Bill as a very positive contribution to assist in improving the management of our forest. It will be to the benefit of all Queenslanders. I say to the critics: please take an objective view and put the well-being of all the people of this State above your own selfish political and idealistic purposes.

I congratulate the Minister and his department on a job well done.

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (2.59 p.m.): This Bill to amend the Forestry Act is important not so much because of what it proposes to achieve but rather because it further emphasises the mismanagement of north Queensland's tropical forests, for which the Government has been responsible. Despite all the fine-sounding words from the member for Toowoomba North, members on this side do not believe that over the years the Queensland Forestry Department and certainly the Queensland Government have been responsible custodians of the State's rainforests.

In presenting the Bill, the Minister admitted that the reason the amendment is being proposed is that the timber allocations in the northern region are no longer adequate to sustain the northern council. In the last nine years the allocations have fallen by 70 per cent. Does that indicate responsible management? It is funny how different interpretations can be put on the same facts. The Minister and the member for Toowoomba North, Mr McPhie, say that it does. To me it means that over the years the Government has not been implementing a responsible management program. The Government has been mining the State's forests; it has not been managing them.

The fact is that the Minister's Forestry Department has presided over 30 years of mining of the State's tropical rainforests, and the resource is running out. These are the facts. Try as they might, the Minister, the Queensland Government, the Forestry Department and the timber industry cannot blame the conservationists, the Federal Government or the ALP for the fact that the resource is running out and that over the years those resources have been badly managed.

The World Heritage listing, which has become the topic of debate this afternoon, obviously is a threat to logging. I concede that, but I do not think that the whole timber industry will be destroyed. There will certainly be job losses in the industry, but nothing like the magnitude of numbers that has been suggested. To start off with, the absolute numbers are not correct. However, there will be compensation and there will be alternatives. In total, more jobs will be created than lost.

The point that needs to be made, and made most strongly, is that the timber industry is a dying industry. For the last 10 years production has been in rapid decline. The Queensland Government and the Forestry Department stand condemned for their lack of planning to take account of the eventuality of the run-out of timber.

The World Heritage listing and the threat to logging are a consequence of the failure of the Government to act responsibly. Over the years the Government has been too short-sighted and too lacking in management planning. Where are the hardwood plantations? It has just been said by the member for Toowoomba North that they are being planted in China. Where are the plantations in Queensland to take over from our natural forests when they run out?

Queensland eucalypts abound in plantations all over the world. I have seen them around the world. I have seen them in Zimbabwe, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and the Philippines. I have seen them all around the world except in Queensland. It is disgraceful. Any anger in the industry—and I know that there is anger in the industry, particularly in the work-force—should be aimed in the direction of the Queensland Government and its mismanagement of this important resource over the years.

A while ago the Minister and the Premier accused me of not supporting north Queensland. I support north Queensland. I support the people of Cairns. I support the people who live in north Queensland.

Mr Vaughan: And they support you.

Mr De LACY: And they support me; that is right.

I am very suspicious of people who come up here from the south. Government members are always talking about the southerners telling Queenslanders what to do. Now the member for Toowoomba North, Mr McPhie, is going up to north Queensland and telling the people there what they want. The overriding issue in the recent Federal election was whether or not to have World Heritage listing. The people have spoken. Can the Government not accept the verdict of the people? I refer to the people in my electorate, the people whom I represent.

I put on record that I support World Heritage listing. I have always supported it.

Mr Simpson: And no jobs.

Mr De LACY: I accept the fact that jobs will be lost in the timber industry. I accept that. However, there is such a thing as what is for the greater good; what is the most important; what will create more jobs in the long term?

A Government member interjected.

Mr De LACY: I will take the risk; I will look after my electorate. The honourable member need not worry about that.

I believe that World Heritage listing is an idea whose time has come. The people of north Queensland and Australia also recognise that. Some time ago I said that the tropical rainforests of north Queensland have been shown to be of World Heritage value and that they are of outstanding universal significance from the point of view of conservation and science.

I know that Government members do not accept anything that Dr Norman Myers says. However, he is an international expert who has travelled widely and looked at rainforests throughout the world. Dr Myers described the north Queensland rainforests as not just the best of the best but in a class of their own, way out in front and much more significant than the Great Barrier Reef or the Grand Canyon. He said that they are a living museum of evolutionary history and that they are the oldest remnants of the original rainforest on this planet.

Honourable members heard that absolute nonsense from the member for Toowoomba North that the rainforests in north Queensland have developed in the last 90 years. Have honourable members ever heard such a stupid, uneducated, ill-informed——

Mr McPHIE: I rise to a point of order. I have been misquoted, and I take strong exception to it. I did not say that rainforests in north Queensland had developed in the last 90 years. I said that a section of rainforest on the Cape Tribulation to Bloomfield road had changed from open forest to rainforest during the last 90 years, and that is fact.

Mr De LACY: I accept what the honourable member has said.

The point which Government members do not seem to accept is what is the real heritage value of a true rainforest. Unless they can make that leap in understanding, they will never understand what the conservationists are on about, what the Commonwealth Government is on about and what the Opposition is on about.

I felt very sad listening to the honourable member for Toowoomba North, Mr McPhie, because he obviously does not understand. It may be that he grew up in Toowoomba, still lives there and therefore does not have the opportunity to experience the true value of the rainforests. Be that as it may. You can take a horse to water, but you can't make it drink.

A while ago the Minister flashed a map. I have not seen that map and do not know what it is. A World Heritage boundary map has not yet been produced. The map

produced by the Minister is either an extrapolation from the proposed National Estate extensions or it is one that has been drawn up based on the indicative map issued together with the Federal Minister's statement when he announced the World Heritage listing. This indicative map was cross-hatched on a sheet of A4 paper. The map was deliberately vague. It was stupid to release it because it caused a great deal of unnecessary concern in north Queensland. The Minister stated that he will table the map, but no formal World Heritage boundaries have yet been produced, although they will be in the near future.

Mr Glasson: Didn't you see what the Prime Minister produced when he made that announcement?

Mr De LACY: I saw that, but it does not contain the proposed definitive boundaries. It is unfortunate that that type of map was released. If that is the map that the Minister is flashing around, he should not bother to flash it any more.

Mr Glasson: It is not the one I am flashing around at all.

Mr De LACY: I challenge the Minister to confirm that he does not have the map showing the boundaries of the proposed World Heritage listing, because it has not yet been published or even drawn up.

Mr McPhie interjected.

Mr De LACY: Of course, it is possible to draw them up and do what one likes with them. I am saying that the definitive boundaries have not yet been drawn up or published. The Minister can flash what he likes in this House, and I mean that. He can read what he likes into that statement.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order!

Mr De LACY: The Minister can flash whichever map he wishes. When the boundaries are published, they will be available for discussion and objection.

In an attempt to head off another outcry—although I know I will not be successful—I point out that the simple inclusion of an area in the proposed World Heritage listing does not mean that every conceivable activity will be prohibited within its boundaries. It simply means that a management plan will be drawn up and there will be an administering authority. If the Minister is fair dinkum about the welfare of Queensland as a whole—north Queensland and Queensland's heritage—may I suggest to him that he co-operate with the Commonwealth Government and form a joint authority of exactly the same fashion as the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. In that way the Minister and his department will be part of the administering authority controlling these areas. The area that falls within the boundaries will be zoned and all activities will be permitted, provided they do not degrade the heritage value of the area. Tourism and all sorts of recreational pursuits will not be precluded.

Mr Glasson: Does it preclude timber-harvesting?

Mr De LACY: Yes, it will preclude timber-harvesting, and that fact has to be faced up to.

The Federal election campaign in north Queensland, and particularly in Leichhardt, which is the area in which I live, was fought on the basis of a mandate for World Heritage listing. The people who sought a mandate on that subject during the election campaign were the National Party, its candidate, the timber industry and, to a certain extent, the Forestry Department. They said, "When you vote, this is what you will be voting on." All I can say is that the people have spoken. They have made their decision and said, "We would prefer World Heritage listing." That does not mean that co-operation and negotiation will be forsaken when the proposal is published.

The National Party made World Heritage listing a central feature of its north Queensland campaign. The word is that the National Party spent \$200,000 on the local

campaign, which focused on this World Heritage listing. Why did it not work? Why did the people not accept that massive advertising blitz and campaign run by the National Party on the issue of World Heritage listing? It was a watershed election, which proved a couple of things. Firstly, the Australian electorate has come of age. It is no longer influenced by the scaremongering, the lies, the campaigns of disinformation and the narrow-minded invective of the National Party. That is what the campaign probably was.

Earlier the Minister said, "Will it exclude logging?" I said, "Yes, in most of those areas it probably will exclude logging." If the National Party had run an election campaign simply on the issue and the jobs that it would have lost in logging, and on the southerners or people from Canberra telling Queensland what to do, it may have got somewhere. With that sort of money and resources, the National Party may have got somewhere. I am sure that, if it had been left to the Minister, that is probably all that would have happened. However, he received help from colleagues such as the Minister for Northern Development and Community Services, who bought into the scene and made the most outlandish statements. He referred to World Heritage listing. As to tourism—he said that at least three major developments involving 300 jobs would be lost. As to mining—he said that the lost potential was for earnings of \$90m a year and 200 jobs. As to forestry—he said that 1 000 jobs would be lost. As to sugar—he said that two sugar-mills would be lost because they relied on the expansion of cane production. Where is Mr Menzel? Here is Bob Katter talking about World Heritage listing stopping expansion of cane production. As to meatworks—the Minister said that 300 jobs would be lost. As to cattle—he said that there were bleak prospects for the Lockhardt River and Hope Vale Aboriginals. They are hundreds of miles away from where it is all happening. "That is why this nation is going broke," Mr Katter said. "Here is a decision that could cost perhaps \$1 billion in export earnings and cost at least 1 500 jobs."

When Parliament resumed today some members of the Opposition wanted to move for the suspension of Standing Orders so that they could move a vote of thanks to the Premier for his assistance in the ALP Federal election campaign. If we had had the opportunity to do that, I would have moved that Bob Katter be included in the motion because he certainly did the ALP's campaign in Leichhardt an immense amount of good. He came in and overstated the case to such a ridiculous extent that people said, "How can you believe that? If that is wrong, everything is wrong."

The Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services—the Minister for destroying the ports—

Mr Prest: It won't be for too long. He's wrecked it, too.

Mr De LACY: That is right.

The Minister told people at a public meeting in Cooktown that their water supply and electricity would be cut off. What a nonsense statement. The people of north Queensland, because they are intelligent people, will not cop that sort of scaremongering any longer.

Brian Austin jumped in. He said that the Tully/Millstream Falls hydroelectric scheme was finished. He supposedly pulled out a group that was there. He forgot, as my colleague the member for Nudgee pointed out, that the *Daily Sun* had reported on 7 April that the Northern Development Minister, Mr Bob Katter, Junior, welcomed Cabinet's announcement that it would drop plans for the scheme. Mr Katter is reported as saying that the Tully scheme would have taken water from the drier inland areas, and that there was a big coal reserve in the Galilee Basin, too far from the coast to provide export potential, but that the coal could be transported domestically. Why did the Minister for Mines and Energy have to jump in and make a fool of himself?

Mr Vaughan: He was playing politics.

Mr De LACY: Does the honourable member think that he was playing politics?

It is all right for the Minister to play politics; but he used his statutory authorities to play politics when he had Mr Galwey and Mr Lister, who is the general manager of the FNQEB and a decent person, making the same type of sensational statements. It was not strange that Mr Lister would make the statements. Do honourable members know who is the chairman of the Far North Queensland Electricity Board? It is Mr Roy Rankine, the general manager of Rankine Sawmills. I do not mind politicians getting out and politicking; but, when they put pressure on statutory authorities and independent semi-public servants to fight their battles for them, it is a pretty poor show.

Honourable members witnessed a recent spectacle on television one evening when Messrs Katter, Muntz, Glasson and Austin—all on television, all holding hands—said that the World Heritage listing would be a terrible thing. They are all from the south. Not one of them comes from our area. They were all saying that the World Heritage listing would be a disaster for north Queensland. Because of the massive potential benefits to tourism, other countries in the world are breaking their necks to secure national heritage listing. How can the Minister for Tourism, Mr Muntz, justify his stance of being opposed to World Heritage listing when it would be a free advertisement for Queensland tourism on the world stage? How can the Minister say that it is no good? The reason is that he cannot get his narrow-minded party political eyes on the job. He can no longer think objectively. That is the trouble with all Government members. Their paranoia about State rights and conservationists has closed their minds and they cannot think objectively.

The Queensland Government should get behind the national heritage listing in a responsible way and see what can be done. Let us iron out the problems as they occur. I appreciate that there will be plenty of problems.

Quite apart from Ministers of the National Party Government, other people emerged from the election campaign and the World Heritage listing debate with their reputations and credibilities gravely damaged. The general manager of Nor-Wood Forest Products, Mr Doug Kenane, who calls himself a timber industry spokesman, made most of the running on behalf of the timber industry. I presume that it was agreed that he would speak on behalf of the timber industry.

Members of the Labor Party learn very early how to discern whether a person is speaking on behalf of his industry or not. As the shadow Minister for Primary Industries, I pick that up easily. If people attack the Labor Party while they are speaking on behalf of their industry, members of the Labor Party will accept that. One can go in to bat for one's industry. It is an interest group, and that is what one ought to do. People have a responsibility and an obligation to do so. However, members of the Labor Party can very easily tell when people are simply being mindlessly anti-Labor. They can pick it up in an instant. Sometimes those people do not know which hat they are wearing, but members of the Labor Party can always tell.

I regret to say that Mr Kenane ended up gravely wounded following the blatant party political, anti-Labor campaign with which he was involved.

John Rankine came to see me the other day. I appreciated his visit. He said, "We have obviously got to talk to the Government in power." I appreciate that fact, and I had a good talk with him. He said, "What should we do?" I said, "The first thing you ought to do is sack Doug Kenane, or certainly not make him the spokesman for the timber industry." Because of the nasty, vindictive type of campaign with which he was associated and the things that he said about the Federal member for Leichhardt during the course of that campaign, there is no way that the Labor Government can or should negotiate with Mr Kenane.

The Labor Party can forgive the normal sorts of things that are said in the heat of an election campaign. However, the way in which Mr Kenane carried on was over the fence.

Mr Newton: He's not in your electorate, is he?

Mr De LACY: I would not expect that he would be voting for me if he was. I could probably do without his vote, anyway.

I suggested to Mr Rankine that new lines of communication obviously had to be set up and that the Federal Government was prepared to talk.

Mr McPhie: Which Minister will do the job?

Mr De LACY: Senator Richardson is the Minister responsible. His first formal duty as a Minister is to visit those rainforests. On 21 August he is going to inspect the north Queensland rainforests and talk to the timber people. He will talk to whoever needs to be talked to.

Mr Glasson: He will be an authority in five minutes, won't he?

Mr De LACY: Let me ask the Minister who is making important decisions for the future whether he is an authority. It is easy to put people down. People always attack the person and not the issue.

Mr Glasson: His mind is made up before he goes there.

Mr De LACY: Of course it is made up, because he is implementing Labor Party and Federal Government policy.

The people of Australia have made up their minds and voted. Senator Richardson will implement the policy, but he is prepared to talk to everyone. I said to Mr Rankine that he needs to set up his lines of communication because we are concerned—and Senator Richardson is concerned—about the future of the people who may be displaced because of a wind-down of logging activities.

Mr Glasson: How much money is he going to offer?

Mr De LACY: That is what we should be asking. I heard a figure of \$50m mentioned during the election campaign and I would be making representations to ensure that \$50m was forthcoming. However, the Queensland Government will blow it because it will ask for compensation in the crazy way that it has done previously. The Premier mentioned something about the total value of the rainforest being \$106m and, therefore, he wants compensation for that \$106m. The fact is that it would probably cost \$200m to harvest that \$106m worth of lumber.

Honourable members should not forget that the Hawke Government is the Australian Government and represents the Australian people. It represents the majority of the people in Australia and the majority of the people in the area affected by this legislation.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! There is too much persistent interjection.

Mr Glasson: The Sydney and Melbourne vote was what he was after. He was not worried about north Queensland.

Mr De LACY: We are talking about north Queensland. The people in north Queensland have voted. The Labor Party member in north Queensland won by almost 6 000 votes, with a majority of nearly 4½ per cent.

Mr Glasson interjected.

Mr De LACY: I have too many matters to continue with to get engaged in that sort of debate.

Perhaps I ought to mention another point about Mr Kenane. Perhaps his value to his employer ought to be questioned, because he decided as a great political gimmick in the middle of the campaign to withhold 500 cubic metres of north Queensland timber valued at \$750,000 that was destined for the new Parliament House in Canberra. He was going to hold the Government to ransom. He has been learning the lessons. As it

turned out, all he did was draw attention to the fact that in the contract for the sale of that timber was a clause that provided that it cannot come from National Estate areas. On the *AM* program on ABC radio, Mr Kenane admitted that he could not tell whether the timber came from National Estate areas or not. The upshot of it all is that the company will lose that contract. Far from holding the Government to ransom by not supplying the timber, he has just lost a sale worth \$750,000 because the Government will be prevented from purchasing it by a contractual clause. I know that he has bravely asserted that there are plenty of other markets for it—and I hope that there is plenty of market for timber—but what an absurd position he adopted in making a fool of himself.

I mentioned briefly earlier the terrible practice in Queensland of political people using their public servants to fight battles for them. I believe that that is a pernicious development and that some of the Minister's forestry officers in north Queensland ought to be questioned. I am not in the habit of bagging public servants, because they are not in the position to speak for themselves. However, as the Minister knows, the timber industry, aided and abetted by the National Party, organised a series of meetings in north Queensland. They were party-political meetings. They were not educational meetings. One was held in the middle of my electorate at Cairns. I rang up the organiser and said, "I understand that you are having a meeting." She said, "Yes." I said, "As the member for Cairns, can I go along and talk at it?" She said, "No, we are not going to have politicians." It turned out that they did have politicians in attendance.

I said, "Who will put the argument in favour of World Heritage listing?" She said, "No-one." I said, "In what way will it be an educational exercise?" She said, "People can get that out of the newspapers." If the meeting was to be a brainwashing exercise on behalf of the National Party, why were officers from the Forestry Department speaking at it? The issue is a grey area; but when officers of the Forestry Department say things such as, "This is no more than a land-grab on behalf of the Federal Government", that is overstepping the boundary that distinguishes what a public servant can say from what a politician can say.

Those people could be politicians; they could do what every other politician does. I could provide the Minister with details, but I do not wish to make a big issue out of this matter. I could tell the Minister who said it and where it was said. The point I make is that those people have the right to be in politics. They could leave the public service and stand for election to Parliament, but they should not go to a political meeting, be introduced as representatives of the Forestry Department and proceed to make party-political statements that are not factual.

In my view, what occurred was a serious breach of public service conduct. I am not even asking that anything be done about it. I merely draw it to the attention of the Minister. The Minister is doing to the Forestry Department what the Premier has done to the Police Department in Queensland; both are being seen as a political extension of the Government.

Mr Glasson: They are responsible officers.

Mr De LACY: I can understand why the Minister wants to do battle. I merely say that politicisation of the public service is a pity. It is something that should not be supported and it is something that the Minister should not support.

I wish to mention one other factor before the time-limit for my speech expires. On the day the Federal election was held, people involved in the timber industry employed practices that I believe should not be allowed to develop. In front of all the polling-booths, trucks filled with timber and with placards all over them were parked. Someone suggested that the timber should have been taken to build a house. The point I make, however, is that that action was in direct contravention of the electoral laws. A permit has to be obtained to put up political slogans. Someone called the police, but I did not worry too much about it because I felt that people would not take very much notice.

What occurred this year was different from what occurred in 1983 when various conservation groups were in front of the polling-booths handing out literature in

opposition to the Franklin Dam. The police came and confiscated all of their literature. The people involved were threatened with gaol and they were removed from the spot by the police. The people and the placards were removed from the front of the polling-booths. Why did the police not take similar action in respect of the timber trucks?

It seems to me that, if police action is all right in one instance, it should be all right in another similar instance. The Labor Party does not really care about the fact that the trucks were put there in that type of action. Obviously, no harm was done.

Mr Davis: That is National Party democracy.

Mr De LACY: Yes. The Labor Party would be justified in concluding that the police——

Time expired.

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Condamine) (3.29 p.m.): I recognise that both sides of the House readily agree that the Forestry Act Amendment Bill is acceptable. The debate has travelled a long way from that point, and has concentrated on the issue of World Heritage.

In the debate that has been conducted today in Parliament and recently in the press on behalf of both the Opposition and the conservation lobby groups, the Queensland Department of Forestry has come under attack. I find that most unfortunate. I wish to present some facts that speak highly of the research work and practical activities carried out by the Department of Forestry.

A couple of years ago, the Minister and senior officers of his department attended a conference in Mexico to discuss rainforests. The honourable member for Toowoomba North mentioned that, in most parts of the world, tropical rainforests are diminishing whereas in Queensland rainforest areas are being sustained.

People speak glowingly of the activities of the Queensland Forestry Department because of the work that it is doing. In support of that statement, I shall quote a review made of a paper prepared by the Queensland Forestry Department titled *Rainforest Research in North Queensland*. The paper came under the scrutiny of experts from all round the world. The first comment I quote was made by Dr E. F. Brunig, who is the Professor of the Institute of World Forest Management in Hamburg. In his review of the department's position paper, in which certain results were published, he stated—

“The results and conclusions of the paper are very much in line with my own experience in Borneo and the Amazon and with impressions I got from visits to Malaya, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.”

That paper further states—

“Research carried out by my Department of Forestry shows that selective harvesting can be sustained in North Queensland's tropical rainforests. Results show that there is a strong growth response following logging of the rainforests. The mortality in logged stands is much less than that occurring in virgin rainforests and it appears that logging captures some of the trees which would die if left in the virgin condition.”

That is what Dr Brunig was referring to.

Dr Tim Whitmore of the University of Oxford said about the paper—

“As an outside observer and without inside knowledge I cannot see how your position as stated in the paper can be faulted.”

Those people are experts who will not fault the performance of the Queensland Department of Forestry, and yet the conservation lobby around Australia is trying to denigrate its performance by saying that it is irresponsible. I will say more about those half-truths later on.

I now want to comment on a statement made by the Prime Minister in the course of his appearance in north Queensland and at Kakadu, where he went looking for the

conservation vote. I am told that it was worth somewhere between 1 and 2 per cent to his party's overall vote. Of course, he was being very smart in capturing the conservation vote. He seemed to be in the right places at the right time. The television cameras just happened to be there to shoot film of him. The Prime Minister also issued a few press statements. However, it is interesting to note that since the election the conservation council is now rather critical of the Hawke Government because it is talking about the timbers being used for the panels inside the new Parliament House. The Federal Government knows, of course, that that timber came from north Queensland forests. That brings out the hypocrisy of Mr Hawke, not only on this occasion but also on others. Mr Hawke made a statement and then a couple of weeks later he made another statement different from what he had promised.

That takes my mind back to the time when he said, in very strong words, "Let there be no mistake, there will be no capital gains tax." Of course there was a capital gains tax, as soon as it was convenient for him to introduce it. He said that there would be no increase in the Medicare levy. A few weeks later he implemented a 25 per cent increase. On top of that, of course, the amount of money that the Government refunds to the patient has been reduced.

In 1983 Mr Hawke said that fuel prices would drop. Everyone knows what happened to fuel prices. Mr Hawke's hypocrisy is coming through.

Conservationists probably mean well, but I notice that most of them, and some members in this Chamber who are very strong in the conservation movement, are safe in suburbia. They are safe because their incomes are not related to the timber industry or the forests. They are strong on fear and emotion but they are pretty short on practicality. Worse still, they fail to recognise the worth of the conservation work that is associated with the management of Queensland's forests. And worse still, they come out with some untruths and mishandle the truth. For example, Dr Aila Keto made the statement that unique macadamia species are on the compulsory logging list for forests in north Queensland. The fact is that there are no macadamia species at all in the north Queensland rainforests.

Mr De Lacy: Do you want to bet on that?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: It was a statement made by the Forestry Department. Can the honourable member for Cairns disprove that statement? Is he an expert comparable with officers of the Queensland Department of Forestry?

Lately conservation groups have claimed that all the rainforests can be saved and locked up because any amount of hardwood is available through hardwood plantations. They say that there is another source of hardwood and that there is no need to go into the rainforest. The Forestry Department claims that that is not right for a start. Some laboratory work has been done, but as yet very few plantations of hardwood have been established in Australia. That being the case, it would be at least 70 years before hardwood plantations become available for harvest. What is Australia supposed to do in the meantime? Should it make its balance of trade worse when a resource is available and it is able to be proved that it will be sustained on the existing harvesting programs?

The next claim that the conservationists came up with was that it is possible for tropical hardwoods to be genetically engineered, so that all those hardwood species can be quickly promoted and put into plantations. That has been refuted by the International Society of Tropical Foresters. It says that, beyond the laboratory stage, little work has been done on genetic engineering. I had wished to quote an article by Dr Whitmore from Oxford University but I have misplaced it. However, the point is that, at the levels that are talked about, genetic engineering is not possible.

One of the experts who came up with much of this stuff is Dr Myers, who indicated on an ABC program, "You can also get almost off-the-peg varieties genetically engineered to suit the specific soil conditions, climatic circumstances, that you have here in northern Queensland." In March he was also widely quoted in the print and television media as saying that genetic engineering was widely practised overseas. For instance, in the *Cairns*

Post of 10 March Dr Myers was reported as saying, "I've seen plantations of genetically engineered trees, hardwoods, that will almost sprout like mushrooms." He continued by saying, "They are ready for harvesting in 10 to 15 years, and that makes it commercially competitive with getting the stuff out of the natural forest." When questioned by one of his peers, Dr Myers suddenly denied having spoken in Australia.

I want to put the Queensland rainforests into perspective. As I understand it, they represent 0.1 per cent of the world surface area. That disproves the contention of the conservation lobby that Queensland's rainforests are vital to the ecology of all of Australia and of all the world. Honourable members opposite cannot tell me that that minute amount can have an effect all over the world. That discounts that argument.

I will put it into another perspective. When one flies over north Queensland one is amazed at the vast size of the State's tropical rainforests. They cover more than 800 000 hectares. It has been quoted but I will quote it again: more than 94 per cent of that 800 000 hectares is under Crown control; 25 per cent of it is national park. Those who know something about national parks would know that they cannot be logged. So 25 per cent of that land area has been locked away. It has been said already that only 18.7 per cent—that is less than one-fifth—of the total area is subject to selective logging. The next important point is to stress that it is selective logging. That is the program that gives sustained yields. The State's forests that are being logged are assured of being there for the next 100 years.

In the area that is being logged in this way, only seven or eight trees per hectare are taken. It is estimated that per hectare there are something like 10 000 to 15 000 trees. That means that only seven or eight are taken out of every 10 000 to 15 000. Honourable members opposite and the conservation lobby call that raping.

Mr De Lacy: How do you get it out—by helicopter?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Obviously the industry has the skills to get the logs out. Timber has been taken out of forests for years and years and years.

The figures that I have just given to the House show that less than one tree in a thousand is logged.

Members who have spoken before me have proved that the timber industry is vital to Australia and vital to the people of Queensland. Unfortunately the conservation lobby is hell-bent on discrediting the performance of the Queensland Forestry Department and is hell-bent on listing the State's rainforests on the World Heritage list.

