

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 6 AUGUST 1987

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

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Resumption of Land at Dellwood Street, Nathan

From Mr Ardill (23 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take action to resume land at Dellwood Street, Nathan for forest park purposes.

Award System for Hospital Workers at Toowoomba

From Mr Berghofer (239 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take action to maintain the existing award system for hospital workers at Toowoomba.

Relocation of ICI plant at Lytton

From Mr Burns (22 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure that the ICI plant, Lytton is relocated to industrial estates at Karrabin, Yatala or Nerangba so as not to affect residential areas.

Bruce Highway/Abbott Street/Racecourse Road Intersection, Townsville

From Mr Smith (1 314 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take immediate action to realign the road and/or provide traffic signals at the intersection of Bruce Highway, Abbott Street and Racecourse Road, Townsville.

Chlorine Plant, Wynnum North, Lindum and Hemmant

From Mr Burns (177 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure that residents are allowed to object to the siting of a chlorine plant adjacent to schools and residences in Wynnum North, Lindum and Hemmant.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

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

Report of the Raine Island Corporation for the year ended 30 June 1986.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Proclamations under—

Chiropodists Act Amendment Act 1987

Health Act Amendment Act 1987

Homes for the Aged Act 1984

Medical Act Amendment Act 1987

Industrial Commercial Practices Act and Another Act Amendment Act 1987

Diseases in Plants Act 1929-1972

Milk Supply Act Amendment Act 1985

Sugar Acquisition Act 1915-1987

Sugar Acquisition Act 1915-1985

National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975-1984

Orders in Council under—

Health Act 1937-1986
Land Act 1962-1987
Workers' Compensation Act 1916-1986
Factories and Shops Act 1960-1985
Inspection of Machinery Act 1951-1987
Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1961-1987
"The Commissions of Inquiry Acts 1950 to 1954"
Industry and Commerce Training Act 1979-1986
City of Brisbane Market Act 1960-1985 and Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984
Dairy Produce Act 1978-1979
Diseases in Plants Act 1929-1972
Fisheries Act 1976-1984
Fishing Industry Organization and Marketing Act 1982-1985
Fishing Industry Organization and Marketing Act 1982-1985 and Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984
Milk Supply Act 1977-1986
Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1985
Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1985 and Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984
Queensland Grain Handling Act 1983-1986
Queensland Grain Handling Act 1983-1986 and Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984
Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act 1962-1986
Soil Conservation Act 1986
Stock Act 1915-1986
Sugar Experiment Stations Act 1900-1983
Sugar Milling Rationalization (Far Northern Region) Act 1987
Wheat Marketing Act 1984
Fauna Conservation Act 1974-1985
National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975-1984
Land Act 1962-1986
Queensland Film Industry Development Act 1977-1981

Regulations under—

Clean Air Act 1963-1984
Clean Air Act 1963-1987
Cremation Act 1913-1978
Health Act 1937-1987
Homes for the Aged Act 1984
Hospitals Act 1936-1984
Radioactive Substances Act 1958-1978
Medical Act 1939-1987
Land Act 1962-1987
Industry and Commerce Training Act 1979-1986

The Profiteering Prevention Acts 1948-1959
Inspection of Machinery Act 1951-1987
Construction Safety Act 1971-1985
Weights and Measures Act 1951-1983
Private Employment Agencies Act 1983-1985
Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1961-1987
Factories and Shops Act 1960-1985
Wages Attachment Act 1936-1978
Workers' Accommodation Act 1952-1980
The Statistical Returns Act 1896-1986
Workers' Compensation Act 1916-1986
Agricultural Standards Act 1952-1981
Artificial Breeding of Stock Act 1979
Banana Industry Protection Act 1929-1937
Brands Act 1915-1979
Dairy Produce Act 1978-1979
Diseases in Plants Act 1929-1972
Farm Produce Marketing Act 1964-1986
Hen Quotas Act 1973-1985
Meat Industry Act 1965-1984
Poultry Industry Act 1946-1984
Primary Producers' Co-operative Association Act 1923-1986
Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1985
Stock Act 1915-1986
Sugar Experiment Stations Act 1900-1983
Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936-1986
Wine Industry Act 1974-1982
National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975-1984
Fraser Island Public Access Act 1985
Fire Brigades Act 1964-1985
Rural Fires Act 1946-1984
Prisons Act 1958-1974
Offenders Probation and Parole Act 1980-1983

By-laws under—

Medical Act 1939-1987
Dental Act 1971-1984
Queensland Grain Handling Act 1983-1986

Rules Under—

Medical Act 1939-1987

Rules of Court under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1961-1987

Reports—

Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust for the year ended 31 March 1987
Royal Women's Hospital Research and Development Foundation for the year ended 30 June 1986

Ammonia Venting Incident at Austral-Pacific Fertilizers Ltd. on 19 July 1987
Trading Hours in Queensland and Other Related Matters
The Barley Marketing Board for the year ended 30 June 1986
Queensland Barley Growers' Co-operative Association Limited for the year ended 30 June 1986
Central Queensland Producers' Co-operative Association Limited for the year ended 30 June 1986
The Bean Growers' Co-operative Association Limited for the year ended 30 June 1986
Bulk Grains Queensland for the year ended 30 September 1986
The Golden Circle Cannery for the year ended 30 November 1986
Cane Pest and Disease Control Boards for the year ended 31 December 1986
The Central Queensland Grain Sorghum Marketing Board for the year ended 31 December 1986
The Cotton Marketing Board for the year ended 31 December 1986
The Queensland Cotton Growers' Co-operative Association Limited for the year ended 31 December 1986
The Ginger Marketing Board for the year ended 31 December 1986
The Buderim Ginger Growers' Co-operative Association Limited for the year ended 31 December 1986
The Tobacco Leaf Marketing Board for the year ended 31 December 1986
The Tobacco Quota Committee for the year ended 31 December 1986
Interim Report for Queensland of the Royal Commission into Grain Storage, Handling and Transport
Schedule of Firms which received payment from the Department of Mapping and Surveying for Surveying and Mapping Contracts and Consultancies for the year ended 30 June 1987.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Accidental Release of Ammonia from Austral-Pacific Fertilizers Limited

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Health and Environment) (10.04 a.m.), by leave: Honourable members will recall an incident in which ammonia was released accidentally from the Gibson Island premises of Austral-Pacific Fertilizers Limited on Sunday, 19 July 1987. At the time I instructed officers of the Division of Noise Abatement and Air Pollution Control to investigate the incident and report back to me upon it. The report contained some proposals with which I concur.

I now table that report for the information of honourable members.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Mr D. Farquhar; Murder Plot by Paul James Mullin

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police) (10.13 a.m.), by leave: Yesterday, in response to a question asked by the honourable member for Lytton, I gave an undertaking to advise the House why Mr Don Farquhar was not warned of a threat by Mullin on his life.

Mr Don Farquhar was not warned of the threat by Mullin because constant surveillance was being kept on Mullin, and to advise Farquhar would have caused needless alarm and possible disclosure of the police operation.

No record can be found of Mr Col Farquhar's having made a telephone call to the police operations centre on Saturday, 1 August 1987, concerning mysterious telephone calls received by him; but, if he has a complaint to make in that regard, it will be fully investigated.

Mr Don Farquhar, who was the subject of the threat by Mullin, has contacted senior police officers and has expressed his sincere appreciation of the police efforts in this whole matter, and his attitude can be seen by the reports in the *Courier-Mail* of 5 August 1987.

There is no record of Mr Col Farquhar's making a request for "a police officer to patrol the area of his residence", which address he states was printed in the press after the raid. It is my understanding that such address was not printed after the raid but at a time close to the involvement of his son, Mr Don Farquhar, in tackling Mullin at the time of the Toombul Suncorp robbery. Such publication of the address of Mr Don Farquhar at that time was the cause of the threat being made by Mullin which resulted in the operation being mounted on Wednesday, 29 July 1987.

Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen: The press acted irresponsibly, didn't they?

Mr GUNN: I think so.

FEES PAID BY CROWN TO BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS

Order for Return

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (10.15 a.m.): I move—

"That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing all payments made by the Government to barristers and solicitors during the 1986-87 financial year stating the names of the recipients and the amounts received separately."

Motion agreed to.

USE OF MINISTERIAL AIR UNIT

Order for Return

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Condamine) (10.16 a.m.): I move—

"That there be laid upon the table of the House a return in relation to the operation of the Ministerial Air Unit aircraft, indicating travel by Ministers of the Crown during 1986-87 showing—(1) Total flying time; (2) Total number of passengers carried; (3) Names of Ministers who travelled on either of the aircraft."

Motion agreed to.

FEES PAID BY CROWN TO PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING AGENCIES

Order for Return

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (10.17 a.m.): I move—

"That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing all payments made by the Government to public relations agencies or consultants and advertising agencies or consultants during 1986-87, stating the names of the recipients and the amounts received separately."

Motion agreed to.

OVERTIME PAID IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS**Order for Return**

Mr SIMPSON (Coorooora) (10.18 a.m.): I move—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the amount of overtime paid in each Government Department (all funds) in 1986-87.”

Motion agreed to.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE**1. Chemical Residue in Meat**

Mr FITZGERALD asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

“With reference to the disruption caused to the cattle trade recently—

What progress has been made in resolving the chemical residue problem in meat so that the cattle market may return to normal trading?”

Mr HARPER: The Government's reaction to the threat facing the State's beef industry as a result of pesticide levels being detected in export beef shipments to the United States of America has been prompt and decisive. That threat has been minimised by the firm action which the Government has taken towards ensuring that chemically contaminated meats do not find their way onto either the export or the domestic markets.