What is World Heritage listing? What does it mean? In August 1974 Australia ratified the Convention of World Heritage for the protection of world cultural and natural heritage. Under the convention countries recognise that the duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations belongs primarily to those countries. That means it belongs primarily to us. It is our nation; it is our program. The State has the expertise to do it.

Mr Hamill: Australia has made the decision. Can't you realise that?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Queensland is a sovereign State. Queensland has made the decision. This State has a standard of foresting that has been acknowledged around the world. This State is going about it the right way. Because the colleagues of honourable members opposite hold the marbles in Canberra, the Opposition wants the Federal Government to stand over the State Government. Because that is something akin to offshore legislation, that annoys me. The Labor side of politics is very, very good at saying, "We are part of an international covenant. We are part of an international agreement. Because of that, we will ram this legislation through." That is most undemocratic. The decision is being taken right out of the hands of the Australian people. The people of Australia are being told, "You have got to wear this because the Government has ratified it." It is just not on. It is undemocratic. It is about as undemocratic as changing the national anthem. No referendum was held. The Federal Government just did it.

I defend strongly the role of the Queensland Department of Forestry, which has received worldwide acclaim. When the department's role is considered in the context of the number of trees that were taken out of a very small area, the Government has every right to sustain it.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Department of Forestry and the Minister on the work that is being done. I hope that this Government's actions will overturn that World Heritage listing as promised by Mr Hawke.

Mr BEARD (Mount Isa) (3.42 p.m.): Isn't it wonderful to be back? I had forgotten how quiet it can be at home in Mount Isa. I bet that the new member for Southport has had his head in scrums that have been nothing like this.

I cannot believe the list of speakers for the debate on this piece of legislation. According to the list, there are six speakers to follow me. I cannot believe all the arguing that has been going on about what is essentially a fairly minor piece of legislation.

When I recall that some of the legislation on critical matters that demanded a full day of discussion and argument was gagged, guillotined and forced through this House earlier this year, I cannot believe I have had to sit here half the morning, all afternoon and perhaps into the night listening to debate and shouting over this legislation. Something is unbalanced somewhere. The member for Toowoomba North——

A Government member: Sit down, then.

Mr BEARD: I am enjoying myself too much to sit down. I enjoyed hearing the member for Toowoomba North assuring honourable members that he had no doubt that this legislation will be passed. Surprise, surprise! It will be passed by 49 votes to 40. Let there be no doubt about that.

The member for Toowoomba North took the opportunity to enlighten honourable members on a few facts outlined by one of the ALP spokesmen. For the past couple of hours members of the Liberal Party have been listening to members of the ALP and the National Party shout at each other about the World Heritage listing. Surely the World Heritage listing is peripheral to this whole issue.

Mr Hamill: You talk about trees; don't you realise they vote for them over there?

Mr BEARD: If I ignore that comment it probably will not appear in *Hansard*. It does not deserve to.

The World Heritage listing which has been discussed this afternoon was a cynical misuse of what should have been a critical issue in an election that should have been fought on the real issues of taxes, inflation, unemployment, overseas debt, broken promises, the Australia Card. Those were the real issues of the election. However, honourable members have relived the Federal election on 11 July as though the World Heritage issue, the Daintree rainforest and so on were the only issues of concern. Members of the National Party have read from briefs prepared by the Minister's staff, quoting statistics that my mind is boggled over, and the ALP spokesmen have shouted back at them with the Prime Minister's latest ideology.

A Government member: We do our homework.

Mr BEARD: I certainly do mine.

One member stood up and was greeted by a shout from some Opposition members, "What do you know about trees?" I object to that greeting of a speaker on any subject in this House. All honourable members are or should be reasonably well informed laymen. That is why we are elected to this House. We are elected to represent laymen in our electorates. I object to the fact that I cannot speak on sugar-cane or timber unless I know something about it. I will speak on any topic which concerns the electors of Queensland, and I make no apology for it.

I think that the points I am making are pertinent and relevant to any discussion on any legislation in this House. Far too often when relatively minor legislation is being debated, honourable members have to listen to point-scoring on both sides of the House, but when it comes to the big stuff, the critical stuff that will have an incredible impact on the lives of many Queenslanders, the legislation is guillotined and gagged and honourable members do not get a chance to speak to it.

I will get to the subject and will not keep you waiting long, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will sit down after saying far less than any of the previous speakers.

The Liberal Party does not object to this legislation and agrees that the Timber Research and Development Advisory Council of Queensland should be formed if for no other reason than that Queensland will have one fewer quango. I do not mind that something that was based in north Queensland is now transferred to Brisbane, even though I come from north Queensland. The honourable the Minister also comes from an isolated part of Queensland, and I am sure that he would not introduce legislation of this kind lightly. As long as adequate representation from people in the north is assured, there will be rationalisation, cost-savings, lower membership of quangos and optimum use of facilities.

Apart from the first few clauses of the Bill, the majority of the amendments are pure house-keeping and tidying up of the legislation. The whole thrust of the legislation is good because it concerns planning, research and development, and gives a good, long look at the use of all Queensland's resources, including rainforests and land. I believe the knee-jerk reactions of trendy southern suburbanites and academics in ivory towers who insist that Australia locks up every single resource in the country, regardless of cost, are just as damaging to this nation as the mindless, money-grubbing exploitation and devastation of those who rape Australia's resources with no thought for future generations.

A balance must be found between those two points of view, and when there is a body—even though it is a quango—which sets about planning research and development and the proper long-term use of resources, it must be supported. I hope that other speakers on this legislation will sit down after they have spoken for five minutes, as I am now about to do.

Mr COOPER (Roma) (3.48 p.m.): I may speak for a little longer than five minutes, but I take note of the comments made by the honourable member for Mount Isa, who, after he got through that little bit of hyperbole and apologising for being here, finally made a lot of sense. I agree with the honourable member for Mount Isa that he will speak on any subject. So he should. I believe he struck a chord of realism when he spoke of the balance between conservation and actual productivity. I commend him for his comments.

When an Act is opened up for debate, whether it is in regard to the subject that this House is dealing with or whether it covers a whole range of forestry activities, all honourable members are entitled to speak within the bounds dictated by you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Various issues have been raised, particularly in regard to rainforests and World Heritage listing. If these subjects are to be canvassed, the Government or the members on the other side of the House have a responsibility to raise these matters. Unfortunately I do not have all the facts and figures in my mind and it is necessary for me to refer to notes. I make no apology for that, either. Honourable members can contribute to the constructiveness of the debate by doing it in this way.

Mr Davis: Wait a minute. You are reading a prepared brief from the Minister.

Mr COOPER: It is well and truly done by me.

It is an understatement to say that the legislation so far has opened up a wide area of debate. So far the discussion has been in regard to World Heritage listing and rainforests. I have no problem with that, because we too have our story to tell. The

Forestry Department has demonstrated that it is very progressive and innovative in its management and research. It is to be commended and has a very fine story to tell.

I wish to canvass the issue of the World Heritage listing. As far as I am concerned, there is absolutely no need for World Heritage listing, particularly of the northern rainforests, for a number of reasons. I reiterate that less than 20 per cent of the entire area—in fact 18.7 per cent—was available to sustained yield logging. Seventy-six per cent of the rainforest is in a virginal or unlogged condition. It runs hundreds of kilometres along the coastline north of Townsville, and much of it is already totally protected from future logging. Over the last half century or more rainforests have been extremely well managed by the Queensland Forestry Department. At the moment the north Queensland rainforest logging industry is viable, and it is vital to the economy of north Queensland that it remains so.

I also believe that it is sustainable for the foreseeable future at about its present size, thanks to the Forestry Department's selective sustained yield, rotational harvesting system. A sustained yield logging as practised does not reduce the species composition of forests, as claimed by the conservationists. I will develop that further shortly. As far as the allegedly endangered species are concerned, none of those species are, in fact, endangered, nor are any economically valuable plants, such as those used for pharmaceutical research, threatened by selective logging methods.

The Forestry Department, after warning the timber industry of intended logging quota cuts for at least the last 10 years, has now reduced the permitted rainforest log harvest to 60 000 cubic metres per year. It believes that outside such unforeseen circumstances as cyclones or other natural disasters, it is a level that can be sustained from these approved logging areas.

At the moment in north Queensland the timber industry directly employs 750 people. I would like to make that point a little clearer. The conservationists claim that only 300 persons would be affected if the area came under World Heritage listing. Additionally, the Forestry Department employs a further 50 directly involved in the logging side of the industry. They would also lose their jobs under World Heritage listing.

The Forestry Department, by using loan funds rather than consolidated revenue, has since the early 1920s built up an accumulated public investment in the State's forests totalling \$329m. Today that represents an asset value of more than \$1.3 billion, with an annual log production supporting a timber industry employing 16 000 people Statewide. Those figures are significant. One has to think about those things before one goes holus-bolus on to declaring State forests unilaterally under the World Heritage listing.

Queensland forest estates, including pine plantations, produce log timber with an annual value of \$18m. This provides the raw log product utilised by the timber industry to produce \$950m worth of consumer goods. Again they are figures that cannot be disputed. An essential proportion of this high value timber comes from the rainforest logging areas and simply would be closed down under World Heritage listing. It is unfortunate that this was just a cheap political stunt to capture conservation votes at the 11 July election. As a Government, we are certainly very conservation minded and realise that a balance has to be struck between conservation and productivity. It is called realism. Someone has to be responsible when it comes to paying the bills.

I turn momentarily to the plant species. Rainforest logging presents no threat to native species. The selective harvesting of rainforest timbers as practised in Queensland simply mimics the natural disturbances and therefore does not pose any threat to the native plant species.

I realise that the conservation movement has claimed that Queensland is ignoring the potential value of rainforest plants or their derivatives which may be suitable for horticulture, drugs or other economic purposes. Conservationists have also said that we are destroying the genetic basis of our northern rainforest and we will therefore miss out on new discoveries of value to society. Both those accusations are simply not true.

An invitation is made to Australian and overseas researchers to study Queensland's rainforests, if they so desire, for any new economically valuable species. It can be proven that selected logging on less than 20 per cent of Crown-held rainforest has not endangered a single species.

Research that has been carried out by the Department of Forestry dating back over 50 years shows that selective logging has not resulted in the loss of any plant species whatsoever; nor has diversity been reduced in any way. There is not the slightest possibility that plant species which could have potential for agriculture, pharmaceuticals, or anything else, could ever be endangered through selective logging. Apparently the conservationists consider that the Department of Forestry's 50-year evaluation of selective logging effects will be far too short and that the findings of the department were in agreement with a recently developed ecological theory that states that man-made disturbances that mimic natural disturbances within specific eco-systems do not lead to the extinction of species. For example, when the conservationists went around wringing their hands over the supposed fate of what was known as the kangaroo apple, they did not seem to realise that the kangaroo apple is an avid recoloniser of selectively logged areas in north Queensland and is therefore in no danger of extinction. The kangaroo apple is a rainforest species whose derivatives are grown in eastern European plantations. They supply the basis for Russian and Hungarian birth-control pills.

I have already stated that less than 20 per cent of Queensland's Crown-owned rainforest estate is zoned for timber production. As well, the two major rainforest types to which logging was largely confined, namely the complex and mixed mesophyll, are well represented in the remaining 80 per cent. They are protected and well covered in that remaining 80 per cent, which cannot and will not be logged. The probability of any species occurring in loggable zones and not in the unloggable areas will be so low as to be immeasurable.

Another factor to be considered with World Heritage listing is tourism. I wish to briefly canvass the link between tourism and the Government's forestry policy. A World Heritage listing does not guarantee tourism. The listing of a natural feature on the World Heritage list does not necessarily guarantee an associated increase in tourism.

Time after time the conservation movement has claimed that the World Heritage listing of our northern rainforests will boost tourism in that area. However, a completely different picture is presented when one refers to the published figures in relation to the Barrier Reef, which was granted World Heritage listing in 1981. During that year the Barrier Reef islands recorded 1.172 million domestic visitor nights. However, that figure declined during the next three years and was not exceeded until 1985 when tourism promotion increased.

So far as domestic visitor nights on Barrier Reef islands are concerned, in 1981 the figure was 1.172 million when the Barrier Reef was given World Heritage listing. That figure dropped to 1.083 million in 1982. In 1983 the figure was 1.092 million. It dropped to .831 million in 1984, and it was only in 1985, after extensive publicity and promotion, that tourism got on top again with 1.261 million domestic visitor nights compared with 1.172 million four years previously. The international figures show a similar result.

On the other hand, the use of State forest parks in Queensland has risen steadily from 500 000 visitor days in 1980-81 to 1.2 million in 1985-86, with approximately one-quarter of each of those figures representing visits to predominantly rainforest areas from Ingham north. That represents an increase in visitor days to State forest parks more than twice that to the Barrier Reef during that period. That demonstrates that World Heritage listing does not necessarily result in an increase in tourism.

Mr Davis: At least it will always be there.

Mr COOPER: I admit that a World Heritage listing might help certain areas such as the Kakadu national park, which is a place that I would love to visit. I am not sure whether the honourable member has visited that area.

Statistics show that Queensland's rainforests are already doing very well and do not need additional recognition or protection by a World Heritage listing.

I turn now to the actual value and worth of the timber industry that is presently under discussion. These things cannot be ignored. As I have said, only 18.7 per cent, or certainly much less than a quarter of the total available land, is used for selective logging. Its value is certainly significant. The value of production in 1985-86 was \$33m. The value with flow-on effects to other wood-using and processing industries was in excess of \$40m. It involved the direct employment of 765 people. In addition, many hundreds of people depend indirectly on the timber industry for their employment.

The number of family members whose living standards or livelihood are affected by World Heritage listing is listed at about 3 000. The access constructed for forest management purposes and for timber-harvesting provides access for many of our tourism ventures. Tourism actually depends on that access.

Tourism and a continued sensible approach to rainforest and resource management can most certainly proceed, I believe, in very close harmony with a balance of sustainable production, conservation of broad areas, preservation of key areas and provision of continuing access as required for tourism purposes. As such, the extension of the sawmilling industry certainly is not necessary.

As a further example of the economic worth of the timber industry, departmental revenue has increased fourfold in the past 10 years and, if it does not change, is expected to treble in the next 10 years. The revenue for 1976-77 was \$6.3m. The revenue for 1986-87, 10 years later, was \$25.4m. That revenue came from 18.7 per cent of the forestry area. That definitely demonstrates a balance that will be required for as long as there are humans on this planet.

I would like to conclude by saying that the Government is most certainly aware of the need to conserve and the need to protect on the one hand but also to balance and to utilise productively on the other. Its research is ongoing and is certainly given top priority by the department. The Government does not believe in destruction but most certainly believes in a need to live in harmony with nature and to balance its natural worth with productivity.

Although this debate has not actually centred on the legislation before the House, I would like to take this opportunity to commend the legislation to the House.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (4.03 p.m.): In the main, I wish to refer to research and development in the southern part of Queensland so that there will be no debate by myself about World Heritage listing.

I welcome some of the changes that have occurred. For the last four years, the Opposition has questioned every forestry Bill that has come before the House. It is concerned as to what will happen to the softwood plantation timber and thinnings that come from the Gympie, Maryborough and Bundaberg areas. It is now known that after promises of many phantom paper pulp mills a project has been announced and is under way. I welcome the fact that a medium density fibreboard plant, ACI International, will now use this resource. A large amount of Queensland's financial resources and funds have been put into State forests for which no return has been received. When plantations are developed, the resource must be used.

I believe that it is proposed to develop 80 000 hectares of plantation conifers. 73 000 hectares of exotic pine plantations have already been established in the Gympie/Maryborough area and it is proposed to increase that area to 80 000 hectares in the near future. Of those thinnings that are being used by the ACI International fibreboard plant, it is only envisaged that the Queensland Government's return through royalties will eventually reach several million dollars a year. On behalf of the people of Queensland, the Opposition questions the return to the people of Queensland. The Queensland Government has invested millions and millions of dollars, yet the private foresters have pulled out of this type of plantation. The Government ought to examine and respond to the economics of its undertaking.

I welcome the \$2.25m project that this year for the first time will examine hardwood experimentation. For many years the Opposition has pointed to the need for this type of research because the expected returns from softwood plantations really have not eventuated. I welcome the experimentation into hardwood plantations that will be conducted by the Toolara nursery. Nurseries of that type will be developed in both the Gympie and Ingham forestry districts. I applaud the \$2.25m joint exercise being engaged in by the Queensland Department of Forestry, Shell Company (Australia) and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation. However, why has it taken the Government so long to accept that Australia's native eucalypts could be of value and could be utilised and to accept that research should be undertaken to get the best value out of them? I welcome the research that is to be done in this area.

It is interesting that since 1980 the attitude of the Forestry Department towards what was expected of Queensland forests has changed. In 1981, the Senate Standing Committee on Trade and Commerce examined Australia's forest and forest product industries. The report indicates that the department believed that potential for an export industry existed. The report states as follows—

“The (Forestry) Department believes that there will be a strong demand for uniformly textured hoop pine from pruned plantations and for the decorative qualities of main rainforest species.”

The report goes on to say—

“... the volume harvested from hardwood forests has been declining for some years and even though there has been widespread silvicultural treatment of State forests, the volume available in the long term is unlikely to be much about the present level.”

The trend has been towards a decline in the resource; yet the department was of the view that, because of the special qualities of Queensland native timbers, export potential existed. It is interesting to note that, four years later, the department has had something different to say about the potential for export of native timbers from Queensland. Part 2 of a report on forest management in Queensland reads in part as follows—

“North Queensland rainforest timbers enjoy a reputation as decorative timbers and potential demand is high, both in Australia and overseas. The resource, however, is limited, and based on sustainable logging estimates in these species, the Department does not envisage any large export-oriented trade.”

That report indicates a change in attitude on the part of the department, which seems to have realised that a sustainable yield from Queensland's forests was not possible and that Queensland would not be looking to supply an export market with its native timbers from the north but would look, instead, to supplying local demand.

A change in attitude has also come about because the latest research indicates that Queensland does not have a good production history. I refer to figures mentioned by the Opposition spokesman on forestry that showed that in 1978-79, Queensland could only produce 2 cubic metres per hectare of wood produced from softwood plantations, whereas New South Wales produced 3.7; Victoria produced 4.7; South Australia produced 11.1; Tasmania produced 6.7; and Western Australia produced 4.9. All other States had a production capacity significantly higher than that of Queensland. The person who provided the figures quoted by the Opposition spokesman had this to say—

“Even allowing for these differences, need I say any more than that we are selling less softwoods per hectare from our plantations than all other Australian States and that the differences are substantial and dramatic.”

What is being done in the forestry area has to be questioned, because Queensland is not able to have the same potential output as that being delivered in other States. In other words, because it cannot get the production, Queensland's forestry plantations will never be as productive and as economic as plantations in other States. It has taken many years to appreciate that it will always be difficult to get an economic forestry

plantation industry when Queensland does not have the same production as other States. That is showing up in many ways. Because of the disastrous state of the finances of the Forestry Department, the industry is not finding its economic potential. It seems to indicate that there has been a bit of sloppiness within the Forestry Department.

In last year's annual report of the Forestry Department the Auditor-General indicated quite a loss in that department that could not be substantially accounted for. At some time the Minister should assure this House that those things that have caused those amounts to be written off through careless or poor book-keeping do not occur in the future. In the 1985-86 annual report the Auditor-General said—

“The amount written off under the heading of ‘foregone assessment of collections’ relates to an incorrect assessment of royalty payable by sawmillers on the sale of Crown Timber in North Queensland. Investigation of the circumstances surrounding the loss has revealed that the loss is not recoverable. Procedures are now in place to ensure that there is no recurrence of losses of this nature.”

That loss of Queensland tax-payers' money totalled \$98,147. To date I do not believe that a suitable explanation has been given about what happened. Can an assurance be given that it will not happen in the future?

The Opposition spokesman on forestry referred also to the total debt of the Forestry Department and to its debt in the Forestry and Lumbering Fund, both to the Commonwealth and to the interfunds, which amounted to \$328m. He also indicated that since 1965-66 the Forestry Department has been unable to repay fully the interest on that debt. In actual fact, of that outstanding debt, \$114m has been capitalised. The real concern is not only the total debt, which is \$328m, but the rate at which it is increasing. This year the debt increased from almost \$302m to \$328.8m. That is a sizeable increase. It is increasing by \$27m to \$28m a year. Since 1965-66, the department has been unable to repay fully the increase in the debt. That is what the Auditor-General says.

The report shows that returns from forest products alone to the Forestry and Lumbering Fund is only \$16m. That fund is going further and further into debt to the tune of \$28m a year. In actual fact, the receipts from straight-out forestry sales total only \$16m.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr CAMPBELL: They are doing well. If one likes to see the debt of the Forestry Department's trust, special and loan accounts increasing by \$28m a year, one will say that the Government has done a good job; but to me it is fairly frightening.

In the long term the State will have to get that return. At present, that does not seem to be the case. Figures from the Consolidated Revenue Fund show that last year's total income from forestry was \$219,000 and expenditure was \$20.9m. The Loan Fund showed a forestry income of \$245,000 and \$21m was taken out as a credit to the Forestry Development Fund. The Forestry and Lumbering Fund and the Forestry Development Fund had receipts which only just balanced expenditure. However, a sizeable amount of those receipts—\$26.4m—came in special advances and loans. This has not been going on for just one year; it has been going on for decades. I believe it is time that the economic section of the Forestry Department tried to reverse the trend of a debt that is increasing at the rate of more than \$20m a year.

In this debate I have covered several matters. I welcomed the changing aspects of research in that the department is now conducting research into developing the State's hardwood species. I have also seen that over the years the department has changed its attitude on exports. Our timber exports are diminishing all the time. That is because the State's plantations are not being allowed to reach the production rates that are attained in other States. That is why I questioned the direction of future research. Lastly, I questioned the financial aspects of the development of Queensland's plantations. The debt is currently more than \$328m but, more importantly, it is increasing at the rate of \$26m or \$27m a year. That is fairly frightening.

Mr SIMPSON (Cooroora) (4.19 p.m.): I rise to support these amendments that provide for the amalgamation of the Timber Research and Development Advisory Councils of south and central Queensland and of north Queensland and associated matters that will bring about more efficiencies and help modern technology in research and development create greater productivity in our forestry areas.

I have listened to the debate with interest. It comes down to a matter of different philosophies on opposing sides of the House. One philosophy sees the resources of this State, which belong to the people, being husbanded in such a way that they benefit the people of this State and future generations in perpetuity. The other philosophy contains a shirking of those responsibilities and displays the hypocrisy that is typical of the Labor Party. Members opposite continue to refer to the beauty of timber and its use in buildings, houses, furniture and feature walls, yet they will not accept the concept of sustained yields. That concept means that the resource does not diminish. If I can use the terminology of Opposition members, our forests certainly will not be mined. In the same breath members opposite claim that our forests have been mined and that they should be placed on the World Heritage list. Opposition members make derogatory remarks about our forests being mined and becoming just holes in the ground. Then they say that, because the areas are so good, they should be given World Heritage listing. When I asked them to identify World Heritage listings in other countries, they could not do so. That proves that there is no point to the exercise.

The debate about the State's rainforests, particularly those of north Queensland, has become very much an emotive public issue. The Labor Party wants to use World Heritage listings and international agreements to try to usurp the sovereign right of this State to manage its own resources. People need to know the countries that are signatories to that agreement. The membership of the World Heritage Committee consists of Algeria, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Seychelles, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Mr Davis: You can't even pronounce them.

Mr SIMPSON: Well, that is only a few of them. It also includes Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica and Cuba. The list goes on. In the interests of time, I seek leave to incorporate the membership of the committee in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Af Algeria, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Rep., Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Libyan AJ, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Seychelles, Sudan, Tanzania UR, Tunisia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Am Antigua-Barbuda, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, USA, As Afghanistan, Bangleadesh, India, Iran Islamic Rep, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syrian AR, Yemen Dem, Yemen, Au Australia, Eu Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany FR, Greece, Italy, Luxemborg, Malta, Monaco, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, UK, Vatican, Yugoslavia.

Mr SIMPSON: That countries with such a poor record in looking after their own resources are able to sit on this committee and say how our forests should be managed is a frightening concept. However, it is a concept in world government and in the philosophy of people who believe in the socialist ethic of destroying the rights of people in an area. They are now conditioning the people of Australia into accepting that they should give away rights that are theirs. That is quite frightening.

In my electorate an endeavour has been made to plant hardwoods as well as softwoods. That highlights the need for greater research. The hardwood program has been singularly ineffective. Of course, it has created a need to find a substitute for hardwoods that are in short supply and imported into this country.

Many more uses have been discovered for softwoods. They have been grown in country that had never sustained any forest. I refer in particular to the coastal lowlands and the higher-rainfall areas in Queensland.

A previous speaker said that yields per hectare were higher in other States than in Queensland. Two matters have to be considered. They are the areas in which the forests are situated and the type of country in which they grow. Other States have reduced their areas of forest to a very minimum, but their productivity is higher than that in Queensland. Queensland has maintained a larger area that is somewhat more marginal in terms of productivity but which gives a greater diversity in timbers. That is the major reason why the Queensland figures per hectare do not appear to be as productive as those in the other States.

In turn, of course, productivity in softwood and pines in Queensland has been greatly enhanced in areas of high rainfall. As is customary in the cultivars in agriculture in the sub-tropical areas of this State with the range in moisture and temperature, there is still a problem in finding a timber that is truly productive and reaches its potential.

That is what this Bill is about. Through research ways can be found to lift that productivity. That is the way to go. We have got to be smarter, more effective and more productive and not adopt the ethic that the Opposition adopts, which is to denigrate productivity and performance and bring it all down to the lowest common denominator. That is unacceptable. In this country support must be given to private enterprise and to those people who are productive and carry out research. That will in turn bring Australians a better standard of living. I support the Bill before the House.

Mr HAYWARD (Caboolture) (4.25 p.m.): Previous speakers, including the honourable member for Toowoomba North, have brought to the attention of the House the fact that this legislation, the Forestry Act Amendment Bill, was the beginning of the implementation of the report of the Savage inquiry.

Mr Austin: Something about "phantom projects in your electorate".

Mr HAYWARD: I will talk about the phantom projects.

I was pleased to hear the concern about finance that was expressed by members on the other side of the House, and particularly by the honourable member for Toowoomba North. The honourable member for Toowoomba North spoke of the implementation of the report of the Savage inquiry and referred to the amalgamation of the Timber Research and Development Advisory Council of south and central Queensland with the Timber Research and Development Advisory Council of north Queensland into one unit to be known as the Timber Research and Development Advisory Council of Queensland. The Opposition supports these changes and believes that they are commendable. However, what tends to happen with Government members is that when they talk about the commendable financial advantages to this State, they do not develop the argument any further. They mention that this Bill implements part of the report of the Savage inquiry and do not go any further. They lapse into some form of State rights argument. For the whole afternoon Opposition members have had to put up with Government members talking continuously about north Queensland rainforests and World Heritage listing. One Government member managed to bring into the argument the question of tourism and referred to 1 261 nights compared with 1 142 nights spent by tourists in the area. One has to question the relevance of that.

The debate this afternoon gives honourable members the opportunity to take a further look at the efficiency and operation of the Forestry Department in Queensland. That is what I intend to do this afternoon. The honourable member for Bundaberg, Mr Campbell, and a previous speaker referred to phantom forestry projects in Queensland. I have brought with me copies of newspaper cuttings giving details of several phantom projects. They run to approximately 40 pages. I will refer to a couple of phantom projects undertaken by the Forestry Department in Queensland.

On 29 October 1976 one article headed "Pulp mill forecast" states—

"A pulp mill in south-east Queensland was forecast in State Parliament yesterday by Mr Ahern, (National Party, Landsborough). He said Australian Paper Mills had acquired 35,000 hectares north of Brisbane and the company had a pulp mill on its planning board".

A further article dated 23 February 1979 and headed "Joh optimistic on wood pulp" states—

"The Premier returned from Victoria yesterday, optimistic that a new \$300 million industry could be established in Queensland."

Here is an interesting article dated 11 April 1979 and headed "Forests swapped for pulpwood plant"—

"The State Government will swap 180 hectares of land in the Beerburrum State Forests with A.P.M. Forests Pty. Ltd. in a move which could lead to the establishment of a pulpwood plant in the area."

I live in that area and there certainly is not a pulp-wood plant there. I would be curious to find out what has happened to the swap of 180 hectares. Since that time APM has sold its forests to a land-developer. I wonder what was happening in 1979.

A further article dated 15 December 1979 headed "Ready, set and . . . oops" stated—

"It was red faces all round during the week when news of a new \$200 million wood pulp leaked out in Brisbane . . . ahead of schedule."

We are still waiting. A further article is headed "APM, MIM to study S-E Queensland Pulp mill". The articles go on and on. They are phantom projects in this State.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr HAYWARD: I do not know if he has managed to open any of them, because they just have not started yet.

In the 1985-86 financial year the Queensland Government had disclosed borrowings of \$2.58 billion. This increased the disclosed public debt of Queensland from \$9.45 billion to a massive \$12 billion. Basic to the economics of public borrowing is the use of borrowed funds and the resources that are developed by their usage. Borrowing by Governments for infrastructure and development has a future beneficial effect on public financing if those assets create more future revenue or reduce future costs to the benefit of the public.

If the Government is borrowing merely to meet running costs, the increase in the debt will not solve any problems; it will merely create new and larger difficulties for this State. Such borrowings will increase the debt and will not reduce any future costs or increase future revenue potential. They are simply an addition to the burden and are of no consequent benefit to the public.

In Queensland, 3.5 per cent of departmental debt is on account of the Forestry Department. In June 1986 the disclosed financial liability of the department was \$328.8m. In addition to that massive debt, buried in the note to the accounts on page 2706 of the document entitled *Departmental Accounts Subsidiary to the Public Accounts 1985-86* is a further \$114m of interest on moneys that have remained unpaid since 1966.

The department has not only continued to run up huge debts, it has not even paid the interest on its old debts for the last 20 years. It is my contention that solutions are not being sought to the problems relative to forestry resources or to the massive cost of continuing operations when those operations may be ineffectual. Instead, this incompetent Government has sought stopgap answers that will serve only to worsen the problems.

Like nearly all of this Government's many instrumentalities and departments, this department does not maintain any accounting records or produce statements to control its functions. It does not maintain accounting records. The accounting standards adopted

by this Government would be suitable for a pub raffle. They amount to a statement of receipts and payments. They are not suitable for dealing with public moneys.

While companies in Queensland are required to display trading statements, balance sheets and fund statements, the Government will not comply, and the Forestry Department does not comply, with the same controls and appears in this case to be unable to comply. Fundamental controls in the accounting and budgetary process do not exist in the forestry system or in the Queensland system. There is neither accounting for the assets and liabilities of the department nor any depreciation or recognition of the incremental growth in forests. As the Minister, Mr Glasson, would realise, the incremental growth in forests is important. He has certainly been arguing that it is one of the reasons why the department is going so well. If it is so important, why is it not shown in the accounts?

The department displays in the public accounts a loan liability of \$328.8m when in fact I contend that its liability is \$443m, with the remaining \$114m being unpaid interest on those outstanding loans. This department makes a fundamental error of finance. It and the Government are borrowing long term to pay short-term accounts. According to the 1985-86 accounts, the department took advances of more than \$47m, yet it purchased assets of only \$27m. The loans taken out in 1985-86 will take at least 70 years to repay, yet \$20m of the advanced funds has been used to help pay current expenses. No assets have been brought to account for that portion that will help repay the loans. Before entering this Chamber, Opposition members were involved in farms and businesses. We understand that if we borrow money we must earn something on that money to repay that loan. A person cannot continue to borrow. If he does, eventually somewhere down the line he will go down the gurgler. It is just that simple.

Mr FitzGerald: We all know about the hard economic facts of life.

Mr HAYWARD: I am just trying to remind members of this Assembly what I am talking about so that some seriousness can be shown in this debate about these matters.

An analogy would be a business taking out a 20-year mortgage to pay this week's wages. To continue that analogy—a proprietary limited company run as this Queensland Government department is run would be placed in provisional liquidation. Quite simply, the department is borrowing money with no prospect of making a repayment from generated revenue.

Mr Glasson: Alleluia!

Mr HAYWARD: I would not be too excited about it, because in the end people have to pay. The Minister is attempting to cover up huge deficiencies by using incomprehensibly large numbers. Brought down to reality, the numbers that were quoted by the Minister in his press release of 8 June reveal massive shortfalls in the future. The Minister for Lands' press release of 8 June stated—

“The Forestry Department has built-up an asset worth hundreds of millions of dollars for Queensland, as a result of its management of the State's forests.”

The Minister goes on to talk about \$329m. He makes the point in his press release that things are going well and that when the forests come on tap the money will be available to repay the loans and things will look healthy within the Forestry Department.

I received some briefing notes from the Forestry Department. There is no secret about them. I am sure that all honourable members who have spoken during this debate received those briefing notes from the Forestry Department. They were spoken about earlier and concern funding for the Forestry Department. They were compiled following comments that I made on television concerning that department. Whoever wrote these notes started off by saying—

“It has no doubt taken some considerable time to gather and present the data from the Honourable member for Caboolture, Mr K. W. Hayward. To enable an adequate response to be made it will be necessary to research the material and provide relevant information.”

Whoever within the Forestry Department wrote this considered that the points I made were serious and should be dealt with. The briefing notes continue—

“The Department complies with accepted Government accounting standards.”

I have not denied that. They go on—

“The Government has adopted the Cash Accounting basis for departments generally.”

I have certainly not denied that. They then talk about some of the allegations that I have made. One aspect is important and it highlights just where we are with the Forestry Department. On page 4 it says—

“It is apparent from a cursory evaluation of the data that whoever provided it knows little about Government accounting and less about the structure, financing and accounting of the Department.”

I certainly acknowledge that people know very little about that. The crunch really comes in the point that is made on the next page—

“An indepth evaluation of the figures”—

this is the Forestry Department’s reply to an allegation that was made on television—

“would take some time to complete, but I am sure”—

so he is not completely sure—

“would reveal that the Department is progressing in an efficient manner.”

The briefing notes which were given to the Minister, indicate that the Forestry Department is unsure as to whether it is progressing in an efficient manner. I am talking about a department that has incurred liabilities of hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars.

Mr Prest: Did the Minister give it to you so you could examine it and then explain what it meant?

Mr HAYWARD: I am sure that Mr Kelly is doing his best to explain it.

I turn now to page 7 of the briefing notes, which were written in reply to the allegations that I made. I take some credit for this, because I think that it is important that this is acknowledged. The notes continue—

“As part of a current strategic planning exercise the Department will be exploring . . .”

I do not know whether or not the department is doing it in the forests, but it is exploring a system of programmed budgeting and accounting. If there was ever an admission that the Forestry Department does not know what is going on within its own administration, these briefing notes certainly reveal that. The next line states—

“It is anticipated that this will lead to a review”—

what an acknowledgement—

“of the principles to be applied to the long term accounting of expenditure on forestry.”

That is what I have been saying. Let us look at it. Let us fix it up and do something about it before this department gets into a complete mess.

I will summarise the briefing notes so that the matter is absolutely clear. At page 4, the Minister said that it would take some time to evaluate the department’s figures to determine whether it was running efficiently. Is not anyone on the Government side of the House concerned about that?

Furthermore, on page 7 it is admitted that the accounting does not adequately reflect the assets and liabilities of the department. If the accounting does not reflect the assets and liabilities of the department, why is something not done about it so that it reflects the assets and liabilities? The Opposition is in the position where it has examined the data and then received the briefing notes from the department. The department

cannot tell us whether or not the accounting reflects the assets and liabilities of the department. Yet Government members are sitting here and saying how well the department is going. That is hopeless.

In my short time in Parliament, I have found that departments always avoid accepting responsibility. If in doubt, they avoid accepting responsibility. Page 2 of the briefing notes on the Forestry Debt states—

“The fact of the matter is that there are no unpaid loan debts of the Queensland Government.”

Wait for this next line—

“All liabilities are paid by the Treasury.”

Seeing that they are all paid by the Treasury, I wrote to Sir Leo Hielscher and stated—

“Dear Sir,

I am writing to you to express my concern over the financial position of the Department of Forestry.”

Honourable members should not forget that he is the Under Treasurer and Under Secretary. After all, I was told on page 2 of the briefing notes that all liabilities are paid in full by the Treasury. My letter continued—

“My inquiries into the operation of the Department have revealed that it is in financial crisis.”

I think that that has been acknowledged by the briefing notes of the department. The letter continued—

“I believe that the very serious issues I have raised should be addressed. Specifically these issues are:—

- The Department is burdening the public with a massive debt which it has no prospect of recovering.
- The Department has been unable to meet its interest commitments since 1966.
- The Department’s deficit cannot be reversed under its existing strategy.
- The accounting presentation of the Department is not satisfactory.”

I am only saying what was said by the briefing notes of the Forestry Department. My letter continues—

“I have received briefing notes on the funding of the Department of Forestry and I draw them to your attention.

Specifically my statements have not been answered but concerns have been echoed.”

I then quote what I said before on page 7 and page 4 of the briefing notes.

My letter continues—

“The comment above indicates to me that there is a severe risk that the Forestry Department may not be operating efficiently.”

I think that that would be considered to be the understatement of the decade. My letter continues—

“My purpose in writing is to draw these matters to your attention.

I would appreciate an appointment with you to discuss the points raised as to their resolution.

Thank you for your prompt attention to these important matters.”

Seeing that all liabilities were paid in full by the Treasury, I thought that I would write that letter.

The reply from the Queensland Treasury stated—

“Dear Mr. Hayward,

I refer to your letter of 10 July seeking an appointment to see me in regard to various matters associated with the Forestry Department.

I am sure you would appreciate that your concerns regarding the operation and management of the Forestry Department are ones which properly should be taken up with the Department and the relevant Minister or through normal Parliamentary processes.”

I suppose that is what I am doing here today, raising my concerns through the normal parliamentary processes.

I refer back to the briefing notes. They make it clear to me that the department certainly has problems. I think that anyone in this Chamber, after hearing what has been said today, has to acknowledge those problems.

Sir Leo Hielscher said that it does not involve him, so in this exercise we are searching around for responsibility. As I said before, I suppose we have the opportunity now to discuss the matter.

I have examined the 1985-86 Budget figures, which were the actual figures. I will now look at the 1986-87 figures that were presented to the Parliament in the most recent Budget debate. I will make some observations about those Budget figures now and no doubt they will be discussed later. The 1986-87 Budget figures show that the Forestry Department's debt is worsening. The Estimates indicate no real change in the activities of the department during the financial year. Certainly during the last year—and despite the Minister's protestations to the contrary—no turn-around has occurred in this financial disaster path.

The Budget estimates indicate that in the 1986-87 financial year the total departmental debt has increased from \$443m to \$503m. Another massive increase in debt has occurred, but people have merely sat around and done nothing. As I say, no obvious turn-around has occurred in the last year.

I acknowledge that it takes a long time for trees to be turned into a marketable product. I acknowledge all of the things involved in forestry and I will make no argument about them. What concerns me is that the department has admitted that it adopts inadequate financial procedures and applies inadequate accounting methods. I am able to make that simple observation because the briefing notes to the Estimates show that that is the case. The notes go further and indicate that the department is not sure whether or not it operates efficiently. I remind honourable members that the organisation concerned is a department in Queensland that lost \$50m of revenue last year. I am sure that all honourable members would have a copy of the briefing notes that were circulated on 7 July 1987. I reiterate that the notes tell us that the department does not know whether or not it is operating efficiently.

It is not my intention to criticise the public benefit of maintaining and developing forestry resources in this State. The Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying, Mr Glasson, agrees that there are aspects of the work of the Forestry Department that are difficult to quantify financially. In a radio interview that the Minister and I took part in, he mentioned things such as enabling people to see the bush, bee-keeping and a number of other social benefits. I do not decry any of those benefits. On that occasion, the Minister also talked about tourism and enabling people to camp in the forest. He talked about multipurpose forest camping areas, educational excursions, stock-grazing, and the foodstock for the honey industry in this State. I acknowledge all those things.

My purpose is to reach a position whereby the department, despite its providing the benefits mentioned by the Minister such as educational excursions and stock-grazing, can seriously be expected to effect a turn-around and show a profit in terms of dollars and cents. If it is not intended that the department should produce a profit, the Minister should say so. Let us acknowledge the function of the department and sort out the methods that it adopts. Let us sort out exactly what the objects of the department are and what it is intended to do. As I said previously, the briefing notes indicate that the department does not know whether it is operating efficiently.

I acknowledge also that, apart from dollars and cents, other criteria for efficiency exist. Perhaps the production of foodstock for the honey industry in this State is a criterion for efficiency. I do not wish to argue about that. Let us acknowledge the activities undertaken by the department and let us sort out the tourism aspects.

The Minister has continually argued that the department will show a profit. I am concerned about that because the department has Buckley's chance of showing a profit. If the way in which the department is operating is any indication, there is no way that it will show a profit. On a number of occasions, in support of the view that the Forestry Department should not show a profit, examples have been thrown at me in an effort to compare the functions of the Forestry Department with other public sector services that would not be expected to show a profit—for example, hospitals.

If it is to be considered in the same way as main roads or hospitals, let us talk about it, let us consider it, let us account for it, let us show it. The briefing notes provided to me contain no mention, no comparison and no consideration of those aspects. This Government, which espouses financial efficiency and profitability of operations, has continued to argue that the Forestry Department will show a net surplus when the assets are realised. There is no way that that will happen. It just will not happen.

What I am arguing is that, given the opportunity now—and the opportunity is here—we should seriously look at where it is heading; not to lop any heads off or anything like that, but look at where it is going and why the Government has not sorted out its accounting methods. We should look at why these things have not occurred.

As I said earlier, it is certainly not my intention to criticise the public benefit of maintaining and developing the forestry resources of the State. What disturbs me—and it should disturb all the members of this Parliament and all the people who live in their electorates—is that, under the current administration and procedures, not only will the forests fail to be protected—they have to be cut down, because that is the only way in which money can be realised—but in the end the public will accrue a massive debt.

Mr Campbell interjected.

Mr HAYWARD: It will get worse by a long chalk. The budgeted figures for 1986-87 show that it will increase by another \$60m.

In view of what the briefing notes that were given to me present, it is time that the Forestry Department was looked at very seriously. It is time that there was an open and immediate public inquiry into its operations and direction. The alternative to allowing the department to continue on its current course is, to me and to the people of Queensland and inevitably the people of Australia, horrific in the extreme.

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (4.54 p.m.): In rising to speak in this debate I draw further attention to some of the anomalies that this debate has produced, particularly in the continuing reference to that hoary old annual that is becoming almost a daily argument—the World Heritage listing. The basic aim of this Bill will be totally lost if the aims of those apologists for the greenies sitting opposite have their way, particularly with the academic protestations, rather than practical reasoning, that have been heard all afternoon.

It is a sad day when any parliamentary group becomes so subservient to a one-eyed minority that it forgets the very basis of its claimed existence—in this case, the Labor Party's desertion of the men and women who have used sheer hard work and determination in the physical sense to provide a livelihood for themselves and their families.

Because of the support given small pressure groups who know how to trade on emotion and political opportunists, we are seeing the complete rape of the basic principles of the old Labor Party by a new breed of persons who have never sweated in any work, much less in such workplaces as forests. Nevertheless, those same people are showing an "enlightened" approach to this State and to the nation generally.

With this new-found concern for the environment and "our future", people such as Dr Aila Keto are hoodwinking the media, who in turn are helping convince the decent men and women who are the grass-root providers of a nation that, by supporting the destruction of industries such as the timber industry and all the thousands who depend upon it for their living, they are in some way saving our heritage. What a load of absolute garbage that is. The member for Mourilyan's turn will come.

As a result, we are now witnessing the imposition of a huge question mark over the future development of areas of this State through injunctions, political blackmail and self-seeking interests. To use such levers as World Heritage listings, Federal Court injunctions and political threats to wipe out people's livelihoods and future prospects is nothing short of criminal. Yet, given the meek acceptance by that once proud, so-called protector of the little man and his right to a job—the ALP—increasingly the country is confronted with this reality.

I well recall listening to an ABC interview of Dr Keto by Lesley Daniels, as she then was. Dr Keto claimed that this Government has been constantly whittling away at national parks and forest areas over the last 30 years to such an extent that there will soon be none left.

Mr Palaszczuk: That is an accurate statement.

Mr STONEMAN: It is exactly what she said.

The sympathetic interviewer, Miss Daniels, gave credibility to that quite ridiculous statement by saying how terrible that was. She did not acknowledge that national parks and forest areas in this State had increased very substantially over the same period. In fact, that increase in area has accelerated since the National Party came to power in its own right.

Most if not all people who work in the timber industry, primary production in the more traditional senses and development generally have, out of practical self-interest as well as an inherent understanding of the need to preserve the natural resources of any State or region, a vested interest in maintaining and increasing timber reserves and the establishment of similar areas.

The agents of the greenie movement—the academics of the ALP who have hoodwinked basically decent people such as the member for Mourilyan, who must surely exhibit the greatest case of tongue in cheek this House has ever seen—seek to set up a bureaucratic nightmare through the listing of wet tropical timber areas.

One wonders what the local authorities, developers, land-owners and tourist-operators can be thinking will happen when their future is dictated totally by Canberra bureaucrats hiding behind heritage listing covering 12 000 square kilometres, 80 per cent of which even those in Canberra agree is totally protected under present terms. Are they trying to prevent people from making a living? Is it their desire that everyone be on the dole? Do they not realise that a country cannot continue to borrow to support a social security system that is the laughing-stock of the developed world? It is interesting to see that, after having given the House a sermon on that exact point, the honourable member for Caboolture has now left the House. The World Heritage listing of these areas would exacerbate the problems of the nation's social security system.

The further question raised is, "Who will fund the adequate compensation promised by the Prime Minister?" I understand that that will amount to more than \$200m. However, the greater question relates to what will happen to the families who for generations have worked in the forests and know them as members of a family—and in such a way that will never be known by the Aila Ketos and Pat Combens of this world. I note that the member for Windsor, Mr Comben, has also left the Chamber.

Do any of those people know what actually happens in any timber area that is developed, regardless of location, much less those in the wet tropics? Do they realise that in most instances selective culling is a natural process that is exacerbated from time to time by natural disasters in the form of fires, cyclones and the like? They create far

more havoc than man could ever attempt. Even then, nature is able to assert its authority and quickly return the area to such a state that one could not recognise the sign of the disaster. A quick trip through north Queensland would convince honest people of that—if they were honest enough to study the practicalities of logging versus nature.

An asset that to this State and nation is worth hundreds of millions of dollars in productive terms and has been built up over the years is being put at risk by a group of do-gooders who have the Labor Party firmly in their pocket. I suggest that honourable members take note and watch the continuing drift of the ALP away from its traditional supporters. The day of reckoning will undoubtedly come.

The principles involved in World Heritage listing will provide in many other areas currently forming the basis of this country's prosperity a snowballing effect that will for ever cripple our perceived integrity and international standing. However, what is even more damaging is that it will shrink the work base for generations of future Australians.

How long can we refuse to acknowledge the value and presence of uranium, for instance—such as at Ben Lomond in my electorate—in terms of jobs and export earnings? How long can we afford to play stupid games with our mineral sands, with a similar loss of job opportunity and vital income? When will we realise that, to maintain the false standard of quality of life that has been achieved, we not only have to grasp every opportunity in a responsible manner—and I emphasise the words “responsible manner”—but we also have to take market opportunities and provide real jobs for the present and the future generations in order to at least be in a position to salvage something from the wreck when the people of Australia hurl the ALP out like the insidious cancer on production and reality that it has become.

To suggest that the timber industry is dying in this State because of mismanagement by this Government is to drive or fly blindfolded along the coastal strip from the border to the tip of Cape York and inland. No-one denies the value of north Queensland rainforests to our history, to tourism, to our heritage, to our best interests; but to deny a State the right to develop and use its natural resources in a responsible manner is to deny a basic right of society.

This State, which has a mere 16 per cent of the population of Australia, is fortunate that it is rich in natural resources. At the same time, it is fortunate that it has a Government that recognises balance within the management of those resources. At the same time, the nation is growing fat and lazy on the resources of our State and our State management, accepting as it does the 25 per cent of national export income dollars that are generated in Queensland.

The Federal Government is allowing people who have never worked an honest day to dictate the agenda for the nation's prosperity, and I suggest with sincerity that they are being assisted by the members opposite, simply through a lack of will, in a manner that is a disgrace to the people they represent. It is not that they do not know; it is just that they do not have the will to stand up for the State that they purport to represent and the people who vote for them. This in itself would be partly acceptable were it not for the fact that unions, who have been the traditional front-line supporters of jobs, have also fallen for the greenie two-card blackmail trick.

Of particular note has been the reversal of support by the AWU under the leadership of Mr Errol Hodder. Old AWU men must surely be turning in their graves. I have heard claims by Mr Hodder that towns in the Mourilyan electorate—Ravenshoe in particular—could survive on plantation timber, although there are no hardwood plantations in that area and could not be for another 60 or 70 years. Regardless of whether or not hardwood should have been planted, it is not there; yet Mr Hodder is saying that that town could survive on hardwood. What an out-of-touch man this poor chap has become since his orders have obviously been sent from Canberra by facsimile machine each morning! To embrace such a concept as World Heritage listing, he must be confident that the AWU in Queensland is about to die or change support. The backlash against the ALP, the member for Mourilyan, the AWU and Mr Hodder and those others, such as Dr Keto, who initiated the whole bag of snakes, will be enormous.

Mr Eaton interjected.

Mr STONEMAN: It had always been my understanding that the member for Mourilyan, who continues to interject, had some involvement in the timber industry. I now realise that that was a major misconception.

The proposals of the ALP in the timber industry of this State can be likened to those of the greenies of the Animal Liberation Movement and their attempts to wipe out the wool industry in the western grazing lands. I wonder what support Mr Hodder is giving those people in their attempts to wipe out the base living of thousands of shearers and those involved in the wool industry.

An Opposition member: They are not greenies.

Mr STONEMAN: As I said, they are the greenies of the Animal Liberation Movement.

The debate on this Bill has given an opportunity for the apologists for supporters of job and prosperity loss in this State to try to wriggle out of the web they are weaving.

I commend the Minister and his department for the positive approach that is being taken in guiding the future of the timber industry in Queensland. They can be proud of that role and will undoubtedly gain the support of the thousands who are a part of a great and vital industry.

On the other hand, the Labor Party can be certain that its day of judgment by its traditional supporters approaches. It will stand condemned for its lack of patriotism and support for the thousands of men and women who are directly or indirectly dependent upon the timber resources of Queensland and Australia and whom it purports to support.

Mr SCOTT (Cook) (5.06 p.m.): Recently in this city I attended a rather interesting function called the Sir Thomas Moore forum on who owns Australia and whether it is the little investor, the bigger investor or the multinationals. There was an interesting range of speakers, but I will only refer to two of them. One was the Minister for Northern Development and Community Services, who, apart from a couple of stories about a deceased member and other stories that were uncalled for, launched in his typical style into a tirade against the Federal Government. It was a remarkable performance on a non-political platform. The next speaker was the honourable member for Mackay, who is an excellent speaker and a great man in political life. It was a public and non-political forum with a religious and legal background. I found that interesting, because the Minister for Northern Development and Community Services, Mr Katter, claims to be a strong, practising Catholic but he is a failed law undergraduate. I found that background rather interesting.

The honourable member for Mackay, Mr Casey, said that he would not be referring to previous speakers and he threw up his arms and said, "The election was won three weeks ago—and who won? We did." Those remarks are relevant to the honourable member for Burdekin, who has just taken up the time of this House by reading an out-of-date National Party speech. What a disgraceful performance. I asked him who wrote it, but I need not have asked. Whoever writes the National Party policy speeches should put his head in the sand and hide his face because it is dreadful stuff. The speech made by the honourable member for Burdekin was a classic example. Unfortunately it has taken up good paper and will appear in *Hansard*. There was not a constructive phrase in the whole of the speech, which merely knocked the Labor Party.

I simply ask the members on the Government side of the House, "Who won the election?" The Labor Party won the election—and it won it in Leichhardt, which is one of the most important seats. That will be the thrust of my contribution to this debate.

Mr Glasson: Your State vote was down by 1.6 per cent.

Mr SCOTT: I will keep hammering that theme. The Labor Party did not lose anything. It held its head up. The campaign was dragged down to the pits by the National

Party and other people who I will name in this House. It was a disgusting performance but the result was that the National Party lost, and I will keep saying that.

Returning to the Bill—and I am sure, Mr Speaker, that you were about to urge that I do so—it contains an interesting amendment, one that the Labor Party supports. It is a short Bill, but it amends an important Act. The Government probably wishes that it had been able to implement these changes by regulation, because it would have avoided the debate that this House is now enjoying. The Labor Party totally supports the Bill, does not dispute the thrust of it and agrees with the ideas embodied in it because they are necessary for the continuation of support for the timber industry.

This Government has not given and is not giving support to the timber industry. The Opposition is happy with the amendment, and I can dismiss it in those few words. The Opposition will vote for the amendment and will continue to support legislation of this kind. This legislation supports research and the best aspects of the timber industry, which is what the Opposition wishes to do.

This afternoon there have been good speeches from this side of the House. The shadow Minister, the honourable member for Mourilyan, Mr Eaton, made an excellent speech. He is a very practical man and, as I have stated in this House so many times, he is a man who knows the timber industry and grew up with it, just as I did. I make no bones about it; my education was obtained from the timber industry because my father was an engine-driver initially at the Stratford mill and subsequently at the Millaa Millaa sawmill. I know what is involved in the timber industry. It has to be determined whether or not the timber industry in far-north Queensland has had its day to its fullest extent. That is what is being debated in this House. It is pleasing to see public servants from the Forestry Department here this afternoon, because there is a tendency for public servants to go out on the political hustings. That should never happen. They might learn a thing or two if they listen to this debate.

The honourable member for Cairns covered the political ramifications of the recent election campaign and the ramifications which have led to this legislation. I am interested in the political ramifications. I will concentrate on that for a few minutes. As I said a moment or two ago, this recent political campaign caused public servants to attempt to become politicians. They do not fill that role very expertly at all. Some of them have the capacity to change; some of them have the capacity to learn the political art.

The far north has seen examples of people who had no knowledge or idea at all of the political art. All they did was damage their own reputations. They damaged the organisations to which they belonged and for whom they thought they were speaking. They damaged the reputation of the National Party because the party pushed them along to do that sort of thing. The National Party people did not have the guts to get out on the hustings and to attack the national heritage listing. They sent their runnings dogs—the little public servants—out to do that job. They did not do it properly. That is a shame. The Opposition has shown them up, and that is the way it will be.