Action has been taken to ensure that residues of prescribed chemicals become diseases under the provisions of the Stock Act, as do antibiotics above prescribed limits. There is a total ban on the use of DDT, and bans on the sale and use of the offending group of organo-chlorines have been well advertised.

The level of testing fat samples has been increased from 80 samples weekly to over 300 samples daily. This escalation of testing has been the result of a co-operative effort between the Commonwealth's quarantine and inspection service and officers of my department. I am pleased to be able to say that the results of fat samples received at the laboratory by mid-afternoon on one day are reported to the submitting meatworks by approximately 6 o'clock the next morning, thereby ensuring minimal disruption to boning-out schedules at the works. This service would have no equal for efficiency anywhere and has been brought about by the preparedness of this Government to provide additional technical equipment and additional technical officers to ensure that every effort is made on the part of Queensland to protect our Queensland and Australian beef industries.

The ability to trace-back animals to the property of origin has been strengthened by the removal of the exemption to tailtag unweaned calves and calves under 100 kilograms live weight from the provisions of the Identification of Stock Regulations. Ear tags were also removed as a means of identifying cattle, as has the tail-tagging exemption for special store sales. A decision by the Commonwealth Government's quarantine and inspection service to publicise what it regards as high-risk shires was taken against my own advice and contrary to my own opinion. Of course, the honourable member's electorate is regarded as having a high-risk level because of the possible contamination of adjoining pastures to other crops that are grown in the area; but I would be at pains to point out to meatworks operators that there are many areas of the honourable member's electorate, his shire and other shires throughout Queensland where, although there may be small pockets of high-risk areas, the great majority of other areas in those shires are certainly not in a high-risk category and should not be regarded as such. It is completely wrong for entire shires to be considered as high-risk areas simply because they contain pockets in which there may be a high risk level.

At a recent meeting with the representatives of the United States Department of Agriculture investigation team, I was given every indication that those officers showed

both appreciation for and satisfaction with the quick and appropriate action that was taken to resolve the residue problem in Queensland. I met them on a Saturday morning. We had a very frank and deliberate discussion in my office. I believe that those people are most understanding and, indeed, extremely satisfied with the action that has been taken by the Queensland Government.

It is my understanding that prices at the Cannon Hill, Toowoomba, Roma, Gramercy and Bohle sale yards for all lines of slaughter cattle have remained firm.

I am aware that some problems have been caused as a result of the labelling of some areas of shires as being high-risk areas. I regret that that has happened, but I believe that all honourable members have an understanding of the buyers' attitude. I reiterate that it is quite unfair, though, for the total area of a shire to be considered high risk just because there may be some small pockets within that shire that pose a problem.

I am monitoring all facets of the residue situation closely and can assure members that the Government, in association with the cattle industry, has resolved to overcome the current problems and to maintain Queensland's position as the nation's major beef-exporting State.

2. Safety Equipment for Police Tactical Response Group; Death of Senior Constable P. Kidd, Workers' Compensation

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

“With reference to the fact that our local television recently has displayed all of the types of safety jackets and vests available throughout the world—

(1) What equipment supplied to the Queensland Police Force Tactical Response Group is supplied under the SAC/PAV anti-terrorist arrangements by the Federal Government?

(2) What additional equipment is supplied by the Queensland Government?

(3) Is he aware that the Victorian Labor Government has issued instructions that all 900 police cars in Victoria are to carry two kevlar vests from August in the interest of protecting police officers?

(4) When will Queensland police receive similar protection?

(5) Has he had any discussions with the Queensland Police Union of Employees in relation to safety equipment for the Tactical Response Group and police throughout the State?

(6) If not, will he agree to have urgent discussions with the union on this matter and purchase the most modern available equipment recommended by the union on behalf of its members?

(7) Does the Queensland workers' compensation legislation apply to our police force and, if not, what workers' compensation provisions will apply in the case of Senior Constable Peter Kidd?”

Mr GUNN: (1) The equipment available to tactical response teams is not disclosed, because of the nature of the duties performed by the teams. However, as indicated on television recently, tests done clearly showed that the rifle used by Mullin had enormous penetrating ability, far above that expected from what could be termed the usual weaponry encountered in such situations.

(2) See (1).

(3) No.

(4) An equipment review for Queensland police is proceeding.

(5) No.

(6) There is no need at this time, as I recently made the statement that the Police Department can purchase any modern available equipment that it desires.

(7) Death benefits equivalent to those under the Workers Compensation Act are payable when a member of the police force is killed on duty.

I draw the attention of honourable members to an article in yesterday's *Melbourne Age* headed "Protective vests for police", which states—

"Production of bullet-resistant vests for the Victoria Police is expected to begin soon despite a series of problems, including an attempt by the manufacturer for indemnity from prosecution if an officer is injured by bullets while wearing one of the vests."

So the vests in Victoria are not really the best. The article continues—

"The deputy commissioner for operations, Mr Kel Glare, said yesterday that police hoped the first vests would be produced within two weeks and that all the vests would be made in about four months.

The State Government allocated about \$900,000 in its latest budget for the police department to buy more than 1600 bullet-resistant vests, which were expected to have been issued to police early this year.

The Government's decision to provide the money followed police shootings in 1985"—

they took a while to make up their mind—

"and 1986, including the wounding of six officers by Max Clarke, who became known as Mad Max. Clarke was shot dead in a shoot-out with police in February 1986.

Mr Glare said he believed that indemnity for the manufacturer which has not been resolved was not significant. 'If they make them to our specifications, we accept responsibility for anything that goes through them or that happens to them,' he said."

In other words, they are expecting bullets to go through the modern vests also.

I table that article.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

3. Revenue from Pay-roll Tax and Stamp Duty

Sir WILLIAM KNOX asked the Premier and Treasurer—

"What was the revenue in each of the years 1984-85 to 1986-87 inclusive from (a) pay roll tax and (b) stamp duty?"

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN:

	Stamp Duty	Pay-roll Tax
1984-85	\$350,479,478	\$442,089,078
1985-86	\$369,568,262	\$482,094,987
1986-87	\$420,611,964	\$511,202,218

4. Employment of Female at Roma Motel

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

"With reference to specious claims made by the Trades and Labor Council regarding employment of a 15 year old female at a Roma Motel—

(1) What were the true facts and circumstances surrounding the case?

(2) Was the TLC engaged in a cheap publicity stunt to discredit voluntary employment agreements at the expense of the highly reputable and respected proprietors of the motel in question?"

Mr LESTER: (1 and 2) The district inspector in Roma has interviewed certain persons in relation to the allegations of the Trades and Labor Council regarding an employee of a Roma motel. The industrial inspector has requested that the employee provide details of her employment to enable further investigation to be made. As yet, complete details have not been provided by the employee or the Trades and Labor Council and no complaint has been lodged by the employee.

The Trades and Labor Council has sought great publicity for these allegations, obviously to try to discredit the Government's initiative to introduce voluntary employment agreements. Let me make it very clear that, if such a contract were to exist, a contract of the nature alleged in this case would be illegal under the proposed legislation—very, very illegal indeed.

Many safeguards are in operation. In the first place, a minor could not make a contract without the consent of a parent or guardian. In the second place, the contract must contain certain minimum standards. People who try to circumvent the legislation will find they are answerable to the courts.

5. Use of Cyhexatin

Mr PREST asked the Minister for Health and Environment—

“With reference to the fact that it has been found in the U.S.A. that a pesticide, cyhexatin, used to protect a range of fruits including stone fruits, apples and strawberries from mites and other pests could be harmful to humans (especially pregnant women) as, in laboratory tests on animals, this pesticide has produced birth defects in a manner similar to those caused by thalidomide drugs—

(1) Is this pesticide used in Queensland and, if so, in what areas, for what purposes and on what crops?

(2) Are any fruits sold in Queensland from any area at all where crops have been sprayed with this pesticide?

(3) What action will he be taking to safeguard citizens in Queensland?

(4) Will such products carry a warning advising people that this product has been sprayed with cyhexatin?

(5) Could this pesticide be harmful to residents in areas where this pesticide has been used?”

Mr AHERN: (1) The pesticide cyhexatin is used in Queensland as a miticide on bananas, strawberries, apples, pears, stone fruits, ornamentals, tomatoes, beans and cucumbers. It has been used in those areas where these crops are grown.

(2) Fruits imported from other areas could have been exposed to this chemical.

(3) The National Health and Medical Research Council has recommended that the chemical be transferred from schedule 6 to schedule 7 of the standard for uniform scheduling of drugs and poisons, with a statement warning of the possibility of birth defects if a pregnant woman is exposed during application. This is an interim arrangement until alternative substances are available.

(4) I am informed that as late as 27 July 1987 there were discussions within the committees of the National Health and Medical Research Council, and further advice from the council is awaited.

(5) My department is proceeding to introduce the legislation recommended and will give urgent consideration to any further recommendations.

6. Government's Dealings with Allan Fitzgerald Pty Ltd

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

“With reference to the collapse of Allan Fitzgerald Pty Ltd which has caused difficulties for contractors and sub-contractors—

Will he list all relevant details pertaining to the Government's dealings with this company on various construction projects, for example, those involving the Queensland Electricity Commission and the Railway Department?”

Mr CLAUSON: The contractual relationship between Allan Fitzgerald Pty Ltd and the Queensland Electricity Commission and the Queensland Railway Department is a matter for those authorities and the Ministers responsible for them.