Most members of this Assembly know that for a number of years I was an engineer with the FNQEB. While I served in that position I was a political person in my spare time. It was well known where I stood politically. To the credit of the officers of the board, I believe that that was never held against me. I use this as an example to people who say, "We cannot be political. We are this or we are that." There are two distinct roles to the human's performance: his job at work, for which, if he can carry it out successfully and practically, he will be given due credit; and his role as a private person. He has to keep that role in its proper place. When I was a politician in the north, I was not criticised.

If I had attempted to drag the FNQEB into the political debate in the way in which the current general manager, Don Lister, has done, without any doubt I would have been sacked. I would have been summarily dismissed from that position. One day I will have the opportunity of asking Don Lister why he personally went out on to the public hustings and told total untruths. Unfounded statements were made by that man in the public arena. If I had done that as an engineer, I may not have been dismissed. Certainly

my reports would have been criticised and sent back to me. I would have been told in no uncertain terms to do my homework properly as an engineer. Don Lister was able to get away with it because this is the era in which public servants move out into the political arena. Of course, a major scalp in that regard attaches to the Cook electorate. Pat Killoran thought that he could easily make the transposition from being the—

Mr Hayward: Pat who?

Mr SCOTT: The honourable member might well ask that question. Pat Killoran thought that he could easily make the transposition from being a departmental director to being the member for Cook and a Minister. He set his sights quite high. He was not satisfied with the humble back-bench role, or learning the position by coming into the House and finding out how it worked. He made it quite plain that he expected to be a Minister.

I was very pleased to hear the member for Cairns, Mr De Lacy, outline the way in which public meetings were held in Cairns. The local member, John Gayler—the incumbent for Leichhardt; the candidate for the Australian Labor Party, of whom we were very proud—and Keith De Lacy himself sought the opportunity to speak at those forums. They were denied that right. It was said that the meetings were not political meetings and that politicians were not wanted there. That attitude is totally fascist. I deplore the attitude of the National Party when it nudges up very closely to the fascist idea that, “We can rule. We will tell you what is right and what is wrong and we will not give you the opportunity to debate these things because we will cut you off at the knees if you try.”

Mr FitzGerald: What are you doing now?

Mr SCOTT: I know exactly what I am doing. However, the honourable member does not know what he is doing. Out in the public debate the Government will not answer questions or allow people to debate these issues. That is a fascist approach.

Mr FitzGerald: We are all yours.

Mr SCOTT: There are still shreds of democracy in this place.

Instead of being out there, these people without intestinal fortitude sent out the public servants.

I have some rather interesting legal observations to make. The FNQEB sought legal advice. On 29 June the board wrote to Macdonnells to seek a legal opinion. The letter stated that the board at a recent meeting had considered the effect of the heritage listing on the board's operations. Of course, the responsibility of the board is to maintain the supply of electricity not only into urban areas but also into the remote parts of the State. Mr Lister had come out and stated publicly and politically that he would no longer be able to guarantee electricity supply to people living in those areas, which included parts of my electorate. That was an outright untruth on the part of an engineer who is in a responsible position and who had access to all the legal advice that he wanted. Mr Lister then got hold of a copy of the Act. No doubt the consumers of the Far North Queensland Electricity Board would have paid for that purchase. He read the Act and said that that would be the result. That was totally and utterly untrue.

On 29 June he wrote to Macdonnells. I did not obtain this information from any officers of the regional board. I do not have any document that fell off the back of a truck. No reply was forthcoming before 11 July. It took a little while for the solicitors to provide a considered reply, which was received on 23 July.

The general manager of that august semipublic authority has had plenty of opportunities to tell the consumers, many of whom reside in my electorate, that he was wrong. That was the information he received. He was told by his solicitors that the World Heritage Act does not seek to cancel any rights of authorities that provide their services in listed areas, bearing in mind that we do not know what areas are to be listed.

The reply from the solicitors went on to say that the validity of the Act is unsure. That is a very telling phrase in itself. They were unable to say what the validity of the Act might be to the board's future activities.

A perusal of the Act makes it clear that the Federal Minister has available a great deal of discretion. I do not argue with that. There is so much discretion that is given to Ministers in this State. That worries me greatly, because I know their track record. However, here we are dealing with a Government of probity that was re-elected to govern Australia. That was the advice that Mr Lister received. Did he go public with what he had heard? No, of course he did not.

The honourable member for Cairns, Mr De Lacy, spoke about Mr Kenane and the timber that had been ordered partly for the new Federal Parliament building. Once again that highlighted an example of blatant dishonesty displayed by people in public positions. He failed to mention publicly that the contract for that timber specified that the timber should not have been felled after 6 March 1986—not 1987; not at the time when the World Heritage listing was publicly announced, but at the time that proper thought was being given to its ramifications during the lead-up to the time that it was made public. It may well be that the people who were supplying that timber may now be entitled to sell it to somebody else. I certainly hope that they do not sell it to the Federal Government for use in the new Federal Parliament building. I hope that it does not adorn the walls of that building—even though it is high-quality timber that comes from north Queensland. The Federal Government can obtain that timber from anywhere else that it chooses. The activities that are carried on during the lead-up to the Federal election campaign called for such a decision to be made in relation to timber-felling.

The Liberal spokesmen on environmental matters did not go to Cairns and did not visit those parts of the Cook electorate that may be covered by the World Heritage listing. They were not prepared to get out there and argue against the proposal that the Federal Government had the courage to announce at the appropriate time, namely that it was Federal Government policy and that it would be adopted if the Federal Government was re-elected. The matter was left wide open for debate.

I wish to continue the remarks that were made by the honourable member for Cairns about the general behaviour of people at polling-booths in his electorate. I was very proudly working for John Gayler in that electorate.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Cook for the first time to return to the Bill.

Mr SCOTT: I will take note of what you have said, Mr Speaker. What I am talking about is relevant to the World Heritage listing. It is also relevant to this document, the proposed amendment to the Forestry Act, which covers the World Heritage listing and is a political question. I would certainly appreciate your guidance, Mr Speaker, if I should move too far from the Bill.

Timber-getters were placing their trucks in front of polling-booths up there. That type of move was made to influence people. They are people whose industry depends on the research that is to be authorised by this Bill. They had their little children standing there with placards around their necks and tears running down their faces. Those little children, who should not have been at a polling-booth, were holding signs that read, "My daddy will lose his job if the Labor Government is returned." What utter nonsense and what despicable tactics promoted and supported by the National Party!

One of the timber-suppliers, Mr Sims, was at the Wujal Wujal booth at Ayton, or Bloomfield—whatever name the people would like to call it—and he was engaged in the same tactics there, trying to influence from inside a polling-booth Aboriginal people who came along to vote. The only difference was that he was talking about the Cape Tribulation road, which is probably used as a logging road and is relevant under this Act. That is the despicable type of campaign that was carried out up there. However, as I said at the commencement of my speech, the Labor Party won.

I certainly am happy to act on your advice, Mr Speaker, about returning to the Bill. I will refer to notes that I made at the time of the Minister's second-reading speech. He made some very apt and worthy remarks. He stated—

“This Bill has as its purpose the amalgamation of the Timber Research and Development Advisory Councils of south and central Queensland and of north Queensland and their consolidation into one unit.”

That is very necessary if the Minister and the department tell us that that is so. It is good to see that development.

Earlier in my speech I commended the benefits that would flow from continued research into the industry that will be enhanced by the legislation. Again I refer to the Minister's second-reading speech, which stated—

“. . . the promotion, merchandising and market development of sawn timber and timber products and the conduct of research into those aspects of the timber industry;

the education, training, safety and working conditions of employees, and the control of the quality of timber in the timber-manufacturing industry;

the conduct of research and other investigations into product development and manufacturing costs in the timber-manufacturing industry.”

They are most important aspects because, if the industry is in its declining period—and that is a legitimate comment in view of the department's own statistics indicating a drop in production because many of the areas are logged out and the department has also had a policy of conservation—and if we are to make the most of the remaining aspects of that industry, this type of research is essential.

I said that the department and the industry have a conservation approach, and I stand by those remarks. I am not sure whether that approach is adequate or not. I am a person who tries to have an objective view on the timber industry and who looks at both sides of the argument—the conservation side and the timber industry side—and I must say that I do not condemn any of the people in the industry who have taken part in this debate outside the House. I certainly do not use scathing remarks such as the member for Burdekin, who used the disparaging term “greenies”. Government members could not belittle people any more than by attacking them personally in this House in the way that they do.

That sort of research and information is needed to allow honourable members to make an objective assessment of the situation in the industry. Honourable members have to protect the remaining rainforest. I totally support the concept of the World Heritage listing. I am happy to have my remarks from *Hansard* quoted to me in my electorate. I will stand by what I have said in this House and I support what the Federal Government is doing.

I am prepared to give credit to people in the department. When I approach them about matters pertaining to my electorate, I am pleased to say that I receive very civil attention. I can only give them personally the highest commendation. I repeat my warning that they should watch that they do not succumb to the blandishments of the National Party that are aimed at enticing them to come out into the public arena.

When I make representations to the Minister about changes of tenure that my constituents seek, I am concerned that I will now receive from the department the reply—

“We can make no statements or decisions about change of tenure until the ramifications of the World Heritage listing are known.”

I will certainly deplore that attitude and attack it whenever I see it raising its head, because it is not needed.

Over many years, there has been a ground-plan by the Department of Lands and the Department of Forestry for the use of the resources in the areas under their control. I would certainly like that ground-plan to be adhered to. I cite an occasion when the

Forestry Department went off the rails with a land-use study in the Bloomfield area. For many years, I tried to discover what the land-use study would lead to and when paper, which had been produced by the timber industry, would be used to set out a statement or a considered report on land use in the area either for growing forestry products or for production of primary industry and other things. Eventually, in one of the replies that I regularly receive from the Minister and appreciate very much, a note was tucked in which included reference to the fact that the land-use study was no longer being considered.

The land-use study produced no result. Whenever I go in to bat for constituents who want tenures changed, I am told that careful consideration would have to be given by the Forestry Department before any decision was made.

Mr Glasson: That is all right.

Mr SCOTT: Yes. I appreciate that. I have stood up in this House and said that I do.

What about the land-use study that was undertaken for the Bloomfield area? Can the Minister tell me off the top of his head, or will he receive advice from his departmental officers and tell me in his reply when these sensible studies will see the light of day?

It is most disconcerting to have to tell a constituent who, with me, has been acting in good faith—as I hope the Minister's departmental officers mostly are—that I cannot provide an answer because a land-use study is taking place. I must say that that land-use study has had a very long gestation period, and a very minor birth has resulted.

I have listened to the views expressed about degradation of rainforests. I remind honourable members that I spent some of my formative years in Millaa Millaa when I traipsed along the timber tracks in the rainforest area—no doubt with a shanghai in my hand, which is something I certainly would not do now. I wish I never had.

I have been told that the rainforest canopy extends over areas where logging tracks can be found. I have also been told that, when trees fall down, the rainforest is restored to its pristine condition. That is absolutely untrue and simply not the case. I respect Dr Keto and I do not take in every word that is said by members of the Government during debates. It is true that the rainforest is degraded when a log is taken out, after a tree has been felled either as a result of an act of nature or as a result of a chain-saw action by timber-getters, and when a road is pushed through. There can be no doubt about that.

I am aware that the thrust of the Minister's argument will be that enough areas will be left in a pristine condition and totally untouched. Obviously the Minister has given some thought to this matter. His departmental officers have prepared endless reports and have convinced him that sufficient areas will be left untouched. However, I do not believe that officers of the department understand the issues fully because they retain the interests of the profession at heart—the interests of the logging industry. Officers of the department are foresters who are charged with the responsibility of making the greatest productive use of forests. They are not charged with the responsibility of giving totally certain and absolutely unarguable advice on environmental damage. I can understand the difficult position that these officers find themselves in, which is why I urge them not to go out on to the political hustings.

The Minister has not yet driven along the Cape Tribulation-Bloomfield road, but he should do so. He will see that the rainforest area has been totally degraded and that vines have grown prolifically. The coastal rainforest trees cannot properly be seen along kilometre after kilometre of the Cape Tribulation road. The Minister ought to go there with his eyes open and note the way in which the vines have taken over the existing trees, which is part of the degradation process. The degradation process can be observed as far back as the most minor part of the ecological growth spectrum. Where trees are destroyed, stinging nettles and other pests and weeds come through. I admit that I am

not familiar with the names of those weeds, but I can assure the Minister that they do come through.

The epitome of the degradation process can be seen as one drives along the Cape Tribulation road. I acknowledge that the Cape Tribulation road must remain. Although I am not in agreement with views expressed by some people in my electorate, I believe that the road serves the area. Whether or not it serves the timber industry and the purpose of drug-trafficking elimination—as the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services tells us it does—I do not know. I very much doubt that either aim would be achieved. However, the road is necessary for use by people who live in the area. I urge the Government to spend the necessary funds to upgrade the road, but only to the extent that it no longer degrades the environment by producing run-off and rainforest detritus that is carried down to the fringing reefs.

Mr Speaker, although I am drifting a little bit from the subject-matter of the debate, I ask for your consideration while I make the point that in the period while I was an engineer with the regional board, one of my responsibilities for a reasonable period was looking after the transmission line to Cooktown, the one that concerned Don Lister so much that he did not treat it in a reasonable manner at all. In that region, in a 24-hour period 12 inches of rain can fall or it can rain so heavily that it washes much of the soil away. While I was working with the board there were occasions when 8-inch or 10-inch pipes were laid underneath a road to carry the run-off from a creek, but after a week or even less, it was found that those pipes had been washed 2 or 3 chains down the creek by an excessive amount of rainfall. As yet, such rainfall has not been experienced by the area covered by the Cape Tribulation road, but it will happen. I have made the prediction for a long time—and I stand by it—that large sections of that road will wash away, not only into the table drains but also through the scrub and down into the fringing reefs. That should not be allowed to happen.

Mr GILMORE (Tablelands) (5.33 p.m.): I welcome the opportunity to debate the matter of the management of our rainforests. At the outset I would like to put the record straight on a matter that was raised by the honourable member for Cook in terms of those heritage listings that he was talking about at some length a few moments ago, at which time he proclaimed the organisers of certain meetings to be fascists of the worst possible kind. I am quite sure that the timber-workers of Ravenshoe and other areas of far-north Queensland will be pleased to read in the press that the member for Cook considers them to be fascists. Not only were the member for Cairns and other Labor Party members of Parliament denied the right to speak at those meetings, but I also was denied that right. Those people, in a spontaneous act of concern for their jobs and their industry, set up those meetings and they had nothing to do with the political forum for anybody other than the people who considered that their jobs were about to be lost.

The Bill that is being debated is designed to streamline the function of the timber industry and the Timber Research and Development Advisory Councils. For many years the Queensland Forestry Department has developed modern forest management policies and is indeed a world-leader in the management of tropical rainforests. Queensland's tropical rainforest management practices would indeed be of great benefit to those countries that we hear about so often as being the ones responsible for the wholesale destruction of rainforest around the globe. I believe the World Heritage listing of our rainforests will lose to the world community access to those very special management techniques developed in far-north Queensland.

The contemplated change to the Act will further improve the department's ability to plan and to further enhance our forest management techniques, which are already of a world standard. Under the changes to the Act the northern region of the State will be well catered for, having equality of representation with other regions, despite the reductions in log yield. I will refer to those reductions later. However, at the moment I will say that those reductions have been brought about not through overexploitation of forest reserves, as has been claimed by Dr Aila Keto and Dr Peter Hale of the conservation foundation, and by the Federal Government, but have been brought about as a planned

reduction of logging effort to reduce the harvest of logs to the minimum sustainable yield from the logging areas of our tropical rainforests. That is a point that has been very widely forgotten by those persons who are in favour of the World Heritage listing of our forest areas.

Tonight there are a couple of important points I would like to touch upon, these being the proposal to place far-north Queensland rainforests on the World Heritage list, the constitutional ramifications of that action, the structure of the northern forest industry and the importance of that industry to far-north Queensland.

During the drafting of our Federal Constitution our founding fathers, bless their wise souls, gave certain responsibilities to the States and certain responsibilities to the Federation. One of those State responsibilities was the management of our forests. At the same time they gave responsibility for external affairs to the Federal Government. Now the Federal Government is using its constitutional right to sign agreements which are, at best, spurious and using this mechanism—which was absolutely unintended and absolutely unforeseen by our founding fathers—to usurp the constitutional right of the States—in this particular case, the right to manage our forests. All honourable members would be familiar with the case in Tasmania in which the Federal Government took away the State's right to manage its own affairs in terms of waterways.

In a recent debate on this subject the proposition was put that someone has to watch over the actions of the State Government. I put it to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that the people watch over the actions of this Government and for 30 years they have judged it to be a good Government—I remind the Opposition that it was 30 years yesterday. Now, in a fit of frustration because they cannot win at the polls and get a place on the Government benches, members of the ALP want to put their policies in place in this State by default. They harness some doubtful external agreement to impose their ideals. If the proposition that someone must look over our shoulder as a Government is true, who is to look over the shoulder of the Federal Government, which is looking over our shoulder? What sudden, divine inspiration has settled on the members of the Federal Parliament that they are wiser than the members of this Parliament? Why are they suddenly more concerned about our forests and the conservation thereof than we are? Why are they—they who have never managed a forest—suddenly better at forest management than we are—the experts in the field?

Secondly, I would like to address the structure of the northern forest industry. I ask honourable members opposite to sit quietly while I instruct them for a few minutes on an industry which is centred in the north, one of which they are abysmally ignorant. Honourable members opposite support World Heritage listing and they support the demise of the logging industry because they are too thick to understand the facts, that is the facts properly proposed, properly understood and properly analysed.

Mr Eaton: You can have logging in certain areas and you can close certain areas off.

Mr GILMORE: I am very pleased to hear it.

In far-north Queensland we have an area of rainforest that is roughly equivalent to the distance from Canberra to Melbourne and is 80 kilometres wide. I make that point because some of the people from the southern parts of Australia do not understand what we are talking about in terms of the areas of our northern rainforest. There are 856 000 hectares of rainforest in far-north Queensland, ranging from Townsville to north of Cooktown. Of that, 160 000 hectares have been set aside for logging.

The map that was produced by the Prime Minister when he made his very doubtful statement about World Heritage listing was one with which we were all familiar. I believe that, because it was produced by none other than the Prime Minister himself, we are entitled to expect this to be correct and to be the original proposition. Or are we entitled to that? Was this map and the idea prepared after a stroke of brilliance at breakfast-time? The total lack of proper information and proper homework presented at the time suggests that it was.

For a moment I would like to ignore the 160 000 hectares of logging area. That gives us some 650 000 hectares of virgin forest in Government hands in Queensland at the present time. The whole of that 650 000 hectares of forest is currently protected from logging by State legislation.

As part of my instruction to the Opposition, I want to go into the structure of rainforest in far-north Queensland. Rainforest and the type of rainforest that grows is dictated by the land form. There are six land forms in far-north Queensland underneath the rainforest areas. Each land form contains a specific type of rainforest, and every land form is adequately represented in the 650 000 hectares of virgin forest that exist at the present time.

Contrary to statements that were made previously by the Opposition, it is not 650 000 hectares of mountain-top. It is 650 000 hectares of virgin rainforest which adequately represents all types of rainforest that ever existed in far-north Queensland. Therefore I suggest that there is simply no need whatsoever to include in heritage areas the logging areas which have been set aside for the future of our logging industry in far-north Queensland.

I turn to our logging areas, that 160 000 hectares that was set aside so many years ago. These are proposed to be listed in the World Heritage list. After 80 years of logging, apparently that area is still worthy of World Heritage listing. My understanding of World Heritage listing is that the areas that are suitable for that listing have to be in pristine condition or, indeed, very close to it. If after 80 years of logging these areas are still satisfactory for heritage listing, then logging has done very little damage indeed to those areas.

Mr Alison: The same could be said of Fraser Island where logging has been going on for 100 years. Mr Comben wants to put that on the World Heritage list too.

Mr GILMORE: I agree with the member for Maryborough.

If our logging methods are so horrifying as to be seen to be destroying our forests, how can those forests still be appropriate for World Heritage listing? The Opposition cannot have it both ways. If the forests are worthy of listing, they have not been harmed, and if they have not been harmed by 80 years of logging, they can continue to be logged.

I will deal with logging practice and the reason for the reduction in logging quotas in far-north Queensland in more detail. The statement that logging quotas in far-north Queensland have been reduced by 70 per cent over the last 10 years has been bandied about very happily by the conservation movement, the ALP and anybody else who wanted to put their fingers into far-north Queensland forests. They have failed to get to the hub of the matter. I will just very quickly deal with that——

Mr Davis: Don't worry about it; we'll take your word for it.

Mr GILMORE: The member for Brisbane Central just might learn something.

Once again I state that there is 160 000 hectares of logging area. 14 000 hectares of that area has never been logged but will be logged, Bob Hawke willing. 90 per cent of that area has been logged once, twice and in some cases three times.

I turn to the reason for the reduction in our logging quotas. Virgin rainforests, when logged, produce more logs than a stand of timber that has been logged on a previous occasion. What this Government has managed to achieve is the steady, progressive logging of 160 000 hectares of virgin forest. As we proceeded through that virgin forest, we took more logs than we would anticipate taking on the second, third or fourth rerun through that forest area. In early times it was very difficult to come up with a reasonable estimate of the amount of available timber in those areas. However, the further the areas are proceeded through—there is only 14 000 hectares of timber remaining—we know exactly what timber is still standing in the areas that have been logged previously. There is a very clear understanding of how much timber is now available for logging in

that area and the statement can be made that Queensland can produce 60 000 cubic metres of timber per annum for ever from that area.

In the management of Queensland's forests, logs are taken that are of a specific size, depending on species. The forests are not clear-felled. I now take to task a couple of media outlets and Dr Keto, who I believe have told lies without in fact mouthing the words. On a couple of occasions I have seen Dr Keto on television and behind her was displayed a photograph or film of the logging and clear-fell woodchip industry in Tasmania whilst she was talking about the logging of the north Queensland rainforests. That is misrepresentation of the worst possible kind, because Queensland does not clear-fell its rainforests. It never has and never will.

When a forest area is first opened up for logging it is surveyed by the department's foresters. They proceed through the land and mark old, diseased and commercial trees, always taking very good care to leave a large number of nursery and seed trees to ensure the regeneration of the forest. The foresters then very carefully mark where each of those trees will fall, the snig tracks and roads. They survey those areas very carefully. All this is done to minimise the damage to the rainforest canopy during the logging operation. It is policed very strenuously and loggers are fined if they go about their business and do not take any notice of these survey marks.

Contrary to the opinions expressed by the honourable member for Cook and others, particularly Aila Keto, the forest does regenerate quickly and heals the scars. A tree that is logged properly does little damage to the canopy of the forest due to the scientific way in which the tree is felled. The vines, stinging trees and sarsaparilla referred to by the honourable member for Cook are indeed pioneer species which are essential to the regeneration of the rainforests species.

It is important to state that once an area has been logged, it is not logged again for 40 years. Therefore, trees that were too small at the time of logging—be they a millimetre too small or whatever—will grow to reach commercial size and can then be removed after that 40-year span. By doing this the forests have been invigorated by the removal of the old and sick trees and the trees that can produce more timber per hectare per annum than the others, the younger and more vital trees, can have room to grow. Therefore Queensland is producing more timber from its rainforests than would otherwise have been the case.

I draw the attention of the House to the magnificent hypocrisy of the Federal Government. After it was taken to task by the timber-workers of Ravenshoe over the timber that was being put into the magnificent new Taj Mahal in Canberra—I believe a figure of \$800,000 worth of timber was quoted—the timber-workers said, "No, we are not going to provide that timber because of what you are doing to our industry". The Federal Government dug out its little book, had a look and said, "Goodness gracious me. We suspect that those logs were cut after March 1986, so therefore we are telling you we don't want them. You can't tell us that at all. So you are going to suffer."

In fact, those timber-workers will not suffer. There are plenty of outlets for that timber. However, the Government displays its hypocrisy by saying, "You can cut it only up to March 1986; after that, no, no. Provided that we have what we want for our magnificent new building, nobody else can have any. You will lose your jobs and that is just the way to go."

Today I have presented to the House some of the facts on the management of forestry in far-north Queensland. They have not been half-truths, as promoted by the Opposition and others. They have not been the outright lies that have been promoted by some of the conservation groups. They are the truth—the facts.

Regardless of the protestations from the conservationists and the ALP, if all or some of our logging areas are affected by World Heritage listing, sawmills will close, jobs will be lost, north Queensland will once again be the loser and we will be the losers absolutely to no avail because, as I pointed out, our forests are not under threat.

I support the legislation as a practical advance in the management of our forests and I sincerely trust that World Heritage listing will not render it futile.

Mr COMBEN (Windsor) (5.53 p.m.): I have sat in the Chamber this afternoon and listened to a number of comments concerning World Heritage. There seems to be a feeling on the other side of this Chamber that World Heritage is some communist-inspired trick to take away some sort of sovereignty from the State Government. In actual fact, World Heritage is one of the greatest sale tickets that one can have on an area for tourism in the future. I say immediately that if the World Heritage required only half a dozen fairly thick logs to be found together to gain access to the World Heritage list, then the rabble on the other side of the Chamber would be listed under World Heritage because they are indeed a group of logs who stand together.

World Heritage listing would be of massive benefit to the people of Queensland. There is now a set of international tourists throughout the world who look at the World Heritage list of 115 places and say, "Let us go there because it must be different. It must be great. It must be virtually unique." To have in the Cairns area and in north Queensland two World Heritage areas, the Great Barrier Reef and the rainforests, is a great plus. Anything that Opposition members can do to support the listing of the wet tropics will be a boon in the future. In 100 years' time, people will look back on these debates and laugh at some of the arguments that were put forward by Government members. Of the Opposition and of the Hawke Labor Government they will say, "They had foresight. They had imagination. They planned for the future. The other side was prepared to stay in a banana republic, a resource-based economy in which you either rip it up or you saw it down." Such an attitude is simply not good enough.

The member for Tablelands, Mr Gilmore, said that the statements I have made previously in this Chamber are half-truths; however, they are facts. What are the facts concerning the use of timbers from that area in the new Parliament House? The facts are that that timber was not to be taken from National Estate areas.

Mr Austin: Have you got a television set at home?

Mr COMBEN: Yes, I have.

Mr Austin: Do you live in a timber house?

Mr COMBEN: Yes, I do.

Mr Austin: Do you recall if that's got steel?

Mr COMBEN: Yes, I do.

If the Queensland Government had planned for the future 30 years ago, there would have been no problems. It would already have seen hardwood plantations growing in the northern part of this State.

Recently, honourable members would have seen the research work done by Dr Geoff Tracey at the CSIRO at Atherton. It is interesting that the member for Tablelands is so adamant that only certain things can be done with rainforest trees. Using modern technology, plantation trees can be grown. Had a system of plantation been implemented 30 years ago and had we then not tried to rely on the technology of 30 years before that, today we would have had a decent set of plantations in the area. That fairly wizened, wild, barren and eroded land of the Tablelands would today be supporting a decent plantation of rainforest trees, not monoculture but a decent set of trees with broadcast sowing, aided by modern fertilisers, genetic injections and that type of thing—

Mr Sherrin: Who writes that stuff?