My ministerial responsibilities extend only to the Subcontractors Charges Act 1974-1976. In exercising their rights under that Act, individual subcontractors should be guided by the advice of their independent legal advisers.

In view of the various conflicting views which have been expressed on the effectiveness of the Subcontractors Charges Act, my officers are preparing a Green Paper on possible changes to the Act. I intend to table that Green Paper later in this session of Parliament. Interested parties will then have the opportunity to comment on the Green Paper.

7. Relationship between General Practitioners and Patients

Mr McELLIGOTT asked the Minister for Health and Environment—

“With reference to *The Courier-Mail* of 30 July in which he was quoted as saying that he wanted to encourage people to have a positive relationship with their general practitioner and to utilise public systems in terms of specialist centres—

(1) Won't that proposition simply add to the GP's income while reducing the economic and medical viability of the public hospital system?

(2) How will public hospital outpatients who presently have access to free drugs continue to have such access through a GP?

(3) What financial assistance does he propose to be given to patients required to travel to his proposed specialist centres, given his commitment to reduce the cost of the Patient Transit Scheme?

(4) What will be the effect of his proposal on our teaching hospitals in view of his wish to transfer “dribbly nose” work to private practitioners?

(5) Since, obviously his proposition is based on the continuation of Medicare in its present form, is he rejecting the National Party's policy to dismantle Medicare?”

Mr AHERN: I thank the member for the opportunity to expand on my thoughts on this vital issue. The future development of the Queensland public hospital system is a matter of continuing review. This system is the best in Australia and its main basis must be preserved; but change and review are necessary as the development of high technology, types of medical practice and changes in the delivery of services progresses. The development of a parallel system of public and private service has been one of the strengths which must be built on, not destroyed. It is therefore necessary that some hospitals provide a general range of services. Some have special units and a few in the metropolitan area have very specialised services and are to be classed as tertiary referral centres.

In answer to the honourable member's questions—

(1) It is important that each family should have its own family general practitioner who has an ongoing knowledge of the whole family. This is the basis of good medical practice. The major public hospitals are increasingly geared to highly specialised medical care. Availability of time and resources would enable these highly specialised functions to be developed and would allow for the care of seriously ill patients. These changes are not going to occur quickly, but the changing roles are being faced here as they are all over Australia. The plain facts are that the number of patients attending has been increased as a result of Commonwealth Government changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. This rather large increase in general medicine patients in casualty departments is impeding the development of specialisation in trauma care. There is no intention to exclude general medicine cases at this time; but I have been highlighting

the problem and, recently, the honourable member himself has been calling for rationalisation of hospital services.

(2) Pensioners and card-holders already have certain access to pharmaceutical benefits. There is no intention to exclude patients from the public hospital system if this is the system they desire to use. There is always a policy in this Government to look after the disadvantaged.

(3) The Commonwealth Government opted out of the Isolated Patients Travel and Assistance Scheme at the end of last year when it was realised that the scheme was costing the Commonwealth Government a large amount of money, and it was handed over to the States to run and administer. A particular scheme has been put in place in Queensland and it is intended that this scheme will be reviewed during the next six months. Any problems and deficiencies will be looked at and any required action taken. Assistance is provided to both public and private patients.

(4) The Hospitals Act provides for the Governor in Council to designate hospitals as teaching hospitals, and to date a wide range of public hospitals has been so designated, thus ensuring a wide range of clinical cases for the teaching of medical students.

(5) Medicare is a Federal Government responsibility. The present Government has indicated that it will continue. My remarks are based on the reasonable assumption that Medicare is to continue whilst the ALP remains in power in the Commonwealth Parliament. It is already signed to continue until 30 June 1989.

8. The Outlook, Boonah

Mr STEPHAN asked the Minister for Family Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs—

“With reference to the publicity which followed the decision to cease Government-run programs at The Outlook at Boonah—

(1) What has been the response from non-Government organisations to the calling for expressions of interest for the operation of The Outlook?

(2) Does she envisage any downgrading of the services presently offered by the programs conducted at The Outlook?

(3) Has any decision been made to change the direction of any other programs or services offered by her department as part of the re-organisation now being undertaken following the review of the Family and Youth Services Department?”

Mrs CHAPMAN: I thank the honourable member for his interest in this matter and the answers to his questions are as follows—

(1) I am pleased to advise that my department has received 24 inquiries from organisations interested in operating the facility. Formal expressions of interest are still being received. I am therefore very confident that The Outlook will continue to be operated by an organisation as a valuable resource for youth.

I will give preference to proposals which effectively provide personal development programs which are based on giving young people experience and guidance, particularly those young people in greatest need. Preference will also be given to those proposals which include programs for training and support for youth workers, and which can make even greater use of the facilities at The Outlook.

(2) I want to make it abundantly clear that it is only the operation of the programs directly by my department that is being discontinued from 1 October this year. All that the change means is that the programs will be continued under different management. Some people, either for devious, destructive reasons or out of sheer ignorance, have tried to give the impression that The Outlook is being either sold or closed down completely. Those assertions are completely false.

The decision that has been made is in recognition of the fact that programs similar to those which have been developed at The Outlook can be operated by organisations

other than my department. My department does not presume to have, nor does it control, all the knowledge and skills in this field.

(3) My department's new direction is based on using all of its resources to maximum effect to help individuals, families and community groups in need. It is also about assisting the community to help itself rather than promoting reliance on Government.

The financial constraints recently imposed in the public sector have necessitated the department's examining all of its services to determine if resources can be more advantageously directed to non-Government organisations to provide essential services in a more effective and efficient manner.

It is most unfortunate that the honourable member for Ipswich has chosen to write newspaper articles and make statements through the electronic media which are completely false and destructive in the extreme. Claims that decisions have been made to scrap certain programs and services are fabrications—and I am putting that mildly—and have done nothing but cause anxiety in some quarters. I think it is reprehensible for an Opposition spokesman to play politics with such delicate and sensitive subjects as child protection and child abuse. Shame on you, Mr Hamill!

I can assure this House that my departmental advisers——

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mrs CHAPMAN: That is the understatement of the year from Mr Gibbs, of all people.

As I was saying, I can assure this House that my departmental advisers and I, as Minister, endeavour at all times to provide the best possible services within the necessary tight budgetary constraints. Even the Opposition spokesman's beloved Federal Labor Government has found it necessary to slash its welfare spending because of its failed economic policies, and has taken the so-called tough decision of passing on massive cuts to the States.

My department has a very difficult job to do and is carrying that out with the best interests of all Queenslanders in mind.

9. **International Year of Shelter for the Homeless**

Mr R. J. GIBBS asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

“With reference to the fact that 1987 has been designated as the International Year for the Homeless—

(1) How many meetings of the Federal organising body has he attended in his capacity as Minister?

(2) What is the total allocation of moneys that the Queensland Government has provided for specific programs in the International Year of the Homeless?

(3) What specific programs and/or building projects is his Government currently engaged in as part of its contribution to this most important event?”

Mr I. J. GIBBS: (1) There are two organising committees for the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless at the national level—

- The IYSH secretariat, comprising representatives from Commonwealth and State Housing Authorities; and
- the IYSH National Committee of Non-Government Organisations.

Ministers do not attend committee meetings.

(2 and 3) Besides an increased rental housing and home-ownership lending program for IYSH, the commission has co-ordinated and provided resources for the following activities—

- video showing social and economic development in public housing since 1945;

- the commission and the "139 Club" are undertaking a demonstration project under the crisis accommodation program. An amount of \$750,000 has been allocated to construct a "drop-in" centre, which on completion will be administered by the "139 Club";
- IYSH display at 1987 Home Show;
- pilot study of home management advisory service to assist tenants and home-owners in private and public sector with financial and social problems (approximately \$40,000);
- grant of \$25,000 to employ housing project officer;
- major research study into the extent and nature of youth homelessness and the problems of inadequate housing in Queensland;
- community organisations encouraged to seek accreditation for fund-raising activities;
- talks on housing issues given to various community groups; and
- general advice and assistance to organisations involved in housing and welfare issues.

For the honourable member's information, I state that Commonwealth and State Governments, besides continuing their public housing activities under the Commonwealth/States Housing Agreement, decided that the focus of the year should be on documenting demonstration projects to be available nationally and internationally. It was also decided at the New Zealand Housing Ministers Conference that a national housing conference would be held in 1988 to review the year and to ensure the initiatives generated are maintained.

10. **Railway Freight Manual**

Mr HOBBS asked the Minister for Transport—

"(1) Is he aware the change-over to the new Railway Freight Manual in western and northern areas of Queensland has not been successful?

(2) In view of this, is he prepared to (a) eliminate or reduce the increased cost of volume loading, (b) replace the Mini Freight Table I with Table II and (c) assure the people of western and northern Queensland every effort will be made that urgent machinery parts will not be subject to delays at pick up points?"

Mr AUSTIN: On behalf of the Minister for Transport, the answer is as follows—

(1 and 2) The new Railway Freight Manual, which has operated since 1 May 1987, was introduced by the Railway Department to replace a goods by-law which was based on freighting principles of last century and which was no longer relevant in the current transport arena.

It was only to be expected when principles, rates and practices which had accumulated over many years were changed drastically, coupled with the effect of many special concessional and local rates, which were in existence, that some customers would be adversely affected. However, the number of complaints received was very small compared with the total number of customers serviced by rail. Indeed, many customers will benefit from the new freighting procedures, which will greatly simplify freighting by consignors and railway employees alike. Overall the new freight manual has been successful in achieving its major objectives.

I have received representations concerning the effect of the new volume measurement and also Mini-Freight Table I as it relates to certain special rates and will be taking action to resolve these aspects. I can also assure the honourable member that every action will be taken to avoid delays in the movement of machinery parts to western and northern areas.

11. Tenders for Satellite Receiving Dishes

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

“(1) What is the name, address and principles of the company which won the contract to supply satellite receiving dishes, cabling and decoders to the Queensland TAB outlets?

(2) What was the price tendered for this contract?

(3) Did any Queensland companies tender for this contract?

(4) If so, what were the names of these companies and their tendered prices?”

Mr POWELL: On behalf of the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing, the answer is as follows—

(1) ACESAT Satellite Receiver Corporation Pty Ltd, 7/32 Endeavour Road, Carlingbah, NSW. Principals: Douglas and Olga Sawtell.

(2) In reply to the Totalisator Administrator Board's invitation to tender, tenderers were asked to respond to a number of alternatives. The final contracted amount with ACESAT was reached at the conclusion of extensive discussions between officers of the board and the company. The final amount approved by the board for supply and installation was \$2,085,874.

(3) Yes.

(4) Companies which have a presence in Queensland and which responded to the invitation to tender are—NEC, MTE Electronics, McConnell Dowell Nichol, Daycan, Nationwide Antenna Systems and Parnis Electronics.

Because of the complexities of this tender and the varying responses received from the companies listed above as well as those not listed, it is not feasible to provide comparative figures which can be attributed to each of the above companies. Many responses were received in an incomplete form, often lacking technical detail and other relevant information. It was only after full technical evaluation by officers of the board that a recommendation on the preferred supplier was made.

12. Permit Fees for Art Unions Conducted by Sporting Organisations

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

“(1) What is the current permit fee or percentage paid by sporting organisations on funds raised by: (a) minor art unions, (b) major art unions and (c) bingo?

(2) In 1985-86 and 1986-87, what was the amount of money collected by the Government from sporting organisations for: (a) minor art unions, (b) major art unions and (c) bingo?

(3) What is the maximum amount allowed to be raised in a minor art union, and when was this amount last increased?”

Mr CLAUSON: (1) (a) Where the gross proceeds of minor art unions conducted by sporting organisations during the 12 months preceding the organisation's date of registration as an approved association exceed \$1,000, a registration fee of 5 per cent of the net proceeds obtained is payable.

(b) The application fee payable by a sporting organisation for conducting a major art union other than bingo is assessed at \$33 for each \$2,000 of estimated gross proceeds or part thereof. A permit fee of 3 per cent of the authorised gross proceeds is also payable by sporting organisations.

(c) An application fee of \$22 is payable for each major bingo session proposed to be conducted by sporting organisations.

(2) A separate record of fees collected from sporting organisations for minor and major art unions, including bingo, is not maintained. However, total fees collected for the two periods in question were—

	1985-86	1986-87
Minor art unions—	488,000	520,000
Major art unions, including bingo—	2,073,000	2,196,000

(3) A minor art union is defined as an art union which has gross proceeds not exceeding \$500. This level was set when the Art Unions and Amusements Act was introduced in 1976 and has not been increased since that time.

13. Review of Australian Constitution

Mr BORBIDGE asked the Premier and Treasurer—

“With reference to the work of the Federal Government’s People’s Commission reviewing and seeking to re-write the Australian Constitution—

(1) Is he aware of a suggested new preamble to the Constitution written by the author, Thomas Keneally?

(2) Does the new preamble delete references to God, the Queen and the States?

(3) Who are some of the so-called eminent Australians appointed to the commission?

(4) What is the Queensland Government’s position in regard to any review of the Constitution?”

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: (1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) For the information of honourable members, I shall lay upon the table of the House a list of members of the Constitution Commission and its associated advisory committees. It contains the names of 40 so-called very eminent, wise people.

(4) The Australian Constitution is treated with contempt by the Australian Labor Party Government in Canberra, which uses the external affairs powers to by-pass the Constitution and the rights of the States. It is a precious heritage that must be guarded and protected. I am completely opposed to the policy of the present Commonwealth Government to change the Constitution through the employment of so-called eminent people. What a scandalous waste of money this commission is. Forty-odd people are employed by the Australian Labor Party Commonwealth Government to attack the Australian way of life.

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

14. International Air Services to Queensland

Mr BORBIDGE asked the Premier and Treasurer—

“(1) What is the extent of Federal Government discrimination against the Queensland tourism industry arising out of its failure to approve additional international air services into this State?

(2) How many airlines have expressed interest in flying to Queensland if Commonwealth restrictions on such flights could be overcome?”

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: (1 and 2) The extent of the Federal Government’s discrimination against the Queensland tourist industry by restricting international air access into the State has been mentioned on numerous occasions in this House. The way in which the Federal Government treats Queensland is absolutely outrageous and scandalous.

The latest surveys on international air routing into this country have revealed that the discrimination continues. This can be highlighted in simple terms by the number of visitor nights that Queensland generates in comparison to the paltry percentage of direct international seats that are available to this State. New South Wales, for instance, receives 51 per cent of the direct seat capacity into Australia and generates 34 per cent of the visitor nights. Victoria receives 22 per cent of the Australian direct seat capacity and generates only 19 per cent of the visitor nights. Queensland, on the other hand, generates 24 per cent of the visitor nights, second only to New South Wales, yet receives only a paltry—and I emphasise “paltry”—12 per cent of the direct seat capacity to this country.

These and other policies are just an example of the discrimination that is handed out to Queensland’s tourism industry. My Government, however, is determined to break this nexus to ensure that capacity will meet demand in the years to come.

To give members an example of the lack of planning by this Federal Government, the Boeing report, which was commissioned by the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation, predicts in excess of 5 million visitors to Australia by the year 2000. Based on the size of the entire fleet of airlines that is servicing this country today, there would need to be an additional 5.2 million extra seats introduced on our international air routes by the year 2000. Already the Hawke Government has adopted the targets of my Government in these projections on international tourist traffic, yet it is consistently failing to come to grips with the full realities of the situation and to adopt the policies which are needed to achieve this growth and the expectations of the aviation and tourist industry in this country.

Not only has it failed to come to grips with the situation, but also it is incapable of realising the exact fleet requirements based on the figures that I have mentioned. If we are to reach these targets, this country will need a fleet comprising an extra 75 aircraft, operating 212 inbound flights each per annum, by the year 2000. Even if Qantas is privatised, the Australian community does not have the capital resources to acquire a fleet of aircraft that size.

There is only one alternative, and that is reasonable and sensible negotiation with foreign carriers on international air routes. They must be allowed to come in, otherwise the Hawke Government will sell this country’s tourism industry down the drain.

As my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Tourism, National Park and Sport stated yesterday, we are being approached constantly by airlines from overseas wanting landing rights in Queensland, but we have had no co-operation from Canberra or from honourable members opposite.

15. Cairns Court House

Mr BEANLAND asked the Premier and Treasurer—

“(1) Will he give an undertaking to the people of far north Queensland that, with the building of a new police station and court house in Cairns, the Government will retain the Cairns Court House for use as a regional art gallery?

(2) If not, how does the Government propose to dispose of the property, for example, (a) will it be sold for cash or (b) will it be swapped for other property?”

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: (1 and 2) The Government will announce a decision in regard to this matter at the appropriate time. However, I can assure the honourable member that the decision, like all decisions made by this Government, will be a very good one.

16. Extension of Queen Street Mall

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

“With reference to the proposed premature extension of the Queen Street Mall underground between Edward Street and Creek Street—

(1) Does the Government still propose to allow Reliant Investments Pty Ltd to proceed or has the project been abandoned?

(2) If the project is to proceed, what is the expected completion date?"

Mr POWELL: On behalf of the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing, the answer is as follows—

(1 and 2) In discussions between the Government and the developer, it has been agreed that the proposal to construct shopping facilities underground in that portion of Queen Street, Brisbane, between Edward Street and Creek Street, be deferred for the time being.

17. Workers Compensation Board

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

“With reference to the Workers’ Compensation Board—

(1) How many persons are on the waiting lists for each of the compensation boards operating under his jurisdiction?

(2) What is the average waiting time in each case?

(3) Has his Department given any consideration to establishing additional boards in major provincial centres and, if not, what is the reason?"

Mr LESTER: (1 and 2) The number of Medical Board hearings has increased significantly since the 1986 amendments to the Workers’ Compensation Act, which saw additional medical specialists appointed to the boards. For example, there are now 32 Orthopaedic Board cases heard each week. The greatest number of cases awaiting consideration are for that board. However, priority is given to those claimants not in receipt of benefits.

I will lay on the table a schedule indicating the number of cases waiting to be considered by each board and the average waiting-time.

(3) I have given very serious consideration on many occasions to the establishment of medical boards in major provincial centres.

It would be great to do that for the benefit of the honourable member for Rockhampton North and for my own benefit. Quite simply, the answer is that there are not enough medical specialists available in the provincial cities. This Government would like to do a lot of things, but here is no point in doing it if sufficient personnel or material are not available. In the meantime, the Government is doing its very best. I have specific information that I now table.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

18. Ear, Nose and Throat Specialists in Provincial Centres

Mr YEWDAL asked the Minister for Health and Environment—

“With reference to the continuing inconvenience to persons residing in many provincial centres when requiring the services of specialists for ear, nose and throat problems—

What steps, if any, has his Department taken to induce specialists to establish a practice in such areas?"