Mr COMBEN: No-one writes it. I am making it up as I go along.

Those are the facts, not the half-truths that the honourable member for Tablelands and other members have produced. There is an alternative to logging of rainforests. The

Government should be carrying out experiments in that regard. I am unhappy that it refuses to acknowledge an alternative. The work of people such as Dr Tracey and other scientists at the tropical research station at Atherton is being by-passed by this Government. Honourable members on this side of the House have given a commitment that when we take over the Government benches in this House we will be adopting that research because we know it works. Opposition members know that the land that the Government presently allows to degrade and waste away will be made productive. Jobs will be created for timber-workers and their families in north Queensland. If that responsibility were left to this Government, the timber industry in the northern part of this State would degenerate even further. The proof of that can be found in the Minister's second-reading speech wherein he stated—

“The cut of Crown timber in the northern region of the State has markedly declined over recent years to a stage where current allocations to mills represent only about 30 per cent of that available in 1978.”

It has been reduced by one-third in 10 years and it is still decreasing. The timber industry is incapable of self-regulation. It has had to tool down in the last two years and it will have to tool down to smaller logs again. It is incorrect for Government members to say, “Next time they come in 40 years' time, those trees that were only a centimetre too small will be big and marvellous and wonderful and things will be the same again.” Because the trees have not grown as fast as the Forestry Department thought that they would grow 10 years ago, the timber-mills will be taking smaller logs. That is the basis upon which the conservation movement challenges the Government. It does not believe that the information that the Forestry Department has put forward is factual. Turnabouts of 40 years and a 40-year productive growth are not sufficient to sustain sustainable yield. That is the basic argument that is put forward by the conservation movement.

Little mention has been made about the amalgamation of the Timber Research and Development Advisory Councils of south and central Queensland and of north Queensland and their consolidation into one unit to be known as the Timber Research and Development Advisory Council of Queensland. What is needed is a decent strategy for the Queensland timber industry. Almost 12 months ago to the day *Timber Industry Strategy* of Victoria was launched. It is the best document on timber-planning that has been produced anywhere in Australia. The Minister and his advisers are aware of that document. It is a seedling to final product plan for the Victorian timber industry. That is the sort of plan that I would like to see introduced into Queensland.

In the foreword to that plan the Honourable Joan E. Kirner said—

“Forests are for all Victorians. Forests are important for their beauty, for recreation and education, for nature conservation. They provide timber for our homes, furniture, firewood, and paper. They create 42,000 jobs.”

Honourable members on this side of the House believe that the timber industry is important. It must be maintained in areas where it is viable and where it will survive in the long term. In some areas there are competing needs; for example the wet tropical rainforests of this State. If jobs are to be created in the future, and if the young people in the northern part of the State are to obtain employment, a strategy must be implemented to look after Queensland's forests. If that means that in some areas such as the wet tropics logging is stopped to provide a tourist industry infrastructure, then so be it. However, an overall strategy is needed, and that is what this legislation should be addressing. That is what the Forestry Department of this State is not addressing at present.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr COMBEN: Before the dinner recess, I was canvassing the need in Queensland for a total and integrated forest product strategy—a seedling to finished product strategy. I have suggested as a preferred model the timber industry strategy of Victoria produced over a two-year period of consultation and negotiation with all major interest groups including the public, the unions, industry, conservation and Government agencies. The

process of producing that strategy was a complex one and it was a long time in coming, but the benefits of that strategy are to be seen already in Victoria. The timber industry strategy is an integral part of the State's economic and conservation strategies. It sets new directions so far as timber management and production are concerned. It ensures an economically viable industry within an environmentally acceptable framework. That strategy has achieved its central task of setting for the timber industry new directions which achieve a balance between timber production and environmental protection. As a result, there is a remarkable degree of support and agreement on many of the key policy directions.

The foreword to that particular strategy includes some 30 key areas, but I will comment on just some of them for the information of the House. There is a commitment to a sawlog-driven industry, a rejection of a pulpwood only or pulpwood-driven industry. There is an endorsement of an industry directed towards value-added product forest management practices and value-added products. There is a reduction of harvesting to a level sustainable in perpetuity on the basis of regional sustainable yields. I would say to the House that this sort of strategy is the one sought by the conservation movement in Queensland. It is one that the public would see as being essential to the proper management of our forests.

The key issue in Queensland today may well be the rainforest harvesting program and whether we should in actual fact be tying up our rainforests as a World Heritage area or whether we should be having some form of sustained yield. It has not been able to be shown that sustainable yield is a viable option in Queensland. I accept that the Minister says that it is and that we are now working towards that, but his own figures say that there has been a 30 per cent reduction in 10 years. Ten years ago this Government was saying, "We have sustainable yield in Queensland." So what are we to believe? Do we believe the department today when it says, "Yes, we finally got it right", or were we to believe it 10 years ago when it was harvesting three times the amount of timber that it is harvesting today? That is the basic issue on which the Minister and I would disagree. We do not know what sustainable yield is. I am frightened that the guts is going to be ripped out of the rainforests, to put it in the vernacular, in the meantime, whereas the Minister is saying, "Look, we are going all right. She'll be fine." However, I do not want to wake up in 50 years' time and find that the children of this generation are not going to be able to see our rainforests.

It is a case of: will they be preserved or not? If wet tropics listing in the World Heritage list means the preservation of that area, then I am for it. However, I am afraid that the Minister has not been able to convince me so far.

Mr Glasson: With your locked mind, you never would.

Mr COMBEN: Two of us have locked minds. I would suggest to the Minister that the question of plantations, the alternative means of obtaining hardwood timber from the wet tropical species, is one that the Minister is not addressing his mind to; so we disagree.

What I am saying of this sort of strategy is that it is about time that the Minister as a member of Government, I as a member of Opposition, the public, the industry, the unions and the conservation groups sat down and started to ask, "Where do we disagree?" Until we produce this sort of strategy and until we have a conservation strategy for the whole of Queensland, we will always face the problem of me on one side saying "I don't believe you", and the conservation movement supporting that sort of view, and the Minister on the other side saying, "Look, it's all fine. It's hunky-dory. We can do these things", and then 10 years later saying, "Well, look, sorry. What we said 10 years ago that we could do is now not right. We have had to reduce yield again." That is essentially what has gone on in the wet tropics.

Mr Glasson: You fully support the document put out by the Victorian Forestry Department.

Mr COMBEN: Yes, I do. I do not say that I am totally au fait with all the issues in Victoria, but the style of consultation and the middle approach that they seem to take most of the time I find perfectly acceptable. I would hope that that is the style of document that the Labor Party will one day produce in Queensland when we are sitting on the Government benches and the Minister will then be free to examine it and say where he thinks it has gone wrong.

The implementation of the timber industry strategy of Victoria has demonstrated that a balance can and must be found between economic and environmental concerns if the forests are to meet the needs of all Victorians and for the timber industry to have a viable future. They are the two elements in public policy in this State that must be reconciled. Unfortunately at present, because of the locked-in attitudes of both the Forestry Department and the Government in this State, the two sides of the argument are not being presented.

Mr De Lacy: If the Forestry Department has 60 000 cubic metres in perpetuity, why does it still have to use virgin rainforest?

Mr COMBEN: That is the essential argument that proves the Government's sustainable yield policy is not working. The Opposition knows that it is not working, because there are no figures to indicate that, over a 40-year period, a number of trees will grow to a size that will enable them to be used. I cannot accept that the Minister will be able to show me in the next 40 years a place where logging had been carried on which will be ready to be relogged. That is the basic argument.

The Minister will not produce any figures. He keeps saying that the sustainable yield potential exists. The Minister should show in five-year blocks which areas will be logged during 1990 and 1995. The Minister cannot because the trees have not grown as well as expected. That is why a need for protection exists and that is why a tooling-down has occurred. That is why a reduction of a third in production levels has occurred, compared with what was produced 10 years ago.

The contents of the Victorian *Timber Industry Strategy* cover the entirety of the timber industry. The chapters are headed: Economic Aspects of the Timber Industry; Victoria's Forest Resources; The Supply and Usage of Forest Products and Services; Native Forest Management; Softwood Forest Management; Value Adding Logging and Production; Future Directions for the Timber Products Industry; Reforestation; Forest Planning; and The Future. All the issues are canvassed and a remarkable degree of unanimity of viewpoint exists in Victoria today. Victoria does not have the problems associated with the Windsor Tableland forestry issues or the wet tropics, the chipping industry or the pulpwood industry west of Toowoomba, which are all controversial. There is also controversy surrounding the decision whether or not to take forestry products out of the Cooloola area and whether or not Fraser Island should be logged. Those issues are of concern to the conservation movement in Queensland and to the average Queenslander.

If the Opposition could sit around a table and be convinced by the provision of facts and figures by the Government, and if the Government would listen to the Opposition side of the argument on whether or not any benefit for Queensland can be derived by logging Fraser Island, the Opposition would accept the Government's strategy. At present, the Opposition is not able to engage in that dialogue.

Mr Glasson: On more than one occasion in this House—as a matter of fact I can name four—you have openly admitted that if you had your way and the Labor Party was in power, logging on Fraser Island would be stopped. The honourable member for Maryborough said that logging has been going on for a hundred years. I defy people to tell me where it took place 100 years ago.

Mr COMBEN: I agree that an argument can be raised on both sides of the issue. However, the amount that the Government is presently receiving in royalties is not

worth what is being taken out of Fraser Island. The economic argument revolves around the Government's sustaining a few jobs in Maryborough.

The number of job opportunities in Maryborough is limited because the number of timber-mills has decreased through amalgamation. I am sure that the Minister was conscious of that, yet he would destroy part of the basic tourist industry attraction in Maryborough. It is that short-term thinking that the National Party member for Maryborough, Mr Gilbert Alison, is guilty of perpetrating which is now causing the demise of Maryborough.

Twenty years ago when I first came to Queensland, Maryborough and Bundaberg were twin towns. They were both situated near the coast and were of similar size. Today, Maryborough is a forgotten city. The only thing it has going for it is its heritage. It is such an old, antiquated city that, when the Labor Party is in Government, it will be able to make it into an historic town because of this Government's mismanagement. In contrast to that, Bundaberg has gone ahead.

If a decent regional strategy had been developed for the area, Maryborough would be as prosperous as Bundaberg. Because of the representation by people such as Mr Campbell, Bundaberg will continue to go ahead whereas Maryborough will fall behind. Because of National Party representation Maryborough is a depressing city. Proper industries have not been developed in Maryborough. Where is the encouragement for new industry that should be provided by a State Government? Where is the encouragement by the Government to use the area's timber resources? The Queensland Government is pulling the guts out of Fraser Island and no economic benefit whatsoever will be derived.

I call for a timber industry and forestry industry strategy in Queensland. If such a strategy were formalised by consultation and negotiation with the public, unions, industry, conservation groups and Government, the industry would be in a much better position than it is today. Only with full and frank discussion will there be agreement on how full, proper utilisation of the potential of Queensland's forests can be reached. That is necessary, and the Labor Party supports it. But it must be done in a way that is environmentally sensitive and also appropriate to our tourist industry. In that way it would be known that all things are going for the industry and that it is not a narrow-based industry that is declining because it has been unable to regulate itself. In the debate on this Bill members should be talking about the further regulation and rationalisation of the timber industry in Queensland.

Reference has been made to the debts incurred by the Forestry Department as well as to the declining number of jobs in the forestry industry. Only when we sit down around the table and get an overall strategy for Queensland will we on this side of the House be content about the way in which the Forestry Department is going about its business and whether it is making full use of resources for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

Ten years ago, if the department had taken into account the views of conservationists, if it had treated the wet tropical areas in the proper manner in which they should have been treated, and if plantations had been started in those days and employment had been given to some people in the forestry industry, the great conflict that is being faced in the north today probably would not have occurred.

I support what my colleagues from the electorates of Cairns and Mourilyan have said: that at present there is a great need for the listing of the wet tropical areas for future generations in order to achieve the full development of the potential of the tourist industry in the northern parts of this State. With that tourist development, full employment will be available in those areas and they will go ahead. If the present Minister and the department continue with their fairly mindless, narrow and archaic views, that region will suffer a gross down-turn in employment with no alternatives. As the Minister knows, employment in that industry is declining and, because of his policies, it will continue to decline.

The Opposition presents an alternative policy, and it is that alternative policy that the Opposition looks forward to implementing one day.

Mr GATELY (Currumbin) (7.44 p.m.): It gives me a great deal of delight to take part in this debate this evening. It is my belief that conservation, the environment and the ecology are matters of great importance. This Government has a policy of ensuring that adequate provisions are made to preserve each of those aspects. This Government has maintained and, where appropriate, will increase the areas set aside for national parks to be utilised for the benefit of the public. It is envisaged that a proportion of each of the environmental features existing in Queensland is retained for ever in its natural state and that adequate facilities for the enjoyment of those areas by the people exist.

Adequate reserves have been established to ensure that all species of native plants and animals are preserved, as far as is possible, in their natural habitat.

This Bill, which provides for the amalgamation of the Timber Research and Development Advisory Councils of south and central Queensland and of north Queensland into one unit to be known as the Timber Research and Development Advisory Council of Queensland deserves the support of this Parliament, and the Minister is to be commended for its introduction.

As late as 7 April 1987, in this House the Minister, Mr Glasson, told the Parliament of negotiations between representatives of the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments concerning the national rainforest conservation program. Mr Glasson stated that he expected the matter of Queensland's participation in that program to be finalised in the near future.

The Queensland Government has made it perfectly clear to the Commonwealth that Queensland's involvement in the national rainforest conservation program will not be allowed to jeopardise the future of the established north Queensland timber industry. Selective logging of about 19 per cent of the Crown-owned tropical rainforest will continue under the supervision of the Forestry Department.

Subject to the maintenance of the timber industry, the Queensland Government is happy to co-operate with the Commonwealth in having funds made available for a number of purposes including land acquisition for national parks, management of rainforest parks, improvement of interpretive and visitor facilities in rainforest parks and research to support conservation of rainforests.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: This is a prepared brief.

Mr GATELY: Yes, and I prepared it.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Chocolates and corruption are your expertise.

Mr GATELY: That is more than the honourable member can do.

Whilst this Government is prepared to meet its long-term responsibility for, and on behalf of, the residents of Queensland and Australians generally in co-operation with the Commonwealth Government, it will not be dictated to by foreign interests such as the World Heritage listing. The fact that an area is nominated for World Heritage listing does not automatically mean acceptance of an area into the World Heritage listing.

I believe it is interesting to note that in August 1974 Australia was one of the first countries to ratify the World Heritage Convention. What should at this stage of the debate be made quite clear is that the World Heritage Convention comes out of that once-great organisation, the United Nations, which was founded on the assumption of a broad agreement with the ideals and charter of the UN by a clear majority of members and support for the concept of collective security as embodied in the UN's repulsion of North Korean and Chinese aggression into South Korea around 1950. However, the international consensus that the founders hoped for has been broken down.

Ms Warner interjected.

Mr GATELY: If I need the honourable member to help me, I will ask.

I wish to quote from Mr Peter Samuel, who said—

“Now, the majority of the UN member states are authoritarian—opposed to democratic rights”—

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr GATELY: That is the case with some of these loud-mouthed people in this chamber. The document continues—

“ . . . individual freedoms and the institutions of an independent judiciary, a free press, free trade unions and opposition political parties. Naturally, as the UN gets a majority that does not respect the original charter, so it is bound to depart increasingly from its ideals. It would be anomalous if it were otherwise.”

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr GATELY: If the honourable member needs it, I will give him a copy of this later. I understand that he is an uneducated fellow.

The document continues—

“The Soviet Union, driven by the belief that its Communist Party has a world monopoly of wisdom and righteousness, and that it must have a world monopoly of power, has naturally been a constant antagonist of the UN in its original ideal as a liberal, pluralistic, pragmatic and benevolent international institution. The Soviets have, quite predictably, seen the UN as just another venue in which to wage political warfare against the liberal democracies.

Not surprisingly, the bureaucracies of the UN have become corrupt, ill-managed, irresponsible cliques with all the evils of unresponsive “big government” and welfarism of the West.”

Mr COMBEN: I rise to a point of order. What has this got to do with the Timber Research and Development Advisory Councils of Queensland? Is the member suggesting that they are corrupt?

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

Mr GATELY: The document continues—

“Some still manage to draw on uncontaminated reservoirs of idealism and selflessness (the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF), one or two are moderately efficient (like the International Civil Aviation Organisation and, by some assessments, the World Bank) but others are cesspools of corruption, careerism and misdirected effort (obviously UNESCO).”

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I give the honourable member his first warning that he must return to the Bill.

Mr GATELY: Mr Speaker, I am talking about the Bill, because, with due respect, this is relevant to the way the outside influences of organisations can be, and are being, brought to bear upon this State and its reserves.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will return immediately to the Bill.

Mr GATELY: In view of the grave concerns about the actions of Mr Hawke and the conservation bandwagon which strutted around the nation and conned the nation—particularly the conservation vote—prior to the election on 11 July, I say to the conservationists, “Just you watch. Mr Hawke breaks his promises as quickly as he makes them.” On national television he said quite openly that if something suited his argument on economic grounds, he would break his promises as quickly as he made them. People should ask themselves why the New South Wales Government suddenly released an area of some 70 hectares from the wetland listing in the Ocean Shores area. That land was owned by Mr Hawke’s friend Mr Alan Bond. Is this to pay off Mr Hawke’s support for the recent take-over in the electronic media or share deals?

Might I at this stage state without qualification that I accept and recognise the rightful role of genuine members of the conservation movement who play an important part in reasonable debate to ensure the protection of our national heritage. At the same time I believe it is important to sound a firm note of warning, warning on pressure groups. This word of warning was highlighted by Lord Ralph Harris, the general director of the London-based Institute of Economic Affairs when he was delivering an annual John Bolython lecture in Sydney. He stated that democratic Governments had been corrupted and manipulated by organised interest groups with a trade-union mentality. Lord Harris also said that the tyranny of pressure groups would result in impoverished society if far-reaching and radical reforms were not applied, and that politicians from all parties had bought votes and allowed themselves to be seduced by minority interests. He said that the new malaise of large-scale unemployment in Europe is largely due to the resultant economic rigidity which impairs adaptation to change and aborts the birth of tomorrow's jobs.

It is in this area that I firmly and politely, without any disrespect at all to the Leader of the Opposition, highlight to him his comments that he would work for and ensure the World Heritage listing of the wetland forests of north Queensland.

Mr Comben: Wetland tropics.

Mr GATELY: Wetland tropics—whatever the honourable members wants to call them. I thank the honourable member for his help.

That does not take away from the fact that, as a result of this action on the part of a person who purports to work for the workers, what he is in effect doing is the same as his Labor friends in New South Wales did in 1982-83 in the debate in relation to the softwood forests in the Wauchope, Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour and northern regions of New South Wales. That Government was quite prepared to see people lose their jobs.

Let it be known in this House that I am not prepared to see any person lose his job. I am not prepared to listen to the rubbish that was thrown up at us that that Government would find those people alternative jobs. That Government was going to make money available.

Mr Eaton interjected.

Mr GATELY: It was the honourable member's friends who made that statement. Can the honourable member now tell me why 900 people in that town of 3 600 people are unemployed and cannot find employment? Those people listened to what the Labor Party people told them and they were conned. Those people are not able to pay their accounts any more. It is despicable that any member of the Labor Party should have the temerity to come into this House and say that he is prepared to see 500 or 900 people lose their jobs.

The fact is that those same people are making comments in that hallowed House down in Canberra to the effect that Australia has got a deficit on the cost of imports into this country. The Federal Government is saying, "Don't let's log these forests. Don't let's manage the resources we've got." It is also saying, "Don't have any of that." It is not concerned that people will be out of employment.

I happen to have been there and I do not like being unemployed. I have risen above that, and I have risen above it to the point where I am prepared to fight with every ounce of my energy to fight such corruption——

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr GATELY: The corruption that the honourable member is talking about is perpetrated by none other than Mr Hawke and his mates, and I will tell him about it shortly.

This is an indictment against the ALP and its supporters who have hoodwinked the public——

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wolston!

Mr GATELY: I will take the matter a bit further. I am concerned for this State's rights. I was concerned about this State's rights when I read an article in a Sydney newspaper, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, dated 4 May 1986. The article was about a man who had the courage of his convictions. He stood up and was counted. He is no longer a Minister in that Government which conned the nation. I will quote from this publication where it states—

“The High Court battle for the Franklin River was won by a narrow majority of four to three and Mr Cohen says that on the Daintree Rainforest issue, which environmentalists wanted to take to the High Court, his advice was that they had only a slim chance of getting the same majority.”

The reason why they only had a slim chance of getting the same majority was simply because the then Mr Justice Murphy had to stand aside from the High Court. There was no way that the Government was prepared to risk a split decision of three to three. Therein lies the story and the danger for the State of Queensland.

I will move on to what has been stated more recently. On 6 June 1987 Mr Hawke stated that he sees the issue being settled in the High Court. He does not even have the intestinal fortitude to front in the Government and put the issue up. He knows that he is trying to cut down the rights of the State of Queensland. In the case of Tasmania, he used the power of the High Court and the RAAF jets to go over and snoop and carry out his vendetta against the State.

Let there be no doubt about how I feel about the situation. I am concerned for the people of this State, particularly when I read that sort of thing and when I have previously indicated in this House that I believe that in the case of the late Mr Justice Murphy decisions were not made based on what the facts should have been. They were based on what that article tells us they were based. The Government could not guarantee the result.

Mr Yewdale: You are condemning a dead man.

Mr GATELY: I am not condemning a dead man. I am repeating what has been stated. It is the truth, and he deserves to be condemned. I am not one bit ashamed of being able to state the truth. It is written in the newspapers, and it is true.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: You are a coward.

Mr GATELY: I am no coward. I am prepared to work for the workers and ensure that this Government and this State continue to meet their commitments so that people who live in this State can do the same. They can live in Queensland and walk with their heads held high. They are not put in the position of not having their jobs.

We can see how good the Labor Party and the unions are, because they have failed to take action to protect their members and their jobs. Those jobs were in jeopardy because of this listing application. To think that the Prime Minister came out with the utterance that “only 500 jobs would be lost”. I wonder how the Prime Minister would feel if suddenly he did not have a job and did not know where the next dollar was going to come from to feed his wife and kids. Would he rely on his wife to do the job for him or would he sit down and cry in Parliament or in front of another television camera and say how sorry he was about the situation his daughter was in? I assure you, Mr Speaker, that there are many people in this State and in other parts of Australia who are suffering as a result of that kind of attitude. They are suffering because they cannot meet their commitments.

This is a Government that is prepared to work, stand up and be counted and make decisions that are not always palatable, but which are in the best interests of this State.

We are not prepared to be dictated to by outside influences such as UNESCO and all the rest who are associated with an organisation that currently has a rating which is far less than that of any decent and fair dinkum organisation and with countries that are a part of that organisation, such as Russia which is not even prepared to pay its way in order to have its vote. It refuses to pay, yet it has a disproportionate amount of say.

If one starts to look at the facts, one can see some of the atrocities that they have committed in other areas. This Government must have the guts to stand up and look after the interests of this State and its heritage. As stated by the Minister back in April, this Government was prepared to talk to the Commonwealth Government, but it cannot get answers from the Commonwealth Government. We could not get answers because Mr Hawke knew damn well what he was going to do. He was going to call an election and run his campaign on the rainforests. He was going to con the conservationists. Let me make one point very clear: I have seen the devastation and I am not prepared to tolerate it any longer. It is time that this Government stood up for what it is all about and protected this State against the tyranny of a Federal Government that could not give a damn about Queensland.

Hon. W. H. GLASSON (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying) (8.01 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate that has taken about 5½ hours. Very little of the debate has been directed to the intent of the Bill. However, it gave many members the opportunity to express their views on what has transpired in north Queensland. I refer to the scuttling of the timber industry by a decision for World Heritage listing of the area of the wet rainforests between Townsville and Cairns. In my reply I shall cite some figures and hopefully reply to the comments made by honourable members.

The Opposition's Forestry spokesman, the member for Mourilyan, Mr Eaton, opened the debate on behalf of the Opposition. I refer to certain comments that he made on the legislation, but more importantly the World Heritage listing of the wet tropics of north Queensland.

The north Queensland sawlog allocations have been reduced in line with the Government's sustained yield policy. Under this long-term policy, the initial rate of operation of the overmature stand has been progressively reduced to the long-term sustained yield of 60 000 cubic metres. The member for Mourilyan referred to the alteration from 80 000 cubic metres to 60 000 cubic metres. The long-term sustained yield of 60 000 cubic metres was revised down from 80 000 cubic metres in 1981 based on improved computerised resource assessment methods and refined conservative estimates of growth and mortality. The Queensland Government negotiated with the Federal Government for 10 months on the rainforest conservation program. The Queensland Government submitted no less than three separate proposals, all of which were rejected. In fact, they were never acknowledged. The Federal Government knew from the start that cessation of rainforest logging was not an option. The Federal Government never made any suggestion, conditional upon the payment of any money or anything else, that cessation would be one of its requirements.

Direct employment in the north Queensland timber industry is now 765 persons. Indirect employment accounts for 378 persons.

The total rainforest-based employment is 1 143. The rainforest-dependent population in north Queensland is 2 858.

It has been Government policy to encourage mill amalgamations and consolidation to reduce allocations in the long-term sustained yield, thereby obtaining larger, more economic processing units. That has been occurring in all areas of the State and nation. Fifty per cent of the structural timber used in south-east Queensland is imported because of the small area of commercial forest in this State. The Government's plantation policy has gone a long way towards redressing the situation through its plantation program, which now supplies 50 per cent of the Crown cut.

The member for Mourilyan criticised the temporary debt overhang. Does he want plantations or not? I ask the same question of the member for Caboolture. If they do not want plantations, some short-term debt is inevitable when 65 per cent of the plantations are under 15 years of age and, as yet, are not producing any revenue. All forestry and marketing policies are discussed with industry. All sectors of the industry were consulted on the rate of reduction of allocations to sustain yield, which the member for Mourilyan criticised. The industry deserves that courtesy from the department and from the Government. There is total investment in the industry. A reduction in allocations will have a detrimental effect on future planning and the livelihood of the industry.

The plantation pulpwood at Gympie and Maryborough, which the member for Mourilyan also criticised, is now fully committed to the CSR particleboard plant and a medium-density fibreboard plant under construction at present by ACI Ltd.

I wish that the member for Bundaberg was in the Chamber now. Although he has been critical in previous contributions in this House, he at least paid a compliment during his speech. He asked, "Why are forests being grown in the area, because they will not be able to be utilised?" Productivity is a function of the species and the site. Queensland has a greater area of softwood plantations than any other State except New South Wales. Southern radiata grows faster than Queensland slash pine but is of lower quality and strength.

The possibility of a chemical pulp-mill in south-east Queensland disappeared when the conservation movement prevented APM from locating a mill at Bribie Island or Beerburrum. APM has since sold its land and has withdrawn from plantation establishment in the State of Queensland. That was brought about by the pressure of the radical conservation and environmental groups within south-east Queensland. The Crown resource involved is now fully committed to ACI.

I turn now to the north Queensland roads that have been mentioned. A road from Hartleys Creek north of Cairns to Southedge holding would be an asset to local and tourist populations. The matter is still subject to negotiation, but I can assure the House, and particularly the honourable member for Mourilyan, that no State Government funds will be allocated to the construction or maintenance of any such road in that location.