Mr AHERN: In an attempt to improve the conditions for visiting medical specialists to public hospitals, the Government has substantially increased the rate of pay for such specialists and, as an alternative to this, is offering contract employment at even higher rates. The terms and conditions for visiting medical officers have been extended to allow for such medical staff to continue working until the age of 65 years.

Approval has also been given for the introduction of a notional sessional concept, particularly in country centres, where specialists are required to provide some continuing medical services to the hospital.

19. Coal Rail Freights

Mr VAUGHAN asked the Premier and Treasurer—

“With reference to an article on page 23 of *The Courier-Mail* of 19 June, headed ‘Freight Concessions Ensure Coal Start at Underground Mine’ and to an article on page 25 of *The Courier-Mail* of 11 July, headed ‘Government Cuts Rail Rate to New Coal Boost’—

(1) Does the Government have a basic formula for determining the rail freight rate for the carriage of coal from mine to port?

(2) If so, what is that formula?

(3) If not, how is coal rail freight determined?

(4) What coal rail freight concessions have been granted to date to (a) coal mining companies generally, (b) the Capricorn Coal German Creek mine and (c) the coal resources of Queensland Cook colliery?

(5) What is the total revenue received by the Queensland Railways from the carriage of coal in 1986-87?

(6) What was the estimated cost incurred by the railways in transporting this coal?

(7) Has the Government considered a coal rail freight formula based on a rate per tonne/kilometre?

(8) If not, what is the reason?

(9) Does the Government intend to reduce coal rail freights in conjunction with the electrification of coal railway lines?”

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: (1 to 9) The policy of the Government in determining rail haulage arrangements for export coal mines had dual objectives, namely—

- (i) to maximise the development of the State’s coal reserves; and
- (ii) to maximise the return for the people of Queensland from the exploitation of this valuable non-renewable resource.

The arrangements for each project are negotiated with the individual developer and agreement is reached prior to the developer committing to the project. This agreement is evidenced by a heads of agreement or formal contract. In this way, the developer is fully aware of what Government charges will apply to its project and the developer takes these charges into account in making a commercial decision on whether or not to proceed with the project.

The rail freight policy takes into consideration general market conditions existing at the time the negotiations with the developer take place and also our perception of future market conditions.

Within this broad framework, the rail haulage arrangements applicable to each individual project are determined on a case by case basis, having regard to project specific factors, such as the actual physical requirements of the haul—distance to port, tonnage levels, capital and operating costs—and value of the coal involved.

The Government has, however, demonstrated a willingness to respond to adverse changes in market conditions which occur after the negotiations with the developer are finalised. In this regard, the Government has provided the industry with very substantial rail freight concessions in recent years in response to difficulties in the market-place. These concessions are, however, outside the formal contractual arrangements between the developer and the State.

As rail haulage arrangements are agreed to on a commercial basis with each company, no details of specific arrangements are disclosed by the Government as this information is confidential and commercially sensitive.

As to the German Creek mine and the Cook colliery—the rail haulage arrangements for these mines were determined in accordance with the policy outlined above.

As to the electrification of coal railway lines—the large capital costs involved in this project are being met totally by the State. Accordingly, any benefits of electrification will accrue to the State to enable borrowings for the project to be repaid.

20. Moura Mine Inquiry

Mr VAUGHAN asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

“With reference to the findings and recommendations of the Moura mine inquiry which were handed down on 12 June—

(1) As the recommendations of the 1972 Box Flat mine inquiry and the 1975 Kianga mine inquiry were never fully implemented, what action is being taken to ensure the recommendations of the Moura mine inquiry are fully implemented as quickly as possible?

(2) Specifically, what is being done in relation to each of the 12 recommendations?”

Mr AUSTIN: (1) The report on an accident at Moura No. 4 underground mine, which occurred on 16 July 1986, was handed down by the warden on 12 June 1987.

The inquiry, which commenced on 9 February 1987, and closed on 27 February 1987, was held before the Mining Warden (Rockhampton) and four persons having practical mining knowledge.

Action has been taken towards implementation of all recommendations in the report; some action will of necessity be ongoing for some time before the recommendations are fully implemented.

(2) The action being taken in respect of each recommendation is as follows—

1. Recommendation No. 1—Flame Safety Lamps

(a) Research work to establish the ignition hazards associated with flame safety lamps in explosive mixtures of methane and coal dust will be continued at the Safety in Mines Testing and Research Station (SIMTARS) at Redbank as soon as some specialised equipment has been assembled. The investigations which led to the finding that the flame safety lamp was the most likely source of ignition were carried out by the station using some improvised test facilities and these need to be refined.

(b) Legislation has been drafted to prohibit the use of flame safety lamps in underground coal mines in Queensland and the necessary amendments will be introduced.

In the meantime, the interim recommendation of the inquiry is being enforced in the revised form.

2. Recommendation No. 2—Frictional Ignition

A research grant has been made by the National Energy Research Development and Demonstration Council to the University of New South Wales and the New South Wales Department of Industrial Relations for investigations into the phenomenon of frictional ignition.

3. Recommendation No. 3—Research: Ignition by Other Underground Apparatus

This work will proceed at SIMTARS as soon as certain specialised items of equipment have been installed. In the meantime, the Chief Inspector of Coal Mines has arranged for a survey of shuttle car brakes to be carried out.

4. Recommendation No. 4—Training

A committee has been formed to establish minimum requirements for training in the coal industry of Queensland. Legislation requiring formal training

programs for workers in open-cut coal mines is about to be introduced and will be extended to include underground mines when the committee's recommendations are to hand.

Inquiries are being made to determine whether retraining programs in all aspects of explosives in underground coal mines are already available from other countries.

5. Recommendation No. 5—Emergency Procedures

Managers of mines are required to prepare and make known detailed emergency procedures.

In addition, a Statewide emergency procedure has been devised which will enable the appropriate emergency services to be mobilised quickly and efficiently.

6. Recommendation No. 6—Gas Analysis Equipment

Scientists at SIMTARS are investigating the availability of a suitable alternative to the gas chromatograph for use in mines rescue stations.

7. Recommendation No. 7—An Autonomous Safety in Mines Testing and Research Station at Redbank

The head of the station is now directly responsible to the Director—Mining Technology and Safety who has no direct responsibility for the inspectorial aspects of the Department of Mines.

Approval has been given to establish the Mine Safety Research Advisory Committee by reconstituting the present Coal Mines Safety Research Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of the same director of the department.

8. Recommendation No. 8—Inertisation

A subcommittee of the Central Queensland Mines Rescue Brigade is investigating this matter.

9. Recommendation No. 9—Aluminium Alloys

Rule 29.1 of the General Rules for Underground Coal Mines is being rigorously enforced.

10. Recommendation No. 10—Continuous Monitoring

Legislation is being prepared and will be introduced as soon as possible requiring continuous monitoring of the mine atmosphere in underground coal mines. The system is already widely used.

11. Recommendation No. 11—Pillar Extraction

Legislation will be introduced as soon as possible requiring the written authority of the inspector for pillar extraction. The recommended conditions will be included in the authority.

12. Recommendation No. 12—Monitoring of Overseas Development

It will be one of the functions of the Mines Safety Research Advisory Committee, with support from SIMTARS, to monitor safety developments overseas, as has been done by the Coal Mines Safety Research Advisory Committee.

21. **Marketing of Crops**

Mr ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

“With reference to the disastrous fall in the returns for our usual winter cereal grains and the increasing interest in growing pulse crops such as chick peas—

Will he liaise with the private traders and the Grain Growers Association with a view to organising a delegation to investigate the problems involved in marketing these crops in India and elsewhere?”

Mr HARPER: I have already had discussions with representatives of the Queensland Graingrowers Association and traders in seeking to develop markets for pulse crops,

particularly chick-peas. I am supportive of their moves to increase our market opportunities for those crops. They can be important alternatives for our grain areas.

Austrade has been assisting in providing information on market prospects for chick-peas and other pulses and has now recommended that the time is probably right for a small group of industry people to visit key potential markets.

I will invite the Queensland Graingrowers Association and private traders to raise the question of a trade mission with me again with a view to establishing its representative nature and the means by which it would be funded.

22.

Land Tax

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

“(1) Is he aware of the problems being experienced by a considerable number of primary producers in respect of the payment of land tax, which situation runs contrary to the spirit of the last amendment enacted by this Government?

(2) If so, what assistance can be given to these genuine primary producers who live on their properties but work those properties as a family trust?”

Mr GUNN: (1 and 2) The conditions for applicability of the land tax primary producer concession for trustees are consistent with the long-standing principles of the Act and are similar to those conditions applying for exempt proprietary companies.

There are some trust situations in which the concession does not apply. Those are where the land is not worked by the owner or a natural person and where beneficiaries of the trust are not natural persons, that is, where they are companies or other trusts.

The Government has undertaken to examine the matter in depth and that examination is presently under way.

23.

Fencing of Suburban Rail System

Mr MILLINER asked the Minister for Transport—

“With reference to answers he gave to questions asked in August and November 1981 where he stated that he looked forward to the time when the Railway Department had sufficient finance to fence all lines within settled urban areas to secure facilities so that accidents would not occur, to his further statements that the tentative estimates taken out indicated the cost of fencing the suburban rail system with man-proof fencing to provide system security would be \$4.2m, to the fact that since these questions were asked a considerable number of people have been killed in the Brisbane suburban area with such fatalities placing severe stress on railway locomotive drivers and to the fact that the Railway Department is reported to be making in excess of \$100m profit annually—

(1) What stage has been reached in the securing of railway facilities by this man-proof fencing and other means?

(2) What has been the cost at this stage and when will the suburban system be fully secured?”

Mr AUSTIN: On behalf of the Minister for Transport, the answer is as follows—

(1 and 2) Whilst the provision of so-called “man-proof” fences throughout the suburban rail system would be a highly desirable goal, the provision of such fencing would not avoid the unfortunate type of incident that is occurring all too frequently. As the honourable member would be aware, access to the railway track is readily available via station platforms, level crossings, overbridges, etc. Under such conditions it is impossible to make the rail system completely secure from all unauthorised entry.

In an endeavour to minimise accidents of the type referred to, 2-metre high fencing has been installed in a number of areas in association with the construction of new

stations or railway lines, and existing fencing has been improved in areas where it is considered to be appropriate.

I am well aware of the effect that such fatalities have on train crews and can appreciate their concern.

The expenditure on fencing repairs in the Brisbane suburban area since July 1982 amounts to \$3,640,878.

Sections within the Brisbane suburban area where 2-metre high fencing has been provided comprise areas between Thorneside, Wellington Point to Cleveland, Beenleigh, both the tunnel and George Street, in addition to a number of small sections throughout the suburban area where requests have been received.

A total of 19 045 metres of fencing have been constructed at an approximate cost of \$326,000.

24. Special Sick Leave for Rockhampton Railway Worker

Mr MILLINER asked the Minister for Transport—

“(1) Is he aware that a Rockhampton railway worker with 44 years’ service in a hospital suffering stress and mental illness has been denied special sick leave that is available to employees after 26 years’ service?

(2) Since I believe the reason for this refusal of special sick leave is that this employee was fined \$5 in 1960, some 27 years ago, will he have this case investigated and give further consideration to this employee’s request?”

Mr AUSTIN: On behalf of the Minister for Transport, the answer is as follows—

(1 and 2) The sick leave to which the honourable member refers is additional sick leave which may be granted to a railway employee who has used up his normal sick leave entitlements. This special sick leave is granted at the sole discretion of the Commissioner for Railways and is based very strictly on meritorious service by the employee concerned.

I am advised that while the majority of applicants for the Commissioner’s special grant do in fact receive that grant, applications from a small number of employees have been declined in the past. The treatment of the employee referred to in this question is consistent with that given to those other employees.

I am also advised that this employee has made application for retirement under the voluntary early retirement scheme and that this has been approved. This will entitle him to a substantial ex gratia payment which will be in excess of the special sick leave grant.

25. Parliamentary Committees

Mr SIMPSON asked the Premier and Treasurer—

“With reference to the tremendous escalation of expenditure in building the new Commonwealth Parliament, to the wastage, strikes and sweetheart deals that continue to plague that building and to the desire of the ALP Opposition to set up public works and public accounts committees in this House—

Where does this leave those that argue that such committees prevent these costs and wastages?”

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: In the light of the horrendous escalation of expenditure to build the new Commonwealth Parliament House, the wastage, the strikes and sweetheart deals that continue to plague that building and the desire of the ALP Opposition to set up public works and public accounts committees in this Parliament, where does this leave those who argue that such committees prevent these extra costs and wastages? I thank the honourable member for his excellent question.

Alleged public sector fraud appears to be of endemic proportions in those States with public accounts committees. Honourable members can examine any State they wish and they will find that fraud and all sorts of things are going on that the committees never catch up with. It also occurs in the Federal public sector, which has a public accounts committee. It never finds anything. According to the Australian Federal Police Association report, alleged fraud within the Federal public sector is between \$1.35 billion and \$1.6 billion a year. What are the committees doing? They cannot even sniff that out, nor are there any probing questions about it.

Furthermore, there appears to be complete reluctance on the part of that public accounts committee to probe the rip-off that has caused the Federal Parliament House building to blow out from an estimate of \$151m in 1978 to \$1 billion in 1988. For the information of honourable members, I can announce that over 2 000 people are working on that building. Because of the increases that Mr Hawke has made in his Ministry, another \$300,000 or \$400,000 will be spent to build further extensions to accommodate the extra Ministers.

More telling about the inability of public accounts committees to save money and explore waste is that it was a newspaper that exposed massive fraud of up to \$24m in the New South Wales State Rail Authority. The New South Wales committee could not even sniff that one out.

In Victoria, it was our late Doug Jennings who, as a Victorian MLA from 1976 to 1979, exposed major land fraud in that State—not the public accounts committee.

Furthermore, that State's public accounts committee did not throw light on allegations of corruption in the Labour and Industry Department last year. It did not know anything about that. Some of its members might have been involved.

It must be pointed out that here in Queensland it is the Auditor-General who oversees our accounts under the Financial Administration and Audit Act.

Our system is highly efficient, and it is clear from the massive fraud in the Federal and southern States' public sectors that public accounts committees are complete and utter failures.

To answer the honourable member's question precisely—it leaves members of the ALP Opposition aligned with the unfortunate reputation of the Commonwealth's and southern States' public accounts committees as being dismal failures and leaves them in the wilderness, as one would expect.

26. Upgrading of Bruce Highway near Nambour

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

“With reference to another sad road fatality on the Bruce Highway near Nambour—

What are the proposals and timing thereof to upgrade the congested two-lane sections of the National Highway leading to Nambour and the Sunshine Coast?”

Mr POWELL: On behalf of the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing, Mr Hinze, the answer is as follows—

The Main Roads Department has had completion of a four-lane road to Nambour programmed for 1988 and construction of a two-lane Nambour by-pass by 1990.

At this time, the Minister is unable to confirm these dates, because in the Federal Treasurer's May economic statement, he foreshadowed cuts in projected Federal funding for roads in 1987-88. As these projects depend largely on Federal funding, the magnitude of cuts to Queensland's Federal road grants could affect the projected completion dates.

Mr Hinze has been pressing the Federal Government for some time for advice on 1987-88 funding, but so far it has not responded. As late as last Friday, at the Australian

Transport Advisory Council meeting, the Federal Minister for Land Transport and Infrastructure Support told State Ministers he did not have a decision on allocations but hoped to be in a position to advise States in the near future. He went on to add, however, that such advice would be subject to later confirmation in the Federal Budget. The whole situation is unsatisfactory from the point of view of efficient programming and construction. It is even more unsatisfactory when it is remembered, as the Royal Automobile Club of Queensland points out, that out of every \$1 spent on petrol in this State, the Hawke Federal Government takes 53.5c, but returns to the States—not only Queensland but also the other States—a mere 9c for road-funding.

When the reduction in Federal road-funding for Queensland is known, and its overall effect on the National Highway construction program is assessed, the House will be advised accordingly.

27. Pioneer River Project

Mr CASEY asked the Premier and Treasurer—

“With reference to the so-called ‘turning of the sod’ ceremony carried out by him in Mackay in October 1986, just two weeks before the State Election on behalf of a company named Pioneer River Developments Pty Ltd for what is known as the ‘mouth of the Pioneer River project’—

(1) Why did all work on this project stop only a few weeks later on this so-called magnificent project which he claimed would uplift the whole of North Queensland’s economy and, especially, that of the Mackay region?

(2) Who were the unsuccessful tenderers on this project when Cabinet made its decision early in 1986 to grant development rights to Pioneer River Developments Pty Ltd?

(3) What were the conditions of, and timing for, the development agreement entered into between the State Government and Pioneer River Developments Pty Ltd?

(4) What engineering and other type of studies have been carried out by the company regarding the siltation, tidal, flood, drainage and environmental impact problems that the development of this site creates, not only for the developers, but also for the people of Mackay?

(5) Are the developers endeavouring to obtain more land from the State Government and/or the Mackay Port Authority in an endeavour to increase the size of their proposal, and does this include the provision of a new mouth of the Pioneer River and, if so, what special engineering studies are they undertaking regarding such a proposal?

(6) As the developing company has had an inordinate amount of time to proceed with their proposal, particularly as their expression of interest was being negotiated as far back as May 1985, will his Government enter into negotiations with one of the unsuccessful tenderers to take over this project, which is important for the expansion of the tourist industry in the Mackay region?”

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: (1 to 6) Apparently, the honourable member is more interested in attempting to score some cheap political points—as he sought to do at the time of the launching of this project—than in advancing a project which will be of tremendous advantage to the Mackay district. It is no wonder that he is known as the “knocker from the north”. He is the only fellow in Mackay I know of who has knocked the project from beginning to end. Why does the honourable member knock these things that are being done for Mackay, as he continually does? Honestly, it is no wonder that he is known as the “knocker from the north”.

Mr Casey: Why don’t you get on with the job?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: I wish the honourable member would get on with the job and do something constructive instead of always knocking.

Surely the honourable member realises that projects of the magnitude of the proposed Pioneer River Resort Development are not completed overnight. This is a wonderful project that will succeed in an amazing way.

Work on the project has not stopped. Negotiations between the various parties involved have been proceeding with a view to solving a number of difficulties that were not unexpected in a project of this magnitude. Those difficulties have been resolved. There is no problem in connection with the whole project.

However, for the information of the honourable member for Mackay—the “knocker from the north”—and for the information of the people who are interested in the advancement of their city, I state that the project’s planning is proceeding. Ongoing discussions have taken place—and will take place—with the Minister for Tourism, the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services, the developers, the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation and local authorities. Those individuals have met and they have solved the problems.

The project is an opportunity to place Mackay on the tourist map of Australia. It requires positive support, which has not been forthcoming from the honourable member. Positive support will be provided by the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation and by this Government. Suitable announcements will be made by the appropriate Minister as the project proceeds. I know that the project will continue and succeed, in spite of the honourable member.