I turn now to the contributions that have been made by the honourable member for Toowoomba North, Mr McPhie. I thank him very much for those contributions. I endorse his comments on the efficiency and competence of the State's forestry service and the industry and community services provided. I also agree strongly with his views on World Heritage listings and his condemnation of the Federal Government's proposal to close down rainforest-logging through such a listing. Areas excluded from logging include significant areas of loggable, accessible rainforest in national parks, scientific areas, buffer strips, isolated rainforest areas, etc.

In the State forest areas alone over 50 000 hectares of loggable, accessible rainforests has been excluded from logging on such grounds. That compares with the 160 000 hectares that is available for logging. I believe that this is a balanced management program.

Interjections were made about China. Australia is growing hardwood in China for firewood, pulpwood and hardboard. That is where hardwood plantations provide economic returns. The Government does not want any of those industries in north Queensland; it wants veneer and raw logs to be derived from Queensland's forests. Those are the best products from the native forests.

I turn now to the honourable member for Cairns, Mr De Lacy, who made a lengthy contribution to the debate. I have previously explained why it has been necessary to reduce allocations to the long-term sustainable yield. I must comment on his statement that the forests are running out. I wish to correct that statement. Unfortunately, the honourable member's belief is held by many people in the southern States. This matter was spoken about at this time last year by Dr Keto and other radical conservationists. I believe that all members of this Chamber are conservationists, but they are not radical

conservationists. No honourable member would be prepared to stand by and watch the rainforests of north Queensland degenerate to the extent that they would no longer provide the beauty, charm and environment that they do at present. Queensland's forests are not diminishing. A sustainable yield of 60 000 cubic metres has been arrived at. Indeed, that is no degradation of the rainforests of north Queensland.

Mr De Lacy: That is not true. You are understating it.

Mr GLASSON: It is true, but the honourable member for Cairns and other members would seek to deceive the public. By virtue of the media they will run with it. Dr Aila Keto's exposure in the media would have been worth millions of dollars. Any statement that the Government would wish to get into the media would not be published. The Government has to buy its time. The honourable member for Cairns and others are being deceptive with the facts. That is why the Federal Government seeks to satisfy the whims of the conservationists and environmentalists in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide; never mind about the people of north Queensland or the timber industry. That is not the concern of Mr Hawke or Mr Barry Cohen. That is why, after two or more logging cycles in some cases and after all this supposed degradation and raping of the rainforests which is running us out of timber, the forests are still noted around the world.

Mr De Lacy: That is not right.

Mr GLASSON: Of course they are, because with responsible management the Forestry Department has kept them up to world standard.

Dr Norman Myers has no experience in north Queensland rainforests and no empirical data on our forests. His claims about genetically engineered plantation species have been investigated and proven to be false by the world's forestry authorities. So Opposition members should not talk about the doctor's great findings. Some of the lobbyist groups have called him an eminent scientist.

The map that was produced was issued by the Prime Minister when he announced his intention to World Heritage list the wet tropics. That map was produced on the day that the Prime Minister and Barry Cohen, the Minister for the Environment, were in north Queensland. In a moment, I will refer further to a map. The facts of World Heritage listing are that, regardless of what the Federal Government says, by the act of listing, it will obtain the power to interfere in any activity within that area. Later I will read the activities that the Federal Government can interfere with. What is to stop any future Federal Government from interfering in any aspect of land management such as power generation, roading subdivisions and so on? If the power is there, it will eventually be used by some future Government.

The establishment of hardwood plantations, either rainforest or eucalypt, would be of no benefit to the present north Queensland timber industry. Rainforest species have not yet been successfully produced in plantations. Eucalypts will not produce saw logs in under 50 years and are much less economic than softwood plantations. If the Government embarked upon a hardwood plantation for a 50-year cycle, I wonder what logic the honourable member for Caboolture would apply to the figures. They would be well worth listening to.

I deplore the attacks of the honourable member for Cairns on Messrs Rankine and Kenane for defending their livelihood against reprehensible activities by the Federal Government. If the Federal Government is unable to buy 500 cubic metres of timber that has been ordered for Parliament House furniture, it should be consistent and have all rainforest species removed from the building. No-one could specify whether those timbers were obtained from National Estate areas or not.

I do not doubt that when the Federal Government stops rainforest-logging, the timber will find a ready market and will be much sought after.

Officers of the Forestry Department addressed public meetings in Cairns at the invitation of the organisers. Those organisers were community groups who were worried about the future of the north Queensland timber industry. They were not political groups.

The meetings were non-political and anything said by the forestry officers was confined to factual matters and their interpretation. I make no apology for their appearance at those meetings.

For the benefit of the House, I wish to read a press release issued by the Prime Minister during his visit to north Queensland. It states—

“The Prime Minister and the Minister for Arts, Heritage and Environment the Honourable Barry Cohen, said today that the Government would immediately proceed towards nomination of the Wet Tropics of North-East Queensland to the World Heritage List.”

I heard the honourable member for Cook state that the National Party was a dictatorship. If that is not dictatorship, I ask honourable members to tell me what is.

The article continued—

“As part of the process the Government will be consulting with the Queensland Government and parties with interests in the region and will invite submissions to be made within a period of three months. This process is necessary as a nominations would need to be made by 31 December 1987 for consideration by the World Heritage Committee by the end of 1988.

Discussions with Queensland concerning rainforest conservation have proceeded for ten months.”

I said that earlier.

The statement continues as follows—

“The Government has made a generous and reasonable offer of funds from the National Rainforest Conservation Program in the expectation that Queensland would enter into acceptable rainforest conservation arrangements, particularly for cessation of logging.”

I repeat what I said earlier: never was the cessation of logging discussed between the Commonwealth and State Governments. Never was it part of an agreement that funding would be made available provided the cessation of logging took place. At the eleventh hour, the Prime Minister suddenly said that, because the Queensland Government would not agree to the cessation of logging and chose to uphold its sustained yield position, the area had to be listed. The Queensland Government knows why the Federal Government had to list it.

Mr De Lacy: Of course. We all know why they listed it.

Mr GLASSON: The Federal Government had to list it to appease the people in Sydney and Melbourne, but no consideration was given to the people of north Queensland.

The statement goes on as follows—

“The Government is determined that the outstanding values of the region be protected. The Government is sure that its actions will bring home to the Queensland Government the need to change its approach to management of the region.”

Mr De Lacy: Management will have to be improved. I agree with the Federal Government.

Mr GLASSON: Do not be a hypocrite.

The statement continues—

“In considering nomination of the Wet Tropics, the Government will formally consult the Queensland Government about the decision and, by a process of correspondence and advertisements placed in the national and regional press, will also invite the views of other organisations and individuals with interest in the Wet Tropics.”

To this date, the Queensland Government has not heard one word; yet the honourable member for Cairns, Mr De Lacy, asks, “Will you please co-operate with the Federal

Government?" I believe it is indeed the responsibility of the Queensland Government to take every possible measure to ensure that, if the listing takes place, the people of north Queensland are protected.

The honourable member for Cairns talks about the \$50m that was mentioned. I point out to him that the only funding that was mentioned was in the context of a policy document, as I mentioned by way of interjection earlier in the debate. I quote from an extract from the official ALP policy document issued in respect of the Federal election held on 11 July 1987—

"The Labor Government's commitment to its forestry policy objectives is reflected in its decision to introduce a new broadacre afforestation program with emphasis on native hardwoods.

Our afforestation program will begin a long term task of providing a guaranteed renewable resource for the forest industry. The program will have the complementary objective of assisting the reclamation of those areas subjected to land degradation. High priority will be given to the development of incentives to encourage land owners to establish plantations and windbreaks with high quality timber species."

Reference is made in that statement to windbreaks and assistance for private enterprise. An Opposition member stated earlier that private enterprise could not afford the investment because of the state of production and the long-term return on investment. I will remind the honourable member for Caboolture of that later in my reply. The statement continues—

"The Labor Government will allocate \$15 million over the next three years to the afforestation program. It will seek supplementary industry and State Government support for the program."

That \$15m will be spent over three years and will be used for a program that covers the whole of Australia. Imagine that! It is laughable. It is a joke when one considers the number of people who will be thrown out of employment in north Queensland. Have any members of the Opposition visited Ravenshoe lately? Are the people who live in Ravenshoe happy with the prospect of the World Heritage listing? I know what will happen to Ravenshoe.

For the benefit of those who are not aware of what is meant by "World Heritage listing", I quote the provisions of section 9 (1) headed "Unlawful acts"—

"9 (1) Except with the consent in writing of the Minister, it is unlawful for a person, whether himself or by his servant or agent"—

Mr De LACY: I rise to a point of order. I feel I should draw to your attention, Mr Speaker, that the Minister is misleading the House because he is quoting sections 9 (1) (a) to (g), which have been ruled invalid by the High Court and no longer form part of the World Heritage legislation. That is the campaign that the Queensland Government ran during the Federal election. It is wrong; it is false; it is misleading, and it is being done again now.

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

Mr GLASSON: I have no intention of misleading the House. The honourable member is misleading the House. For his information, I will read a memo, which states—

"Memo from Forestry Department, re World Heritage Properties Conservation Act.

Part (h) of Section 9 (1) of the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act has been validated by the High Court in the Tasmanian Dams Case.

However, the validity of parts (a) to (g) have not been unanimously determined by the High Court.

This memo has been confirmed by Crown Law."

I am not misleading the House. It is only that they have never been put to the test before the High Court and obviously they would probably receive the same consideration as was given in the Gordon below Franklin dam case. So I am not misleading the House. I shall read on to have it inserted in *Hansard*.

Mr De Lacy: You are making a fool of yourself if you do.

Mr GLASSON: Why?

Mr De Lacy: Because the High Court has considered it and ruled on it.

Mr GLASSON: It is obvious that the honourable member does not have a copy of that. It is from the Crown law office.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GLASSON: It has come down from Crown law today.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister to continue without any altercation.

Mr GLASSON: I intend to proceed and read parts (a) to (g).

Mr COMBEN: I rise to a point of order. I understand it is the normal practice of this House—and accords with Standing Orders—for the Opposition to request the tabling of a document from which a Minister has quoted. I respectfully ask if the Minister could table that opinion.

Mr GLASSON: No problem. It will be tabled. Indeed, the maps that I intend to show will be tabled, too.

As I was saying, the section reads—

- “(a) to carry out any excavation works on any property to which this section applies;
- (b) to carry out operations for, or exploratory drilling in connection with, the recovery of minerals on any property to which this section applies;
- (c) to erect a building or other substantial structure on any property to which this section applies or to do any act in the course of, or for the purpose of, the erection of a building or other substantial structure on any property to which this section applies;
- (d) to damage or destroy a building or other substantial structure on any property to which this section applies;
- (e) to kill, cut down or damage any tree on any property to which this section applies;
- (f) to construct or establish any road or vehicular track on any property to which this section applies;
- (g) to use explosives on any property to which this section applies; or
- (h) if an act is prescribed for the purposes of this paragraph in relation to particular property to which this section applies, to do that act in relation to that property.”

That is quite clearly what they say.

I will now refer to the contribution made by the member for Condamine. I strongly endorse his remarks on the viability of rainforest plantations and the misinformation spread on this matter by Dr Myers. The sustainability of selective logging in tropical forests is also endorsed.

I thank the honourable member for Mount Isa for his support of the Bill and I agree that the World Heritage listing has been cynically misused as an election ploy by

the Labor Party. I welcome his endorsement of the legislation as a necessary rationalisation of the current situation.

I thank also the honourable member for Roma for his support. I agree that there is no need for World Heritage listing of the north Queensland rainforest. I welcome his statement that selective logging does not threaten any rainforest species, valuable or otherwise, or reduce genetic diversity. He also highlighted the fact that Federal action in this matter would deny future generations access to the unique timbers of north Queensland. I agree with his scepticism on the alleged benefits of World Heritage listing to the tourist industry. Certainly, the timber industry and tourism are highly compatible. That has been proved over recent years. Claims that we cannot have both are nonsense and, indeed, untrue.

I thank the honourable member for Bundaberg for drawing attention to ACI's medium-density fibreboard project at Gympie. The main benefit from pulpwood and fibreboard manufacture is in the value-added investment and employment which flow from availability of the resource. The major return from softwood plantations is derived from the final harvest of the sawlog component of the forest and the veneer logs.

The Shell project is directed largely at production of fibre for pulping. It is financed by the company and directed at producing export woodchips. There is no justification for expending Government funds in this field. The department has recognised local requirement for sawlogs by establishing softwood plantations primarily for sawlog and veneer log production. The swing away from exports has been dictated by domestic requirements, not by a change of attitude.

I have explained before that productivity depends on the quality of the site and the species which can be grown on that site. Our forestry plantations are closing the gap, owing to our very advanced technology. Economic analysis of our plantations indicates that they are capable of producing a positive rate of return.

The loss reported in north Queensland stumpage was due to a book-keeping error—I admit that—in the assessment of the original stumpage. The error was not discovered until the sale was completed, and was therefore not recoverable. Procedures have been instituted to ensure there can be no recurrence.

I now refer to the contribution made by the member for Caboolture, Mr Hayward. The Queensland Government has no—I repeat the word “no”—unpaid Loan Fund commitments. All liabilities are paid in full by Treasury as they become due. The accumulated loan indebtedness of the Forestry Department to Treasury at 30 June 1987 was \$356,746,000. In addition, unpaid interest on these loans totalled \$136,868,000 at the same date.

Assets established from capital funds advanced are estimated at approximately \$1.3 billion, consisting of—

Plantations	\$1,150,000,000
Native Forests	50,000,000
Roads and bridges	42,000,000
Buildings	40,000,000
Plant and equipment	12,000,000
	<u>\$1,294,000,000</u>

The forest estate developed by this investment is an asset which provides many community benefits in addition to timber and forest products. These include watershed protection, grazing, conservation of soil and the environment, wildlife habitat and recreation.

Roads and facilities built for logging and forest management in the first place have a high continuing value for providing community access to the protected and managed forests for tourism and recreation, scientific studies, education of school groups, grazing, bee-keeping, etc.

Government investment in forestry produces assets of value to the whole community. It is in many ways comparable to similar investment in public facilities such as water storages, roads, parks, etc. It can be justified not only in terms of primary revenues generated but also in terms of the wider community benefits, including the value of dependent industries to local communities.

In the absence of timber production and other commercial forest activities, essential protection and management of the State's forested areas would become a total charge on the community at large, such as with national parks. That was mooted this afternoon by one member on the Opposition benches. He did not consider the funding or management of those areas or the people in north Queensland who will lose their jobs if logging is stopped.

Departmental revenue has increased fourfold in the past 10 years and is expected to treble in the next decade—

Financial Year	Revenue \$
1976-77	6,300,000
1987-88	25,400,000

That is a fourfold increase. With final crop sales of plantation timbers becoming effective in the 1990s, the department's ability to meet commitments is considerably enhanced.

It is reiterated that loan moneys are expended on capital works and the purchase of assets. The department's assets are currently in excess of \$1.3 billion, as indicated above.

The capital funds invested in the establishment of softwood plantations are of a commercial nature and the associated investment is expected to provide a real return of about 4 per cent—that is, the average inflation rate plus 4 per cent.

Loan Fund advances are not obtained to meet short-term operating costs. The department's accounting system provides for administrative, operating and capital expenditures to be clearly identified. The Financial Administration and Audit Act sets the accounting principles to be adopted, and the department complies with those principles.

The latest accounts certified by the Auditor-General were for the 1985-86 financial year. He certified without qualification. I refer to his certificate of 11 August 1986, which was published in the Departmental Accounts Subsidiary to the Public Accounts tabled in the House by the Honourable the Premier and Treasurer of Queensland.

The Government has adopted the cash-accounting basis for departments. I refer honourable members to pages 115 to 119 of the *Guide to Public Financial Administration in Queensland* published by the Treasury in 1982 for a resumé of the arguments for and against the concept of cash accounting and why it was adopted by the Government.

The department has a comprehensive budgeting system, and assets and liabilities are recorded in its books. The department operates a modern computerised accounting system incorporating accounts payable, general ledger and budgetary control modules which provide financial data for decision-making by managers.

Departmental officers prepare the financial statements of the accounts, which are certified by the principal accounting officer and the Conservator of Forests. Subsequent to such preparation, the Auditor-General certifies that he has examined the accounts of the department and provides an opinion as to format, compliance with prescribed requirements and whether the statements present a true and fair view of the transactions for each financial year and of the financial position as at the close of that year.

The minimum area of softwood plantations envisaged by the department is 200 000 hectares, with a cycle period of 35 to 50 years. Of the 159 000 hectares established to date, 114 500 hectares or 65 per cent, are 15 years of age or less and have not yet

produced any revenue. At current rates of planting, revenue flow will not peak until about 2020 AD.

Implementation of the policies of the Government will establish a resource which in the future will not only provide for the needs of Queenslanders but will also reduce imports and make a worthwhile contribution to reduction in the overseas debt by not having to import timber in the quantities now necessary to continue the development of our State.

The Loan Fund advance for the department's capital works program in the 1986-87 financial year was \$27,582,000. A significant part of the expenditure of \$31,320,000 was for—

- (a) establishment of new plantations;
- (b) construction of buildings;
- (c) additional roads and bridges; and
- (d) purchase of vehicles and plant.

These tangible assets will be utilised to generate future revenues to be derived by the department from the sale of forest products.

In contrast, the Federal counterparts of members opposite, who intend for no valid reason other than greenie demands to close down the vital, viable and sustainable north Queensland timber industry, are proposing to cynically waste many million dollars of community funds on useless non-productive compensation and alternative employment projects. They are quite seriously suggesting that all the displaced timber-workers can be employed on establishment of hardwood plantations. In addition to the horrendous cost of initial compensation and land purchase, which will exceed \$100m, this would involve continuing expenditure of at least \$30m per year on a project which will produce no economic return for at least 50 years, with no guarantee of success even then. I challenge any member of the Opposition to prove these statements wrong.

I turn now to the contribution made by the member for Caboolture, Mr Hayward. I will correct some misinterpretations. The member for Caboolture is in error. Borrowings in the 1985-86 financial year were \$26.5m. I do not know where he got the figure of \$47m. Quite obviously, the honourable member cannot have read the document. Borrowings in 1986-87 are of about the same order, not \$50m as stated by the member for Caboolture. Loan funds are used on capital works, not on recurrent expenses. This is quite obvious from the figures shown in the annual report. I ask the honourable member for Caboolture: what is wrong with a review of budgeting and accounting? All systems need reviewing at regular intervals.

The honourable member for Cooroora, Mr Simpson, pointed out that growth in subtropical plantations has been greatly enhanced by the forward-looking research and development program of the Queensland Forestry Department.

I thank the honourable member for Burdekin, Mr Stoneman, for his contribution to this debate and join him in deploring the role of the AWU in the promotion of World Heritage listing of Queensland's tropical rainforests at the expense of members of the union.

I thank the honourable member for Cook for his support of the Bill. His attacks on people who are unable to defend themselves in this forum are totally irrelevant to the Bill and require no further comment from me.

In regard to World Heritage listing—I repeat that the High Court has validated Federal power to act under the World Heritage Convention to protect, in its own way, listed areas. Its power has been validated, and it will undoubtedly use it.

The land-use study referred to by the honourable member for Cook, Mr Scott, was an informal working group involving officers from the departments of Forestry, Mines, Lands and National Parks. The group collected a large body of information, which has

been passed on to the respective departments. The group was not constituted as a decision-making body and is no longer active.

The Cape Tribulation road does not serve any segment of the timber industry. The apparent degradation of rainforest immediately after logging is more apparent than real. After a few years, recovery is complete.

The honourable member for Tablelands, Mr Gilmore, had a very strong appreciation of what the growth of rainforests and their regeneration are all about. I heartily agree that areas zoned from logging in north Queensland should be excluded from World Heritage listing. The honourable member for Tablelands gave one of the clearest and simplest explanations of sustained yield selective logging that I have heard. Additionally he has a very precise understanding of the transition from the first cut to recut logging in an overmature forest.

The view of the honourable member for Windsor, Mr Comben, on World Heritage was totally unconvincing. He has missed the point. World Heritage listing is not at fault. The Federal Government's abuse of the concept to override the Constitution is the problem. None of his rhetoric about overseas tourists will change this.

On plantations alone—anyone can grow rainforest trees. No-one, not even Geoff Tracey, had demonstrated how to grow rainforest trees to sawlog standard in plantation on an economic basis. I ask that those comments be referred to the honourable member for Caboolture, Mr Hayward.

There is no wasteland in North Queensland—I repeat, “no wasteland.” Every hectare up there has an owner and each owner has his price. That price must be met before a plantation can be started. A 40-year cutting cycle is quite feasible in rainforests owing to the growth rate of north Queensland's species.

Victoria has certainly produced a glossy document, but does it state that, since the Labor Government took office in that State, 40 per cent of the productive forests have been locked up on national parks? That has reduced the allowable cut from the State's forests from 1.2m cubic metres to 800 000 cubic metres. We can do without strategic plans of that nature in Queensland.

The long-term plans of the Queensland Forestry Department are contained in two published documents, *Forest Management in Queensland*—Parts 1 and 2—which are available to all members on request.

Mr Comben: Skinny, flimsy little things with no substance whatsoever.

Mr GLASSON: This document has been referred to by an overseas authority as one of the most responsible documents ever to be produced.

Sustained yield is not a matter of how much virgin forest is yet to be logged. It is a question of the net area available for logging, the growing stock on the area and its growth rate. Those factors are demonstrable on the north Queensland forest estate. Any reduction in the area available will reduce the long-term sustainable yield, which is why we oppose any further reduction in this area.

The honourable member for Windsor has proposed dialogue with the conservation movement. That is a waste of time. The Australian Conservation Foundation has already declared its objective of banning timber production from all native forests in Australia. It is well on its way in other States. As the member for Windsor, Mr Comben, said, after north Queensland the next victims on its list are Fraser Island, Cooloola, the Conondales, etc. That is in Dr Keto's firm plan. Members of the Opposition will go hand in hand with her. The honourable member's policy of appeasement of the conservation movement is a death sentence for the timber industry in the great State of Queensland.

I thank the member for Currumbin, Mr Gately, for his support for the Bill. I endorse his views on Federal proposals for World Heritage listing of the north Queensland rainforests.

Mr De Lacy: What about tabling that map you said you were going to table?

Mr GLASSON: This morning I held up a map, which I will now table. It contains the areas listed or nominated for listing in the register of the National Estate. The history of what occurred in Tasmania shows that the conservation movement proposes that all areas held in that estate would become part of World Heritage.

For the benefit of those honourable members who have any concern for north Queensland, I hold up a further map. The areas that are covered by the red lines with circles will be the total area which will be listed in the World Heritage in north Queensland. If the Queensland listing follows the same principles as Tasmania, all that is the National Estate. That is exactly what has been recommended in Tasmania to go on the World Heritage. I refer to the Lemonthyme forest and all the other native forests. I seek leave to table the information.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents on the table.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 33, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

REVOCATION OF STATE FOREST AREAS

Hon. W. H. GLASSON (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying) (8.44 p.m.): I move—

“(i) That this House agrees that the proposal by the Governor in Council to revoke the setting apart and declaration as State Forest under the Forestry Act of:—

- (a) All that piece or part of State Forest 207, parishes of Conondale, Monsildale and Yabba described as portion 82, parish of Yabba as shown on plan FTY.1211 prepared by the Department of Mapping and Surveying and deposited in the office of the Conservator of Forests and containing an area of about 0.6760 of a hectare—and,
- (b) All that piece or part of State Forest 168, parishes of Bendidee and Moogoon described as Area ‘A’ as shown on plan FTY.1337 prepared by the Department of Mapping and Surveying and deposited in the office of the Conservator of Forests and containing an area of 169.7 hectares—and,
- (c) All that piece or part of State Forest 1004, parishes of Como, Goomboorian, Tagigan, Toolara, Ulirrah and Womalah described as Lot 104 on plan MCH 5043 deposited in the office of the Department of Mapping and Surveying and containing an area of 5.141 hectares—and,
- (d) All that piece or part of State Forest 779, parish of Gregory described as portion 159, parish of Gregory as shown on plan FTY.1340 prepared by the Department of Mapping and Surveying and deposited in the office of the Conservator of Forests and containing an area of about 102 hectares,

be carried out.

(ii) That Mr Speaker convey a copy of this Resolution to the Minister for submission to His Excellency the Governor in Council.”

These proposals make provision for the excision of land from State forests near Jimna, Goondiwindi, Rainbow Beach and Childers. I would like to mention at this

junction that all four proposals have been carefully considered by the Conservator of Forests and have his endorsement.

Turning now to the proposals before the House—the first involves the excision of an area of about 0.6760 of a hectare from State forest 207, parishes of Conondale, Monsildale and Yabba.

The Department of Forestry undertook an investigation to determine a suitable site for the relocating of the headquarters for the Jimna forestry sub-district. It was considered essential that a new complex be established on an alternative site as the then existing office comprised an old converted residential barracks poorly appointed and sited for office use. The site chosen for relocation forms part of the forest estate and lies in close proximity to the old headquarters site. Construction of the new complex was carried out under the supervision of the Department of Works and provides a well-accepted level of accommodation for departmental staff.

Upon its excision from the State forest, it is proposed to have the subject land set apart as a departmental and official purposes reserve under the control of the Conservator of Forests as trustee. This type of land tenure is considered the most appropriate in the circumstances. The area will not pass from Crown control.

The next proposal provides for the exclusion from State forest 168, parishes of Bendidee and Moogoon, of an area of 169.7 hectares. This area forms part of a larger section of the State forest which for a number of years has been utilised for grazing purposes under special lease tenure.

The lessee, who holds the adjoining property under agricultural farm, has made application to have this section of his leased land excluded from the forest estate to permit its inclusion in the adjoining agricultural farm. All merchantable timber has been logged from the subject land and its excision from the State forest will have little adverse effect on the management of the balance of the reserve. Its best future use is considered to be for agricultural development and, accordingly, I am not opposed to its revocation from the State forest. The lessee has agreed to meet all costs in this matter, including survey.

The third proposal deals with the proposed excision from State forest 1004, parish of Toolara, of an area of 5.141 hectares now described as Lot 104 on plan MCH 5043. To service the growing population of the Cooloola coast region, the Widee Shire Council initiated an investigation to locate a parcel of land for utilisation as a cemetery. The site most favoured by the council is situated adjacent to the Rainbow Beach road approximately 5.5 kilometres from the Tin Can Bay road junction.

Following a thorough investigation of the availability of alternative sites, the Department of Forestry is now prepared, in the public interest, to relinquish its management control over the area to enable the land to be utilised for the purpose sought. The subject area carries no merchantable timber and accordingly its excision would not have any detrimental effect on Crown log supplies to the sawmilling industry.

The fourth proposal seeks the excision from State forest 779, parish of Gregory, of an area of about 102 hectares, described as portion 159, parish of Gregory. This parcel of land is completely severed from the main body of the State forest by tracts of freehold land. The subject land is sought by the Isis Shire Council for reservation as a gravel reserve under its control.

For a number of years the land concerned has been utilised for grazing under special lease tenure. The council has now been successful in having the lessee surrender his lease to permit its management as a gravel reserve. Investigations have disclosed that Portion 159 contains extensive quantities of material well suited for road construction and maintenance. Supplies of this type of gravel elsewhere in the shire are extremely limited. The area carries only a small quantity of merchantable hardwood timber and its loss as a timber-producing area would not have any detrimental effect on the established sawmills drawing Crown log timber supplies from this region. Again, the excision of this

parcel of land from the forest estate would have no adverse effect on the management of the balance of the reserve.

I strongly support all of these proposals and commend them for the approval of the House.

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (8.50 p.m.): In commenting on this revocation of State forest, I indicate that the Opposition agrees that the land that is part of State forest 207 should be set apart as a departmental and official purposes reserve. The Opposition agrees that part of State forest 1004 be located as a parcel of land for utilisation as a cemetery by the Widgee Shire Council. It also agrees that State forest 779 be used as a gravel reserve. The benefits will be to the community. The Opposition supports the surrender of State forest for those purposes.

I ask the Minister a question about the second proposed revocation. The reason that I am concerned about the revocation of part of State forest 168 is that for a number of years it has been utilised for grazing. In the past, on behalf of my constituents, I have asked for an addition to a farm of State forest area—in one instance, 10 acres—and it was rejected because it was not Forestry Department policy to surrender its land. In this case, the land has been under lease for some time, yet the Minister has no objection to the lease being joined onto the present lease of the farmer. I assume that it is for an agricultural lease. However, the Minister does not say whether it is freehold or what the value of it is.

Mr Glasson: It is a lease.

Mr EATON: Is it a freehold lease?

Mr Glasson: No.

Mr EATON: The Opposition will certainly support that.

In the past, the Government has surrendered land under the freehold leasing tenure and quite often it has not been beneficial to the State in the long term. The Opposition has been concerned for some time that the Government is losing revenue. The Government receives a short-term benefit, in that the price of the conversion is put into its coffers; but, in the long term, it is selling the assets of Queenslanders and receiving no income. After the sale, the only people who receive income from the land are the various Government departments, such as the Stamp Duties Office, the legal fraternity and the shire councils through rates. By freeholding land, the Government loses all revenue-earning avenues.

Freehold land has been in great demand in Queensland for the family unit and people who wish to buy a small block of land to settle on and raise their families. That is the area of concern that the Opposition has whenever the Government gives any Crown land or land of any tenure to the community. It believes that, when land is available, it should be put up for ballot so that the rich and the poor have the same opportunity of taking up land so that not just one section of the community is catered for.

I am happy that the Minister has said that it is not a freeholding lease. No doubt the Minister knows more than the Opposition about that. Under those circumstances, I do not see that the Opposition can offer any opposition to the revocation of the State forest areas. The Opposition agrees with the Minister.

Mr BEARD (Mount Isa) (8.53 p.m.): In his speech the Minister stated—

“I would like to mention at this juncture that all four proposals have been carefully considered by the Conservator of Forests and have his endorsement.”

That sums up the Liberal Party's attitude to this motion. I believe that the question asked by the member for Mourilyan was valid and that it was answered effectively across the floor by the Minister. The Liberal Party sees this as a modest and reasonable proposal and has no objection.

Mr COMBEN (Windsor) (8.54 p.m.): May I have the indulgence of the House for a moment? I would like to refer to matters that the Minister raised in the previous debate when dealing with forestry, which is now being considered in this revocation. The Minister tabled a document from the Department of Forestry relating to section 9 (1) of the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act, which stated the validity of certain parts "have not been unanimously determined by the High Court". I have with me the Australian Law Reports on that judgment. The answers given quite clearly by the High Court in that matter are that section 9 (1) (h) is valid but that the remainder of section 9 (1) and section 9 (2) are invalid.

I do not know what legal advice the Minister has received. I have just cited a decision of the High Court on section 9, which was the point of some debate previously. The decision reads quite clearly that section 9 (1) (h) is valid, as the Minister said, but that the remainder of subsections (1) and (2) are invalid. The Minister's legal advice—and this memo has been confirmed by Crown law—is clearly wrong. There is no ambiguity about it whatsoever. The Minister's advice does say, however, that the validity of parts (a) to (g) have not been unanimously determined by the High Court. The word "unanimously" there means nothing. The High Court has determined that those sections are invalid. The Minister's advice is clearly wrong. I suggest that he refer it back to Crown law immediately.

Mr Glasson: You are saying that they are wrong?

Mr COMBEN: No. I am saying that the Australian Law Reports say that the Minister is wrong. The decision is quite clear. There is nothing unclear in reading a decision of five judges.

I turn now to the motion for revocation that is being considered tonight. The point has been made by my colleague the honourable member for Mourilyan, Mr Eaton, and the honourable member for Mount Isa that these proposals have been carefully considered by the Conservator of Forests and bear his endorsement. On that basis, neither opposition party has any objection to the revocation. However, it must always be remembered—and I add this caveat—that, when 281.6 hectares is to be revoked, honourable members rely on the Minister's good offices to say that these matters are what they appear to be.

The second part of the proposal refers to the excision of certain areas of land from part of a larger area which has been utilised for grazing for a number of years under special lease tenure. That is something that could be open to manipulation. The Minister has given the assurance that the possibility of altering the tenure to freehold cannot arise after the motion of revocation is agreed to. However, honourable members rely on the Minister to tell them what the areas will be used for. When I find that Rainbow Beach is one of the areas, I am always a little concerned. Many large tourist developments have been undertaken on Crown land. No statutory assurance has been provided to ensure that the areas revoked this evening will be used for the purpose that has been stated. To that extent, I reiterate that honourable members rely upon the Minister.

The first proposal relates to the excision of half a hectare to provide a site for the Jimna forest and subdistrict headquarters. I wonder why it is necessary to have an area excised and set apart as a departmental or official purposes reserve in terms of the Land Act. The former headquarters located nearby were never under such a lease and were never given such status. Those premises were merely part of the State forest. I can see no reason why that separate arrangement should be made, but the Minister must have his reasons. A great deal of time, effort and tax-payers' money has gone into that revocation. I hope that substantial justification exists for it.

Earlier I mentioned the second part of the proposal, which relates to 169.7 hectares that will form part of a larger area. The Minister has said that the loss of that area of land from the State forest would have little detrimental effect on the management of the balance of the reserve. Obviously, some detrimental effect will occur. I only hope that no-one is receiving a fairly substantial lease benefit at the expense of a small part of a State forest that belongs to the State's tax-payers.

The first two proposals need to be carefully examined, but I will certainly not be the first member in this House to say that the third part of the proposal involves excision of approximately 5 hectares of land that will be turned into a cemetery. I suppose that the dead have to be buried somewhere.

A former member from Townsville, the late Tom Aikens, made a comment in this House when the Cemetery Act was being debated—the provisions referred to the decorous disposal of bodies—that he believed that his body should be cut up and fed to the crows because that would serve a good purpose. I am not sure what the good people of the Widege Shire would do if they were not allowed to have a cemetery. I certainly do not oppose that third part of the proposal.

The fourth part of the proposal relates to a gravel reserve. Again, I express slight reservations about revocations near Rainbow Beach. However, Opposition members accept the Minister's word. On that basis, I support the comments made by my colleague the shadow Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying. Although it is always sad when forestlands are revoked for purposes other than total nature conservation, the Opposition has no objection to the revocations.

Hon. W. H. GLASSON (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying) (9.01 p.m.), in reply: I wish to reply to the comments of the Opposition spokesman, the member for Mourilyan. I refer to the speech with which I commenced the debate. The simple fact is that leasehold land and freehold land cannot be amalgamated into one parcel. It is an agricultural farm.

Motion agreed to.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 17 March (see p. 774).

Mr BRADDY (Rockhampton) (9.02 p.m.): This is one of those fairly rare occasions on which matters relating to consumer affairs are able to be debated specifically in the House. The Bill contains a relatively small amendment. At the outset I indicate that the Opposition does not oppose the amendment and in fact it will be supporting it.

However, it is with considerable reluctance that the Opposition in fact concedes that it should support the amendment, because it does have wholesale reservations about the Consumer Affairs Act in Queensland and the conduct of consumer affairs by the Queensland Government. Indeed, I should say that it compares very unfavourably with the trends elsewhere in Australia, particular those displayed by the Commonwealth Government. I refer particularly not to my parliamentary colleague from Rockhampton, Mr Keith Wright, but to the recent action of the Commonwealth Government in appointing Mr Peter Staples as the first Federal Consumer Affairs Minister with the specific responsibility of looking after consumer affairs. Indeed, the Opposition welcomes that appointment and the chance that it gives people throughout Australia to co-ordinate the consumer affairs movement.

As I was suggesting, the actions of the Queensland Government compare unfavourably with the action of the Federal Government. For example, Queensland does not really have a specifically appointed consumer affairs Minister. The Minister responsible for administering consumer affairs, of course, is Mr Lester, but he is not given the title. His ministerial title does not officially list him as the Minister for consumer affairs. His letterhead does not contain any acknowledgment that the Ministry of consumer affairs is his. That therefore indicates the reality of this Government's attitude to consumer affairs. The National Party Government of Queensland regards consumer affairs as, at best, an afterthought. I suggest it does not even regard consumer affairs as that; I suggest it regards it in many ways as something that is painfully necessary which it must put up with.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I suggest through you to the Minister and the Government that a thorough review of consumer affairs in Queensland is due. The legislation, the conduct of the department and the general attitude or change of attitude as to where it is going also need to be reviewed. If this Government wishes to match the advocacy and efficacy of the Commonwealth Labor Government, which has a specific Minister administering the Consumer Affairs portfolio, it has a long way to go.

In real terms, consumer protection in Queensland has, I suggest, fallen far behind that in other States let alone the Commonwealth Government. Indeed, where other States have accelerated their interest in consumer affairs, Queensland has in real terms gone backwards. I suggest that prosecution of offenders in relation to consumer affairs in Queensland is generally not effective. It is not in effect a deterrent to people who breach consumer affairs standards. There is little follow-up; the fines are totally inadequate and traders basically believe they can ignore the directions that should be coming to them under the Consumer Affairs Act.

I suggest again that control over consumer affairs is spread over too many departments; it needs consolidation. First, the Government should acknowledge that in effect this piece of legislation is inadequate and insufficient and should be scrapped. Of course, before the scrapping of the legislation there should be widespread consultation with people involved in consumer affairs and with the Consumer Affairs Bureau so that an adequate, acceptable piece of legislation can be placed on the statute-book of Queensland.

In relation to this legislation, I also refer to the Consumer Affairs Council, which is set up under the present legislation to advise the Minister on a broad spectrum of issues. I suggest that that council should be more truly representative of consumers. The current set-up under the legislation provides for appointees to represent consumers. In fact, I suggest that only one of the current appointees is specifically a representative of consumers. Several others come from organisations that, at a stretch, could be regarded as consumer organisations. So out of 12 people, one representative from the consumer affairs movement is all that the Minister can bring himself to appoint to the Consumer Affairs Council.

I also suggest that the Minister should look at amending the legislation as it relates to hazardous and defective goods. The difficulties and defects in the present legislation relate to the fact that there are no powers to compel people to remove products from the market-place. I suggest that, in 1987, for legislation that is supposed to protect consumers not to have the power to compel companies and traders to recall products is a substantial defect that the Minister should look to and remedy as a matter of urgency.

I also criticise constructively the employment of staff of the Consumer Affairs Bureau throughout Queensland. At the present time the inspectorial staff for consumer affairs are concentrated in Brisbane and Rockhampton. For staff to be effective in protecting consumers, they must travel. I suggest that in Brisbane the bureau is overloaded. In fact, it is so overloaded that the staff there are referring consumers with complaints and problems to various voluntary and community organisations for help and advice so that they can have their problems rectified.

I further suggest that the Queensland Government and the department must make a greater effort in consumer education. From time to time newspapers and the electronic media carry advertisements relating to consumer education. However, I believe that this is merely a token effort and that it is insufficient in the current times. From watching consumer complaints that have been aired on current affairs programs, it is obvious that a large number of people in Australia, and in Queensland in particular, are taken in by confidence people. From time to time the Minister mentions this. Tonight I was watching *The Investigators*. Because the Minister had referred to a particular organisation that was printing books at great expense, he was referred to favourably in that program. Of course, as I say, that is a token effort. How many people watch *The Investigators*? How many children are growing up without the ability to assess where they are going in relation to consumer matters?

Mr Elliott: Haven't you read the pamphlets that Vince puts out through the Education Department? There is one for every school in my electorate.

Mr BRADDY: What I am saying is that the Government has to get to the children who do not readily pick up Vince's pamphlets, as they were referred to by the interjector a moment ago.

Mr Casey: If the kids picked them up, they would throw them away in fright.

Mr BRADDY: Children would be the last people who would be likely to pick up those pamphlets.

What is needed is education in the schools, not pamphlets which very few adults and no children read. What is needed is a course which is run through the Education Department, with its consent and co-operation, and which gives a general grounding in consumer affairs. Such courses have been conducted in other places.

That is something that the Minister and his department should look into because it is clear that many people are still being taken in. Even apart from people being taken in, there needs to be a sound consumer education as part of our life-style. It is recognised that people now have to be trained to budget and to understand budgets. They also have to be able to understand market forces and how sometimes unrestricted market forces will lead people to lose money in a way that is unfair and unjust, particularly in difficult times.

I suggest that when the Minister is attending to any of the matters to which I have referred, he does so in a co-ordinated and disciplined manner. Unfortunately, recently honourable members saw an example of what happens when things are done in an undisciplined, unco-ordinated and what appears to be an impulsive manner. Not only are people hurt but also in some cases financial disasters flow from those actions. Of course, I am referring to the recent extended trading hours trial.

I refer to the report on trading hours in Queensland of July 1987 which was recently presented by the Trading Hours Investigation Committee. At page 64 of that report the following appears—

“The trial was implemented at short notice and it produced some large problems for many small retailers. Trading at the Christmas/New Year period is different to the rest of the year in that it is a time when substantial gift buying takes place and special goods and foods related to the Christmas festivities are purchased. These goods have to be ordered by retailers many months in advance of the Christmas trading period.”

On page 65 the report continues as follows—

“The effect of the trial on small retailers was substantial. In many cases, small retailers were left with large quantities of special Christmas stock—Christmas cards, decorations, hams and such like—which could not be returned to the wholesaler and which could not be sold. In addition, many lost sales to the larger stores. Many small retailers suffered a substantial financial loss during the trial.”

The relevance of that report to this particular legislation is, of course, as I say, the necessity for Government and a Government Minister to be cautious, to be careful and to be disciplined in matters involving substantial sums of money and people's lives.

In regard to my proposals relating to consumer affairs, it is obvious that the Minister should consult widely in advance and be careful to ensure that any changes are made in such a way that all people concerned have a chance to have their say and not to be affected in a way which is unfavourable unless they are people who deserve to be so affected by the changes.

Again, comments should not be made by the Minister while inquiries are being made. In its report the Trading Hours Investigation Committee in effect disciplined the Minister.

In the foreword to that same report can be found the following statement—

“As a result of a report in the Courier-Mail of May 11, 1987, wherein it was alleged that the Honourable the Minister had stated that unrestricted trading hours would not be introduced in Queensland, the Committee considered its position at a meeting on May 12. It was agreed that the Committee’s credibility as an independent committee had been prejudiced by the alleged remarks of the Minister on unrestricted trading hours.

The Committee had at that date completed all but a few of the hearings and considered all submissions and had reached a decision in general terms as to the recommendations on the Terms of Reference. The Committee therefore decided that in the absence of further such statements, it would continue rather than waste all of the work undertaken to that date.”

If ever a Government-appointed committee said to a Minister, “You also must be disciplined. You also can totally prejudice a report before it is even handed down”, then it is contained in that foreword to the Trading Hours Investigation Committee’s report handed down in July 1987. Whilst I urge the Minister to conduct a detailed investigation of his department and his legislation, I suggest that it must be done with the kind of discipline with which these sorts of inquiries should be conducted and that this legislation should contain.

I draw the Minister’s attention to a matter which, on indications from this Government, may arise in the future. At different times there have been rumours and statements from various other departments about the possible establishment of a food irradiation plant in Queensland. The Opposition is waiting for the Government to make official statements in this regard. I hope that, before any statements are made, the Minister responsible for consumer affairs is called upon by his Government to have an input into any discussions and that he ensures that his department is looking at the possibility of the establishment a food irradiation plant, even though it may not eventuate. The Minister will then have regulations in place to ensure suitable labelling and markings in the event of his Government’s proceeding with this plant as it has indicated or, as some people would say, threatened to do. This is an area in which the Minister responsible for consumer affairs should be active.

The difficulty is that the National Party Government does not really take the Consumer Affairs portfolio seriously. There is no specific Minister for consumer affairs. It is something that is tacked on to the portfolio of the Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs, Mr Lester, as he passes through the corridors of power. Consumer affairs does not appear on the Minister’s letterhead. Honourable members can congratulate the recently re-elected Hawke Government on its appointment of a specific Minister for Consumer Affairs, but can offer no such congratulations to the Queensland Government after its re-election in November 1986. After the Bjelke-Petersen Government was returned to office in 1986, consumer affairs was again treated with the scant respect with which it had been treated prior to that time.

All the areas that I have pointed out need looking at and strengthening. There must be greater co-ordination and a better relationship between the voluntary consumer affairs organisations and this Government. The voluntary organisations will not give the respect to and provide communication with this Government until it indicates that it treats consumer affairs seriously and not as something that it must put up with. People in the community will complain about matters from time to time and that is the only reason why the Government pays any attention at all to consumer affairs.

The Opposition reluctantly supports this legislation, not because the legislation in itself is wrong, but because of the paucity of the amendment and the failure of the Government to substantially amend the Act and give Queenslanders the consumer affairs legislation that they deserve. Because of this paucity and lack of foresight, the Opposition reluctantly agrees with the amendment as it is framed and seriously suggests to the

Government that during the course of the next six months substantial reforms be put before this Parliament in relation to consumer affairs.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah—Leader of the Liberal Party) (9.22 p.m.): I support the legislation, which is commendable. I want to make some special points. Having been the Minister who produced most of the consumer affairs legislation of this State in the seventies, I have taken special interest in some of the matters contained in the Bill. The introduction of the Consumer Affairs Act in 1970 was intended to protect people in the community who would not be able easily to have access to lawyers, corporate support and other agencies that big corporations, employers and retailers might have. The proposal in the legislation is to extend to small businesses that same type of access to the Consumer Affairs Bureau and other agencies of the State for the purchase of their tools of trade, their furniture and fittings, motor cars and so on, but not necessarily the goods that they may retail. It is an innovation that is supported by the Liberal Party. Of course, there is room for it. It must be pointed out that in their particular businesses and callings most small-businessmen have access to continuing legal advice. They have access also to other agencies to assist them in dealing with suppliers.

One of the reasons for the existence of this legislation and the Consumer Affairs Bureau is that most people are ignorant of the law. Many people have the law on their side but do not know how to use it or do not realise that the law is on their side. I am sure that all members of this Chamber have had people come to their electorate offices to outline a retailing complaint. Having examined the matter, honourable members may have found that the law is very much on the consumer's side and that he just does not know how to take advantage of it. So the Consumer Affairs Bureau plays a very important role in advising people where to go. I hope that that continues to be the policy. It would be a pity if people were to ask the Government or a Government agency to do all the work on their behalf when they are quite capable of using the agencies that are available. Now that legal aid is available very widely in the community in various forms, once people know that the law is on their side and that information is available to help them, there is very little excuse for their not taking advantage of the agencies that now exist.

People enjoy and do have legal rights in our community. Unlike people in many other countries of the world, Australians have rights that they should exercise. I do not know how many times that I have advised people to take advantage of their rights to redress a wrong that has been done or appears to have been done to them. I must say with some degree of satisfaction—I am sure every member has shared a similar experience—that people who exercise their rights in the correct way are often rewarded by success.

Today, the business community is far more sensitive about consumer needs and requirements than it was 20 years ago. There are always those who will take advantage of unsuspecting consumers. Consumers make assumptions that parliamentarians are making laws to look after their interests. A reasonable assumption it is, too. Unfortunately, many people fail to take advantage of the laws that we provide. In this particular case, as the Minister pointed out on his visits round the State, many people in business, while they may be dealing with consumer items in a legitimate operation of their business, are also consumers in their own right and should have access to these advisory bodies. The Liberal Party supports this very worthwhile and logical amendment to the Consumer Affairs Act. I am sure that it will be very helpful.

The previous speaker pointed out that there was no law regarding the recall of products. Of course, he was incorrect in that statement. Several laws in this State relate to the recall of consumer items. The powers to recall products are strongest under the Health Act, which provides for dangerous goods to be taken off the market instantly. The Explosives Act and other Acts also provide for the recall of dangerous products. In fact, a whole range of legislation looks after not only the standards of goods that are distributed within the community but also looks after the interests of consumers. Many Acts of Parliament have the power to remove from the market items relating to health,

food, primary industries, etc. A public servant, a Minister or the Governor in Council has the power to take products off the market. Those products range from toys, which have often been removed from the market in this State and elsewhere, to food of various types, which in some circumstances can be dangerous. The powers to recall products exist in a lot of legislation. The Liberal Party supports the proposed amendments.

Ms WARNER (South Brisbane) (9.28 p.m.): I support the proposed amendments to the legislation. However, because they will have very little effect upon the Consumer Affairs Act, it seems irrelevant to spend time debating them.

There is one issue that should be brought to people's notice. As this Government makes no secret of its basic philosophies, no matter how bizarre its ideas might be, it is obvious that in this State this Government would not be very interested in protecting the rights of ordinary people from unscrupulous traders. After all, the Government stands on its record of being a Government that protects the interests of free enterprise—the wealthy few—and defends those interests to the detriment particularly in consumer affairs cases—of the interests of ordinary people who simply want a fair go.

As I said, the principal amendment is a little bit irrelevant. It does little or nothing to strengthen the crying need for greater consumer protection in Queensland.

All honourable members would have received complaints from constituents who have asked for support. Basically, their only recourse is to go to the Consumer Affairs Bureau. I will elaborate on that aspect later.

The amendment attempts to redefine the meaning of the word "consumer". It fails to do that adequately. There is still no workable definition.

In a situation of complex trading regulations, one of the things that are required is clarity of the meaning of consumers' rights.

The other purpose of the amendment is to set a financial limit of \$40,000 on transactions that qualify under the Act. However, the Government does nothing to clarify the existing terminology of the Act. Honourable members do not really know what it means. It is possible to minimise that confusion with a little bit of thought. As the Opposition spokesman suggested, some careful thinking—not knee-jerk reactions but a careful look at what is needed in this regard—is required. At the moment the Act contains a whole lot of jargon which is so confusing that sections are quite often not even implemented.

For some time consumer organisations have been quite articulately calling for some realistic and necessary amendments that would not only clarify consumer rights but also give the legislation in Queensland real teeth so that consumers could be adequately protected.

The Consumer Affairs Act is designed to protect consumers, obvious though that might be, from unfair trading practices by ensuring that consumers have some recourse to action against traders who have written them off. At present Queensland traders feel that they have no obligation under the Consumer Affairs Act. They know that they can get away with it. After all, why would they worry about the rights of ordinary people when they have this Government to protect them?

It is clear that on previous occasions the Government has sided consistently with those who have money and consistently against those who have no money, power or influence. One of the problems that consumer organisations face is that they have to try to influence the Government to be more sympathetic and more responsive to a very complex and difficult situation in which ordinary consumers are not protected.

Earlier today, the honourable member for Currumbin talked about the United Nations and its guide-lines. In 1985, the United Nations set out some guide-lines about what consumer rights may be and what have been established as legitimate rights for citizens all over the world. It is important for the Minister to know and to remember what those rights are. They are the right to safety, the right to be informed, the right to choose, the right to be heard, the right to redress, the right to consumer education and

the right to a healthy environment. In the light of those objectives, it is remarkable that all the Government can do is play around with definitions, and to do that badly as well.

What about the introduction of some serious amendments to the powers of prosecution under this Act? What about the introduction of some serious amendments to the Act to clarify what it means? What about the Minister and his department taking some serious action to protect consumers?

In 1985, the Minister increased penalties under this Act by some 500 per cent. That is quite impressive, but not when one considers that the maximum penalty under this Act is only \$5,000, a mere parking ticket to some of the concerns about which I am talking. To some of the medium to large companies, \$5,000 does not mean anything.

Of the 88 prosecutions in 1985-86, only 13, or 15 per cent, were basic consumer-protection offences. The other 75 cases, or 85 per cent, were offences for failure to supply information. Does that mean that if a trader is suspected of engaging in unscrupulous practices the Consumer Affairs Bureau contacts him, asks for information and prosecutes him for his failure to provide that information but does not tackle the substantive question of whether or not there has been an unfair practice? Of the other 13 cases, 12 were prosecutions for providing false information—again, not the substantive practice. No determinations were made about the unfair situations in which consumers had found themselves.

An illustration of the ineffectiveness of the bureau's investigations and prosecution activity is the recent experience that I had in October last year when I tried to assist a constituent who came to see me with a problem related to an organisation called Consumer Guard. Do honourable members recall what that case was all about? Traders paid between \$6,000 and \$12,000, depending on their turn-over, and they were given a little logo to stick on their window.

Mr McPhie: That's good.

Ms WARNER: Yes, it is good.

That logo was supposed to encourage and reassure customers that the firm with the logo was somehow more reputable than another firm without the logo. Traders assumed—wrongly, as it turned out—that Consumer Guard would underwrite them in the event of any financial difficulties. That was the import of the propaganda and the advertisements that Consumer Guard put out, so traders paid money in good faith to the company. They bought the logo and thought that they were getting some kind of insurance. In fact, when a number of traders did get into financial difficulties and their customers went to Consumer Guard to get reimbursed, they were told that Consumer Guard had no responsibility in that matter. I raised the matter in this Parliament. I was vilified in the press by Consumer Guard, which took out three full-page advertisements against me costing approximately \$12,000. Consumer Guard would have been better using that money to reimburse its customers.

I went to the Consumer Affairs Bureau, which simply ducked the issue. Officers in that organisation simply did not want to know. They said, "Oh yes, it is a bit of a ticklish problem, but there is really nothing that we can do because our hands are tied." In the end result, the Federal Insurance Commissioner stepped in and suspended the activities of Consumer Guard. Ever since, Consumer Guard has been out of operation; but that did not happen until many people had been ripped off to the tune of millions of dollars because of the lethargy and inertia on the part of the Queensland Government. The Queensland Government knew about the matter because it had been raised in the House; moreover, consumer organisations had raised the issue of the legitimacy of Consumer Guard when it first started its practices, but nothing was done. Suddenly it became clear to everybody that Consumer Guard was obtaining money from traders under totally false pretences.

Because nothing had been done at the State level, the Federal Government had to step in and take action. That is a glaring example of the gross inadequacy of consumer

protection in this State. For 2½ years, nothing was done while millions of dollars were being ripped off people. Everyone knew that it was happening because several television programs had been broadcast; yet nothing was done at the State level.

The Minister ought to be more sincere about the issue of consumer protection and step in and do something when it is quite clear that there are legitimate grievances about consumer issues. To date, whenever I have tried to contact the Consumer Affairs Bureau, I have simply been fobbed off. The issue has been tied up in red tape and nothing happens. Consumer protection in Queensland is a poor imitation of the real activity that occurs in other States, particularly in New South Wales.