28. Relocation of Railway Line in Mackay

Mr CASEY asked the Minister for Transport—

“With reference to the commitment by the State Government at its Cabinet meeting in Mackay in October 1986, just two weeks prior to the last State Election, to spend \$30m to remove the railway line from the environs of the city of Mackay—

(1) Has the program been drawn up by Queensland Railways for this project and, if so, what is the timing for the transfer of (a) the passenger station, (b) the goods station and freight facilities, (c) the loco shed and workshops, (d) the maintenance facilities, including service industries and (e) the administration facilities and electronic control equipment from each of their existing locations, and where would each be re-located?

(2) What sections of land, currently used by the Railway Department in Mackay, which will become vacant because of the proposed transfer will be (a) retained by the department, (b) kept for other Government departments, (c) used to widen and improve existing road facilities in the city, (d) kept for other purposes, such as recreational and park facilities and (e), sold for (i) residential, (ii) commercial and (iii) industrial purposes?

(3) Have proper engineering and environmental studies been undertaken by Queensland Railways of the three proposed alternative new routes for the railway line, namely, the Bakers Creek/Te Kowai direct route, the Paget/Racecourse/Te Kowai compromise and the West Mackay/Lagoons route and, if so, what are the respective merits and demerits of each route?

(4) Does Queensland Railways still consider the replacement of the existing crossing of the Pioneer River with a bridge in the same location as an alternative and, if so, what is the reason?

(5) In view of the major controversy existing in Mackay because of speculation regarding the Railway Department’s proposals, will he undertake an independent up-date of the Ullman & Nolan 1977 report commissioned and paid for by the Queensland Co-Ordinator-General’s Department, which has been used as the blueprint for planning development in the region of Mackay since that time so that the people of Mackay and district are satisfied that every effort has been

made to take their wishes into consideration regarding the future location of the railway line near Mackay?"

Mr AUSTIN: On behalf of the Minister for Transport, the answer is as follows—

(1 to 4) As the honourable member is well aware, there has been a great deal of public debate in Mackay about the route which the railway might take when it is relocated from its present alignment. This debate followed the tabling of a report of the Commissioner for Railways in this House in which a route deviating from the North Coast Line at Baker's Creek was recommended.

As a result of the concern expressed about that proposed route, the Minister undertook to have the matter reinvestigated thoroughly. To this end railway officers have visited Mackay on a number of occasions and have spoken to various organisations and local residents. Representations have been received from a number of parties.

Proper engineering and environmental studies are being undertaken and when all of these have been completed and the advantages and disadvantages of each route analysed, the Minister will, in accordance with the undertakings that have been given, present a report to this House to enable the matter to be fully debated before the final decision is made.

(5) No.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Massage Parlour Prostitution

Mr Warburton: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to his statement in 1978 when he said he was convinced about the link between massage parlour prostitution and crime. At that time the Premier stated—

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

I ask the Premier to inform the House whether he has had any cause to alter his view on this matter. Is he still in no doubt that there are links between prostitution, crime and drugs? I further ask the Premier, who is always talking about the importance of policies, what is his Government's policy on massage parlour prostitution?

Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen: I know that the honourable member loves to talk about massage parlours and become involved in that whole area. He always seems to be talking about that area. He seems to think and talk about nothing else. I must inform him that this whole question is at the moment being dealt with by the Fitzgerald inquiry.

Mr Warburton: Are you going to go and tell them?

Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen: I know that the honourable member would probably be at home if he did appear.

Dino De Laurentiis Film Group

Mr Warburton: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to the financial problems of the Dino De Laurentiis film group, which is known widely in the United States as the mega-flop group, and a recent reference in the Los Angeles press that Dino De Laurentiis is now counting on Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen to bail him out of his financial woes by looking to its low-cost Queensland operation for a steady stream of cheap product for distribution. I also refer to reports earlier this year of a \$7.5m Queensland Government loan to the De Laurentiis group at the remarkably low interest rate of 4.5 per cent, which followed on the heels of the State Government's \$10m loan to Mike Gore. I ask: when does the Government expect to receive a positive cash flow which will begin to pay off this investment on behalf of Queensland tax-payers, and is he in a position to assure Queenslanders that their money is safe?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The Government is still sure that it made a very good investment on behalf of the State. I am sorry to see and hear the Leader of the Opposition joining ranks with the "knocker from the north", as he is known in that part of the State. He also wants to knock this. I do not know whether he has been down to the site recently to look at what has taken place. If he had been, he would have been absolutely staggered to see the progress that has taken place.

Mr Warburton: But we're paying for it.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The honourable member talks about payment. The Government made a very good financial deal on behalf of the State. If only the Commonwealth Government and the honourable member's Canberra colleagues would do the same sensible things in supporting and helping industry instead of knocking industry, Queensland and Australia would have a very different future than it faces. It is a very good project. The organisation is highly respected in the United States. If it is being knocked by some of the media, that is what one comes to expect.

A Government member interjected.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: As one of my colleagues says, that is not unusual. It is a good project. As I said, the honourable member has only to go down to the site and see what has taken place and he will be amazed at the rapid progress that has occurred.

Premier's Trip to Romania

Mr FITZGERALD: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to an article by Quentin Dempster in today's *Telegraph* referring to the fact that a back-bencher in this House was unable to ask the Premier a question and instead had to issue a media release. The article refers to the honourable member for Toowong, who this morning received answers to two questions on notice. However, neither of them concerned the question I am about to ask. It refers to the Premier's proposed trip to Romania. I ask the Premier: what is the purpose of this trip and what benefits does he hope to obtain for this State?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The purpose of the trip is to gain considerable benefits for the State through coal contracts, space travel facilities and to see our legal people in relation to action taken by the Commonwealth Government against this State.

When I hear of the honourable member for Toowong making the statements that he does, highlighted by Quentin Dempster, who is, of course, as everybody knows, an out-and-out socialist Labor supporter, I ask the honourable member for Toowong why he resorts to lies and untruths as the Labor Party does? Is the Liberal Party going to get down into that gutter, too? Why did he not make it \$150m or \$150 billion while he was at it?

The cost of flying the aircraft to the United Kingdom and return is exactly identical to the total sum of the first-class fares for the group. Using the aircraft provides greater efficiency and greater security. This morning I have checked out that cost. For the honourable member for Toowong to say that the cost is \$150,000 shows the depths to which he is prepared to stoop and the fact that he is a liar of the first order.

Reductions in Award for TAFE Teachers

Mr FITZGERALD: I ask the Minister for Education: has he read the article in this morning's *Courier-Mail* headed "Teachers of TAFE fear award cuts"? If so, will he tell the House whether any such cuts are planned?

Mr POWELL: The Director of TAFE was given one line in that totally misleading article. I ask the member to put the question on notice so that it can be answered thoroughly.

Mr FITZGERALD: I do so accordingly.

Premier's Visit to Romania

Mr BURNS: In asking a question of the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to the fact that tomorrow he is leaving for Romania. Ten years ago—in 1978—when I returned from Romania and spoke about coal deals there, the Premier told me that I was a com. In 1971, when I went to China, the Premier said about Chairman Mao, “Better dead than red.” The Premier said that there was no need for Queensland to trade with those “communist mugs”. Look at the money the Premier has lost this country by his stupidity over the last 10 years. I now ask: why, when he would not deal with communists 10 years ago, is he now going over there? You are a hypocrite, you old mug.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BURNS: Check out the Turkish power station while you are there.

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

Mr BURNS: What?

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

Mr BURNS: What? That he is an old mug?

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BURNS: I will withdraw the comment that he is an old mug; I will just say that he is a hypocrite—

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

Mr BURNS:—and an old mug.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lytton will withdraw that comment.

Mr BURNS: What?

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

Mr BURNS: I am not too sure—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will simply say, “I withdraw the comment.”

Mr BURNS: What? That he is an old mug?

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

Mr BURNS: I will withdraw the comment that he is an old mug. He's a hypocrite and he's going over there when he could have got those jobs 10 years ago. He has cost this country a lot of jobs.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I now bring to the attention of the member for Lytton the provisions of Standing Order 123A. I now order him to stand and say that he withdraws the comment. I do not want him to say words other than that he withdraws the comment.

Mr BURNS: I withdraw the comment.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: It is very interesting that the honourable member criticises and condemns me for going over there.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I now call the Premier.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: I thought he asked me a question and I was going to answer it. I know his general association with the Communist Party.

SUPPLY**Vote of Credit—\$3,410,000,000**

Mr SPEAKER read a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that the following provision be made on account of the services for the year ending 30 June 1988—

- (a) From the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland, the further sum of \$1,260,000,000;
- (b) From the Trust and Special Funds, the further sum of \$2,050,000,000; and
- (c) From the Loan Fund, the further sum of \$100,000,000.

Committee

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (11.20 a.m.): I move—

“That there be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1987-88, a further sum not exceeding \$3,410,000,000 towards defraying the expenses of the various departments and services of the State.”

Motion agreed to.

Resolution reported, received and agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS**Committee****Vote of Credit—\$3,410,000,000**

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (11.22 a.m.): I move—

“(a) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1987-88, a further sum not exceeding \$1,260,000,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

(b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1987-88, a further sum not exceeding \$2,050,000,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

(c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1987-88, a further sum not exceeding \$100,000,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.”

Motion agreed to.