Enactment of legislation is only as effective as the Minister and the departmental officers who administer the Acts. As I said previously, the Opposition can have no confidence in this Minister or in this Government because they do not have any sincere desire to offer effective consumer protection. Their basic philosophy is that commercial interests are more worthy of support than are the interests of ordinary people. That is all that can be assumed from the Government's inactivity and from the paucity of a Government profile on this issue.

Both the existing Act and the manner in which it is policed are totally inadequate to protect the public and inadequate for the setting-up and acceptance of decent trading practices in this State. The sad fact of the matter is that Queensland has only token legislation that pretends to offer protection. The reality is that protection is a myth. Armed with this inadequate legislation and an inadequate Government policy, which is probably more important than the letter of the legislation, the bureau simply allows consumers to fall into traders' traps and then fails to help them.

The shadow Minister mentioned that consumer education is grossly lacking in this State. There is no awareness of consumer education in Queensland schools. Although the Minister for Education insists that creation science should be taught in schools, he has not insisted on children learning the basic facts of life to enable them to be consumers in a complex society.

Mr Littleproud: Are you sure about that?

Ms WARNER: There is no basic consumer education in Queensland schools. No effort has been made to inform people of their rights.

The problem for the bureau is that it has confined itself mainly to educational aspects but it has not been given proper resources to do that. I am also aware that not enough prosecution is being undertaken. The legislation has no teeth and there is not enough commitment on the part of the Government to consumer protection. Although there is a desire to help on the part of the bureau, obviously it is not being given the facilities to do the job that it is being asked to do.

This is an age in which plastic credit cards are being increasingly used. People get into difficulty very easily when they are given this new toy, which is probably a Bankcard or a credit card. Again, this is a matter for consumer protection and consumer interest. Welfare agencies are being inundated with problems that people get into because of the misuse of credit cards. The Government does nothing to educate our children on that issue.

Initially Queensland was slow to introduce consumer protection legislation, and now I suspect it would be deemed an act of treachery to provide adequate consumer protection because it offends against the basic free-enterprise spirit that this Government promotes to the disadvantage of ordinary citizens. Enterprise must be free; it must be free to make a fast buck, it must be free to create a con and it must be free to defraud by false promise or by shoddy goods. The protection of the majority from the unscrupulous, self-seeking minority has never been the hallmark of this Government. That attitude extends across a number of policy areas in which the minority are able to take the majority for a ride while the Government stands by and does nothing. In fact, it quite often moves to protect the interests of the minority against the majority. By doing that

the Government stands indicted not only in this policy area but also in a whole range of others. It can quite clearly be demonstrated that in the area of consumer protection the Government has shown a lack of interest, a lack of resolve and a lack of sincerity. I wish that some sort of comprehensive legislation would be introduced to produce a Consumer Affairs Bureau which has some teeth and energy to tackle the problem that exists today.

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs) (9.43 p.m.), in reply: I thank all honourable members who have contributed to this debate. Although the debate has been brief, it has dealt with a very important subject. The legislation recognises that small business does at least have some claim as far as the Consumer Affairs Bureau is concerned, whereas previously if a small business was involved in a transaction and it was ripped off, then it had no recourse to the Consumer Affairs Bureau. For that reason the legislation is very important.

I will be referring to the comments made by all speakers in the debate. I have taken great care to write them all down and I will give a very comprehensive reply to what everybody has said.

Mr McElligott: You didn't move.

Mr LESTER: If the honourable member opposite were to listen, he would find that I have moved and he will be for ever grateful because he will be able to tell his people in Townsville what he has learned here in Parliament tonight.

Mr Goss: And what you have learned, too.

Mr LESTER: We all learn something, and the day when we stop learning is the day that we should give up.

The honourable member for Rockhampton made a conscious effort to make a meaningful contribution to the debate. The Consumer Affairs Council is presently looking at the Consumer Affairs Act and will be making recommendations in the near future. The council has a wide cross-section of representation, including two members of industrial unions. The unions have been included so that they can have their say. It cannot be said that the Government has not been fair on this occasion.

The Consumer Affairs Bureau investigates complaints received from consumers. This amendment does not lessen the protection that consumers have. The Consumer Affairs Bureau itself is undertaking an internal review of its role. That is very important. Much that is very good will come out of that review.

I also indicate that 22 departmental industrial inspectors act also as consumer affairs inspectors. In times of public service ceilings which apply in every part of Australia, that is a most effective use of staff. The Consumer Affairs Bureau is well represented throughout Queensland. It cannot be said that it has just a few people in Brisbane and two in Rockhampton; the bureau is represented in areas all over Queensland.

Referral of consumers to other bodies is only for them to obtain legal advice. The bureau does not have legal advisers on staff. It does not refer complaints to other bodies.

The Consumer Affairs Bureau of Queensland is at the forefront of consumer education in Australia. Other States look to Queensland for a lead in consumer affairs education. The former Federal Minister responsible for consumer affairs, whom the Labor Party recently decided to dump, Mr Barry Cohen, is quite a decent fellow. At one of the Consumer Affairs Council meetings he said that Queensland led the way in consumer affairs education. I do not know whether that led to his dumping from the Ministry, but I think it contributed to it. I am prepared to believe that he was correct in saying that. Much material is available to schools. As a result of a recent survey in schools, the bureau has forwarded its material to approximately 200 schools, both primary and secondary; so to claim that the bureau is not presenting consumer education in schools is bunkum. The bureau has a representative on a team that is looking at food irradiation.

It is nonsense to suggest that I am not the Minister for consumer affairs. My very, very large department takes in employment, industrial affairs, occupational safety, workers' compensation, statistics, small business and a number of other responsibilities. If my letterhead were to contain all of those things, the page would be filled up with what I do and there would be no room for anything else. I assure honourable members that my department looks after consumers. They are very important people. I also add that I am the Minister who is responsible for all of those other activities, just as I am responsible for consumer affairs. Many of my pamphlets and other publications contain the words "Minister responsible for consumer affairs". The Consumer Affairs Bureau is a very important member of my little family in my department.

The honourable member for Nundah, Sir William Knox, made his usual, significant contribution. He is my predecessor. He was very popular in this portfolio.

As part of the policy direction for small business, the Consumer Affairs Bureau is embarking upon even further education about small business. The program is now being formulated. It will spell out the rights of small-business people and will advise them to settle their own problems before they come to the bureau. With the right type of advice, quite often a number of little problems can be sorted out before the matter is brought to the bureau. If that happens, everybody is better off. The Consumer Affairs Act contains the power to ban dangerous goods.

I turn to the contribution of the member for South Brisbane, Ms Warner, who is no longer in the Chamber. I take umbrage at her suggestion that I am not sincere. That is some of the greatest hypocrisy spoken in this House today. It is not correct. Not one member opposite, not one member of the Liberal Party and not one member of my own party could say that, when he has presented me with a problem, I have not done my best to try to solve it. So to suggest that I have not been sincere is wrong; it is unfair and it should not have been uttered. However, I am big and strong and I can take all of that sort of thing, but the statement needs correcting.

As previously stated, the Consumer Affairs Council is currently reviewing the Consumer Affairs Act; so the honourable member does not have a great deal to worry about. Media statements were issued by me warning business not to deal with Consumer Guard. My department spent quite an amount of time warning people about that.

The member for South Brisbane has in fact supported this amendment, as the transactions were business transactions. This amendment will enable me to take action against firms of this type in the future.

It has been suggested by the member for South Brisbane that my department does not do anything. That reflects terribly on my staff. Last year 30 000 telephone inquiries were made through the Consumer Affairs Bureau. That is an enormous amount of business. In addition, last year more than 5 000 complaints were finalised. Yet the member for South Brisbane suggests that I am not sincere and that my department is not doing anything. The facts speak for themselves. When honourable members speak in debates, they should endeavour wherever possible to tell the truth. If they did so, everybody would be much better off.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Leader of the House) (9.54 p.m.): I move—

"That the House do now adjourn."

Death of Senior Constable P. Kidd in Raid by Police Tactical Response Group

Mr GYGAR (Stafford) (9.54 p.m.): This morning in this House the Minister for Police made a ministerial statement on the events which occurred during the tragic shootings of Constables Kidd and Grant on 29 July. Unfortunately, it is quite clear that the Minister has not been told the whole truth. The question is: why?

If the Minister's advisers had prepared a full and open account and outlined the steps being taken to correct any perceived deficiencies in the TRG, the whole matter would have rested there. However, the Minister's statement raises more questions than it answers. This House deserves to know why a cover-up over these incidents is taking place.

I emphasise that I make absolutely no criticism of or reflection on the men who performed this operation—the men on the spot. It would be grossly unfair to try to second-guess people placed in a dangerous situation where split-second decisions were required. I emphasise also that at this stage I have no criticism of the Minister's activities surrounding this incident. However, the Minister does have a duty to discover rapidly who is not telling him the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and why the truth is not coming out.

In the Minister's statement, which was written by his advisers, great play was made of the amount of planning, preparation and rehearsal involved before the raid took place on the house where Mullin was living. I ask the Minister is it true that the inspector in charge of the TRG, Harry Edwards, and Senior Sergeant Don McKean and Senior Sergeant John Behm—two of the most experienced operators in this squad—were all in Townsville at the time the raid took place? If this is true, why were they not recalled to take part in this elaborately planned and rehearsed exercise? Surely if one is going to go into an operation of this kind, the officer in charge should be there, as should his two most senior men.

In addition in the Minister's statement it was said—

“. . . no-one can yet categorically state that any of these would have prevented the death of Senior Constable Kidd.”

That remark is in reference to armoured vests. I state categorically that if the TRG had been properly equipped with level 3 body armour, which they had asked for, none of the bullets which penetrated the vest worn by Senior Constable Kidd would have entered his body. They would all have been deflected. It is a deliberate deception of this House for the Minister to make such statements.

It was said by the Minister's advisers in the speech that he presented that better quality vests, other than the ones being worn, only came into production 18 months ago. This evening I was able to show members of the media a film taken in 1984 of vests of this type resisting high-powered rifle rounds being fired at point-blank range. The vests were available and were asked for.

It is a matter of interest also to note that the Minister's advisers stated that the level 2A vests being worn by the TRG were purchased five or six years ago. Is the Minister aware, or has he been told, that the Dupont Company, which manufactures kevlar, has stated that the life of these vests is only five years? That company has stated that the vests should be thrown out after that time because constant movement and wearing of the vests renders them unsafe for use five years after their purchase. I do not believe that the Minister was told those facts. He should ask his advisers why he was not told.

The statement was a continuation of the nonsense being spoken by anonymous police representatives who have made out that the weapon used by the criminal was some super weapon. It was not. It was merely a medium-powered varmint rifle which is commonly seen on many stations in Queensland. No shooter or countryman would use such a rifle for anything heavier than a kangaroo. Far more powerful weapons are legitimately available, yet this medium-powered weapon cut through the armour worn by Senior Constable Kidd and was responsible for his death.

I have communicated privately to the Minister other matters which leave grave doubts about the fullness, completeness and totality of the truth contained in the statement that he presented to this House this morning. Someone, somewhere does not want this House or the public of Queensland to know what happened. The Minister has a responsibility to this House and to the people to find out why.

Sale of Railway Property in Cairns

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (9.59 p.m.): I wish to utilise this Adjournment debate by going in to bat for a group of people in Cairns who are suffering great anxiety. This group of people have been either leasing or renting property from the Railway Department and have been threatened by the proposals to sell off railway property in Cairns.

Seventeen households are involved, five of which are renting houses from the Railway Department and 12 of which have actually purchased and own houses situated on land that is leased from the department. These 12 families reside mostly, if not entirely, in old railway houses purchased by the occupants, who I think in every case were railway workers. All of them, with a single exception, are retired. Of course, that exacerbates the problem. Naturally those people who are renting houses from the Railway Department are railway employees. However, some have been renting those houses for a long time. It would be a tragedy if they were turfed out. It would constitute a major and unexpected disruption to their lives. However, most concern is felt for that other group of people who actually own their own homes even though they are located on land leased from the railways. They bought those houses on the understanding that they would have a house for life. As I have said, they are mostly pensioners, but they are also former railway employees who have given years of service to the Railway Department; some of them have given service for the best part of a life-time. Mr Speaker, as you know and, I am sure, as any fair-minded person would acknowledge, the railway workers of Queensland have contributed greatly to the development of this great State, particularly the far-flung parts. That has certainly been so in Cairns. I know for a fact that that has been the experience in many centres throughout the rest of Queensland. I think that we have an obligation to look after these people, particularly, might I say, as they are in their twilight years. They are ordinary working people and are not in a financial position to go out into the housing market. I must stress that Cairns has an acute shortage of low-cost housing. The rental market is very tight. At present it is not easy for even those people who have secure employment to obtain reasonable accommodation in Cairns. Those 12 families are not in a position to rent accommodation. They are certainly not in a position to buy a new home or even a piece of land. A piece of land that is a long way out of Cairns cannot be purchased for less than \$30,000.

I request the Minister to give certain assurances to these people. I believe that they are owed nothing less than guarantees of new accommodation at no expense to themselves if and when the land on which their houses are situated is sold and they can no longer lease it. I ask the Railway Department and the Minister to give guarantees that those people will be provided with new homes or that the homes that they are currently occupying will be relocated to new blocks of land. That would not be an easy option because many of the houses are too old to relocate. These people are going through a security crisis. Their future and their peace of mind has been shattered by the proposal to sell off railway land. What I want and what I think the community of Cairns wants is an assurance that these people will not be turfed out on the street, as it were. I do not expect that the Railway Department would do that. I realise that it could constitute a major problem. As the press reports state, the Railway Department is talking about getting \$20m from developers to develop the railway land in Cairns. I am talking about a development that is worth hundreds of millions of dollars. It is not too much to ask that these people be provided with security in their remaining years. I would like the Minister to give them written assurances or an assurance from the House that they will be looked after.

Brisbane River

Mrs HARVEY (Greenslopes) (10.04 p.m.): The Brisbane River is certainly a subject for discussion in the Adjournment debate. Not only the people of Queensland but also those in other parts of Australia are looking to see what happens along the Brisbane River. I refer to an article in the *Gazette* of 30 July this year entitled "Return of the Riverfront". That article explains much of the work being carried out on the Brisbane River by the Brisbane City Council and the State Government. However, although the journalist who wrote the article has made a number of statements that I think are of great interest to the people concerned, I want to clarify and correct some incorrect statements that I think would be of particular interest to the members of this Assembly. I met that journalist on the occasion when he investigated the riverfront development of the Port Office site. I have no doubt that he wrote the article honestly and sincerely in the light of the information that was provided to him by the Brisbane City Council's large—if not always totally accurate—media department.

I wish to correct his statement that the Brisbane River Committee, which was set up by the State Government, was really a duplication of the Brisbane City Council's river committee. That is quite an erroneous statement. It was intended that the committee set up by the Lord Mayor would provide a report to the city council on the feasibility and establishment of a single authority to organise the development of the Brisbane River. In contrast, the Brisbane River Committee, which was established by the State Government, has a wide mandate to ensure that the physical environment of the Brisbane River is utilised to the best advantage and benefit for the people of Brisbane and Queensland. That is done largely by landscaping but also by the control of development along the 20 kilometres of the Brisbane city reach from Hamilton to Yeronga. That ensures not only that landscaping is provided but also that any large development takes into account public access to public areas and the fact that the site must be made presentable and hospitable and that an environment is created for the benefit of all.

The second part of the article by that journalist states that the city council had pressured the State Government into desisting from establishing a high-rise car park on the Port Office site. That statement is totally erroneous. I have double-checked the information and found that at no time did the State Government consider the location of a car park on the waterfront.

To put the matter into its correct perspective—the Lord Mayor only very recently applied to State Cabinet for permission to turn the naval stores site at the base of the Kangaroo Point cliffs—the most prime site along the whole of the Brisbane River—into a huge car park so that when tenders were called for its redevelopment, tenderers would know that the Brisbane City Council would provide a free car park. I call that double standards.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mrs HARVEY: Of course she did not do it. That proposal was put through the Lands Department to the Brisbane River Committee. The committee replied to the Minister for Lands and said that that move was not in keeping with the stated aims of the committee or this Government of ensuring that the banks of the Brisbane River are left for the benefit of the public and not used to provide acres and acres of land for car parks so that cars have the best position along the river.

The State Government has ensured, particularly in the case of the Port Office building, that car parking is to be provided underground and well out of public view from both the road and the river. People walking along the boardwalk will not see cars.

That stipulation by the State Government has put many of the developers of that site to considerable expense. However, because they appreciate the need to provide the correct environment along the river, they have been willing to oblige. All of those developers are co-operating extremely well, despite the fact that they are facing huge expenses in providing exhaust systems and screening for cars that are well out of the way.

Introduction of New Crops

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (10.10 p.m.): Tonight I wish to talk about agriculture in general, but I want to make a plea for action in one particular respect. With the present downturn of agriculture and primary industry in general, we are all a bit inclined to wring our hands and say that nothing can be done. However, I am not sure that that is correct. I believe that at this time we should be searching for new crops. Some of the crops that farmers have relied on for a long period may become viable again—and I hope that they do—but there is quite a possibility that some of them will never again be viable. If one looks at the make-up and the costing of those crops, one finds that some of them are selling in the range of \$80 a tonne to \$90 a tonne. An increase in the vicinity of 50 to 70 per cent in the return to the farmer will be necessary to make them viable in the future. When dealing with overseas markets, that seems impossible to achieve.

Farmers should be searching for new crops. That will not be an easy task. Tonight I suggest that a working party or task force be set up to do nothing but look for new crops that can be grown in Australia.

I am not conversant with the tropical area. It may be possible to introduce a similar system there. However, I know something about farming in temperate areas and I believe that farmers should start searching for new crops.

Because it is a time of financial restraint, it is not easy to obtain funds for such a project. However, throughout Queensland there are a number of research stations employing plant-breeders and I cannot see why it is not possible to withdraw one plant-breeder from each research station or every second station to join a task force to investigate some new crops.

It is possible that some of the crops that are not viable now will be viable in the future. It is also possible that in the near future some of the farms growing these crops will close down. In my electorate, many farms are being closed down. I am talking particularly of barley and some of the crops that have been grown in Queensland over the years. In fact, some of the larger barley-growers in my electorate are no longer ploughing the ground; they are just using it for pasture.

That brings me to another aspect of agriculture. In the temperate zone, there is no satisfactory dry-land pasture inland of the Great Dividing Range. There are some tropical pastures, but the dry-land pastures are certainly not adequate.

I do not have time tonight to elaborate on this subject as much as I would like to, but during the last Federal election—and I am not trying to play politics—the Prime Minister said that one of the problems that had beset the Government was a fall of \$9 billion to \$10 billion in the export earnings of primary industries. If the balance of payments problem is to be remedied, there are two ways of achieving it. Firstly, secondary industries should be built up. Although I hope that success is achieved in that area, I am not sure that the sort of money required can be found. If primary industries can make the money that they used to make with the present crops in order to build up the balance of payments, that is fine, but I do not believe that they can. Farmers have to search for new crops. There must be crops that are grown in other parts of the world that can be grown in Australia.

Of course, it has been easier to grow the bulk crops such as wheat, barley, coarse grains and sugar. Farmers can buy the machinery with which to handle those crops in bulk. Unfortunately, farmers may not be able to continue in that way. This is an area in which all parties should be making suggestions. It has nothing to do with party politics; it is for Australians and Queenslanders. If Australia is to prosper, State Governments have to play their part.

I would like to be able to think that it could be done without cost. However, some cost will be involved. If the research stations use restraint, the problem with funding might be overcome. I am not suggesting that the men engaged in research stations are

not doing a job. Their job has been to upgrade crops, particularly in regard to quality and yield.

Logan Motorway

Mr PALASZCZUK (Archerfield) (10.14 p.m.): In rising to speak in the Adjournment debate, I take this opportunity to bring to the attention of the House my reservations about the proposed Logan Motorway. As all honourable members will be aware, the proposed motorway will skim the border of my electorate, and therefore will have a great effect on the electorate of Archerfield. As a matter of fact, the motorway will pass through the suburbs of Ellengrove, Doolandella and Pallara. For people living in those suburbs, the construction of the toll road, coupled with the proposed development of the Hancock brothers' land at Doolandella, could be a financial disaster. It is my considered opinion that land values will go through the roof, eventually causing rate rises of such magnitude that the people will lose the life-styles they have worked many years to achieve.

As honourable members will be aware, toll roads have existed in many countries over the last few hundred years. It was not uncommon in England for individuals to be given the right to charge a toll on a certain section of a road on the condition that the road was maintained and kept to a reasonable standard. In Australia, however, it has always been accepted that the maintenance of the public road was the responsibility of either the local authority or the State Government through its Department of Main Roads. In recent times we have seen that the Federal Government has begun to play an increasing role in the upgrading and maintenance of our highway system.

On the face of it the proposed Goodna-Loganholme road project could be classed, I suppose, by many as a good thing—a very innovative project to help the Queensland motorist; but I think this project requires closer scrutiny.

Firstly, let us examine its benefits. Certainly, as the Minister states, it will cut the time taken in travelling from Warwick, Ipswich and my electorate to the Gold Coast. Certainly it will divert a great deal of through traffic from the busy streets of Richlands, Inala and Acacia Ridge in the heart of my electorate; but that is where the advantages end.

Secondly, let us consider the route. The motorway will run parallel with the upgraded Johnson Road-Browns Plains road, on which a considerable amount of public money has been spent. This route includes two new bridges—one over a major creek and the other over the interstate railway line.

As the Minister has pointed out, the motorway route was chosen as far back as 1981. It was always my understanding that Johnson Road was to be upgraded and connected to Ipswich Road. This could have been achieved at less cost and disruption to private property. As the Minister has said, there is no compulsion for a motorist to use the new motorway. He also points out that the funding for the motorway is beyond the Main Roads Department budget. He quotes the Gateway Bridge to support his argument. One is therefore entitled to ask what the Queensland motorist is getting for his high registration fees and other taxes and charges levied by this high-tax Government. I would suggest that he gets very little.

What did the Queensland tax-payer get from the Gateway Bridge Authority? A current \$14m loss and the Queensland Government's bailing out the authority with a purchase of 69 per cent of the Gateway Bridge Authority.

The Logan Motorway Company will go the same way as the Gateway Bridge Authority. It will run at a loss and the Government will have to step in and bail it out.

Once again we will see the squandering of public moneys, and the motorway's becoming a further burden on the tax-payer. Queensland will be left with a situation in which public roads will be kept at a passable standard and the poor motorist will be encouraged to use the vastly superior private road, and pay again for something he should have been provided with in the first place.

I understand that there are to be three sections of the motorway and that each will be subject to a separate toll—and subject to inflation of course. The Stapylton Road toll plaza should prove to be very lucrative.

By the time the motorway is completed, the Oxley Road-Ipswich Road overpass should be completed. Traffic would proceed down Blunder Road and confront the Stapylton Road toll plaza. I certainly hope that adequate provision will be made for the motorist who does not want to use the motorway to have ready access to Johnson and Browns Plains Roads. We know the route of the motorway, but it is interesting to look at some of the proposals for the development of land adjacent and in close proximity to it. One that springs to mind is the Woodlands development.

On 24 September 1986, Mr L. M. Hancock, property director of Hancock Brothers Pty Ltd, wrote to me outlining his company's proposals. The next saga to come to mind was the proposed retirement village for wealthy Japanese. That idea never hit the deck. The outcry was quite justified. The last thing that is needed is a foreign enclave.

The Logan Motorway became involved next when the Premier announced the Doolandella high-tech park. An amount of \$6,000m was mentioned, but it was more pie in the sky, like the Carole Park steel-mill, the Shrian Oskar oil-seed plant at Wacol, the car assembly plant on the GMH site at Acacia Ridge and the six jumbo jet loads of Japanese tourists arriving in Queensland each week.

The next point I wish to raise is: from where does the Logan Motorway Company propose to raise its funds? Is the money to be raised locally or overseas, bearing in mind that the Premier is always blaming the Federal Government for the overseas deficit? I would point out that Queensland always seems to have a Minister overseas with the begging bowl, borrowing money and adding to Australia's overseas debt.

In conclusion, I repeat that the poor old Queensland motorist, so often slugged for high registration fees and third party fees, is being asked to fill the coffers of a private company.

Proposed Establishment of Australian Horticultural Corporation

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (10.20 p.m.): I rise to highlight a recent development in the Federal Government, which is succeeding in ignoring the wishes of local industries that wish to develop their own policies. I refer to the overwhelming opposition of the Australian horticultural industry to the establishment of an Australian horticultural corporation. I note with a great deal of interest that, when Mr Hawke was in Bundaberg recently to release his rural policy before the election, he addressed an invitation-only meeting, keeping out the local horticulturists and primary producers, some of whom had travelled quite a considerable distance to hear what he had to say and to in fact question him about some of the aspects of his policy.

Before Mr Hawke left on the plane, while he was near the fence at the airport, those who had an opportunity to speak with him asked him questions in connection with the proposed Australian horticultural corporation and just why it was that he was going ahead with that policy when in fact there was substantial opposition to it. He did not agree that there was substantial opposition to it. When it was pointed out to him that that was in fact stated in the *Queensland Fruit and Vegetable News*, he did not quite cotton on to what that publication was or from where it came. So much for the understanding that he has of the horticultural industry in Queensland.

Mr De Lacy: You are not being fair. He understands.

Mr STEPHAN: He did not even understand the publication. If he did, why did he ask John Kerin to whisper in his ear just what was going on?

I must point out that the common question on the lips of most of the nation's horticultural bodies is: why is the Federal Government going ahead with an Australian horticultural corporation when there is such overwhelming opposition in the industry to it?

At a recent count, at least 10 major horticultural organisations were actively opposing the Government's plans in their present form. Numbered amongst those who were opposing the action were the COD, the Australian Horticultural Growers Council, the Australian Vegetable Growers Federation, the Australian Apple and Pear Growers Association, the Potato Growers of Australia, the Australian Banana Growers Council, the Australian Avocado Growers Federation, the Australian Kiwifruit Growers Association, the Australian United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association and the Australian Berryfruit Growers Federation. The Australian Citrus Growers Federation was in fact the only notable body supporting the Australian horticultural corporation, and that was against the wishes of its Queensland constituents. I point out to members opposite that it was against the wishes of the Queensland horticultural producers more than it was against the wishes of the Australian body. All of the associations that I have mentioned, except for the COD, which is a State body operating in other centres, are in fact Australian bodies.

The views of the broad cross-section of industry bodies can be summarised as follows—

The proposed structure is inappropriate to the diverse nature of the horticultural industry.

The administrative costs will be enormously high.

Levies on participating groups will be high to support the structure.

Levies may be imposed on a complete industry group to support a relatively small export sector.

Industry-wide decision-making on specific product issues is impractical. Levy-payers must be the decision-makers on a product-by-product basis.

I point out how important it is that those who pay the bill have a say in what is going on within the structure and where their money is going. That is so whether it be in sales promotion, development of markets or paying for their own representatives. That has been ignored. The role of existing organisations and present exporters who have worked very hard to establish their position is not clearly defined.

Mr De Lacy: I will send your speech down for his comments.

Mr STEPHAN: The honourable member can take it down and have it published. I will take down his comment that he is quite in favour of the establishment of the corporation. I hope that the horticulturists take note of that.

The Federal Government is ignoring the industry's real problems of high interest rates, high taxation, low returns on capital outlay, high capital expenditure and the cost of development of a product that is required by Australian consumers who enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.26 p.m.