Resolutions reported, received and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1)**First Reading**

A Bill, founded on the Resolutions reported from the Committee of Ways and Means, was presented and read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (11.26 a.m.): I move—

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

This Bill appropriates a total amount of \$3,410m for expenditures for the normal services of the Government until the passage of the Budget legislation itself. An amount of \$1,260m is provided for the Consolidated Revenue Fund, \$2,050m for the Trust and Special Funds and \$100m for the Loan Fund. This amount is in addition to an amount of \$2,560m which was appropriated by Appropriation Act (No. 2) 1986.

The Bill provides for the necessary expenditure authorisations for the Government, sufficient for its requirements to the end of November, pending passing of the Budget. The Bill is therefore a very necessary piece of legislation to ensure that the ongoing activities of Government can be maintained.

The Government is presently preparing its Budget for the 1987-88 financial year. The Budget is being prepared under the most difficult circumstances imaginable.

In introducing this Bill, I want to inform the Parliament and the people of Queensland of the background to the budgetary problems now being faced by Queensland and the other States. I can only say that the bulk of the blame for the current circumstances must rest squarely on the Hawke Government in Canberra. There is no doubt in my mind that the Commonwealth Government is seeking to use the States as the whipping-boy to solve its own economic and budget management problems.

It is the States—the real providers of essential services to the community—which are suffering at the expense of a Commonwealth Government, which has proven unable, time and time again, to bite the bullet as far as national economic management is concerned. The Commonwealth Government talks about smaller government. It went to the people on that basis. Indeed it has larger government. That is another lie it perpetrated during the election campaign. It promised lower taxes and so forth and referred to them as critical to national economic recovery. I agree whole-heartedly that there has to be economic management, and I have said so on many occasions. It is a fact, however, that the Commonwealth's actions do not match the words. It wants others to practise what it is preaching. I say that it should be setting the example and it is not.

Let us look at what has happened in the last 15 years. Since the early days of Whitlam, public sector outlays, as a proportion of the nation's gross domestic product, have increased from 31.5 per cent to 43.4 per cent, which is a tremendous increase in that short space of time. This has meant an ever-increasing spiral of taxes to raise the funds necessary to meet these outlays. Dreadful new taxes, such as capital gains tax and fringe benefits tax, have been imposed by the Commonwealth Government. Other State Governments have imposed petrol taxes, tobacco taxes, financial institutions duty and so on, although Queensland has not. New and higher taxes are being imposed year after year.

It is no wonder that the nation is suffering from economic distress and experiencing hardships. When it has not been possible to fund the ever-increasing expenditures by taxation, we have seen massive increases in Budget deficits, particularly at the Commonwealth level. And let us not blame just the present Labor Government in Canberra. High spending has been a very bad disease—almost worse than AIDS—that has afflicted all Governments in Canberra over the last decade and a-half.

It is high time that that high-tax, big-spending mentality was put to rest once and for all. Queensland has led the way with its responsible financial management, low taxes—it does not have a petrol tax or other such taxes—and its willingness to place firm limits on expenditure so that year after year it in fact balances its Budget.

Even though the Queensland Government has always practised restraint and lived within its means, it would go an extra mile if the Commonwealth was genuine in its ambitions to trim the public sector for the national economic good. We can have the reductions in income tax and other taxes, which are so necessary to stimulate economic growth, if we take the decision to trim the fat from the public sector and eliminate all the waste that occurs.

Mr Prest: State fire services.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The honourable member has raised a very interesting matter. It has nothing to do with the Government, as he knows. Of course, I would not expect him to know. He does not know anything other than ALP policies.

Mr Prest: We would expect you to take some of the blame.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The honourable member is out of his depth completely. In fact, he is out of his depth in most ways.

Mr Prest interjected.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The honourable member is a typical Labor stooge; and that is praising him.

I will give the honourable member just one or two examples of waste and duplication. All honourable members know that education is a State responsibility. I think that even the honourable member for Port Curtis might concede that point. Yet the Commonwealth Department of Education employs about 1 800 public servants, with a salaries bill of \$60m per annum. However, none of them do any teaching. They have no students and they just shuffle paper.

Mr Simpson: What a waste!

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: As the honourable member says, what a waste!

In contrast, the Queensland Education Department, with a staff of about 30 000 teachers, is administered by a head office staff of only 500, with a salary cost of just over \$10m.

Health is also a State responsibility. I do not know whether the honourable member for Port Curtis would know that. However, the Commonwealth Department of Health employs about 4 100 public servants, with a salaries bill of \$144m per annum; but, again, none of them provide any direct health service to patients. They have no patients. I have given two examples of duplication of departments and waste of public money.

In contrast, the Queensland Health Department requires a head office staff of only 300 to oversee the administration of the State's entire hospital and health-care system. Apart from the unnecessary duplication, the fact that such Commonwealth departments exist imposes additional costs on the States by the Commonwealth's insistence on its own priorities and by the often unrealistic and frequently pointless reporting requirements demanded. Queensland always has to report back to all those public servants. It takes up a lot of time and involves a waste of energy, effort and money. Elimination of those burdens would free many State public servants for more productive and effective work. Of course, Opposition members would not want that.

In a paper that I presented at the Premiers Conference in May, I set out 33 areas in which Commonwealth programs and functions should be transferred to the States, with enormous savings in areas such as health, education, transport, housing, welfare, industry assistance and Aboriginal advancement, to name the most obvious. The consequences of this duplication and the Commonwealth's own inability to control expenditures on its own responsibilities are clear. They are also tragic.

If the Commonwealth wants to be involved in these areas—and let me make it perfectly clear that I do not for one minute suggest that it should be—the least it could have done was restrain and cut expenditures. Despite claims by both the Prime Minister and the Treasurer that the current Commonwealth Government has been a Government of restraint, the truth is quite the reverse—exactly the opposite of what they say. In fact, as we all know, Commonwealth Government spending on its own functions has grown at an almost totally unrestrained pace.

The reductions in Commonwealth deficits, which the Commonwealth Government has been promoting so loudly, result from inflation-fed revenue increases and not from expenditure restraint.

Between 1982-83 and 1986-87, the increase in Commonwealth Government spending on its own functions was 22 per cent in real terms—a 22 per cent increase in real terms in that short space of time—fully matching the very significant increase in revenues during that very same period. It increased our taxes. Payments to the States increased by only 6 per cent during that period in which Commonwealth Government spending increased by 22 per cent. It is clear where the Commonwealth Government has attempted to place the burden for restraint. All honourable members know that that burden has been placed on the States.

If the Commonwealth Government had limited the growth in its own outlays to that which it has imposed on the States in that very same four-year period, in 1986-87 the Commonwealth would have had a \$4 billion surplus rather than a \$2.5 billion deficit.

The much-heralded May economic statement, which purported to be the key to a major winding-back of public sector expenditure to boost economic recovery, was a complete and utter sham. All honourable members know that and they knew it at the time. But the media did not know it, and they were hoodwinked very easily and simply because they wanted to be. The fine words that were used on that occasion were not matched by actions, and the real opportunity for future prosperity was completely and utterly lost.

The statement was based on a supposed \$4 billion cut in the deficit, leading to a significant reduction in public sector demand. The reality was quite the opposite; it was quite different. The facts and figures cannot be disputed and, for the benefit of this Parliament and the people of Queensland, I will present them as they are and not as the Commonwealth Government would have everyone believe.

Of the \$4 billion, \$1.1 billion was simply a reduction of inflated forward estimates and nothing more. I say that because previous forward estimates of expenditure of \$80.9 billion were lifted by a further \$1.1 billion virtually on the same day as the much-heralded \$4 billion reduction was announced. Honourable members can see how simple it was and what it was all about. In effect, that \$4 billion was really \$2.9 billion. The sum of \$1.2 billion came from asset sales and other one-off occurrences that would not lead to any of the necessary structural changes that are required to reduce the size of the public sector. An amount of \$1 billion came from cuts in payments to the States, as everyone knows only too well. The sum of \$400m came from additional taxes—new taxes, more taxes—and only \$300m came from genuine cuts in Commonwealth Government outlays, and then only from 1987-88 forward estimates and not from the 1986-87 actual expenditure.

Despite the supposed harsh measures of the May statement, in 1987-88 Commonwealth Government spending is still expected to rise by 0.3 per cent in real terms, while payments to the States—the real providers of essential services—will decline in real terms by 3.5 per cent. It is easy to see just who is going to bear the brunt of the Commonwealth's budgeting problems. The States did not create those problems, but they are being asked to carry the burden.

I have made it clear on many occasions that the Queensland Government stands ready to play its part in supporting the right policies to solve Australia's economic problems. But to have only one Government playing its part—or only the State Governments playing their part—has a limited effect on the nation's economic ills. The real villain in the piece—the Federal Government—made up of all the communists, socialistic factions, Left Wings and Right Wings—Opposition members know them all better than I do—actually increases its expenditure outlays at a time when it forces the States to reduce theirs.

It is now a matter of public record that I went to the Premiers Conference two weeks after the May statement with the aim of trying to get the Commonwealth back on the right track.

I did everything that I could on that day to help the Commonwealth get back on the right track, but there are none so blind as those who will not see.

Mr Prest: I saw a cartoon the other day about someone who had gone blind. I want to know when you went blind.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Well, that is interesting. According to the honourable member, I am a very able and clever man to be making this statement without being able to see it.

To that end, my goals were to see cuts made in Government spending to assist to turn around Australia's economic malaise, which everybody agrees is necessary. I tried to ensure that the cuts were shared equitably between all levels of government, including the Commonwealth. I did not succeed in that, either.

I was quite prepared to accept our equitable share of the \$1 billion cut proposed by the Commonwealth for the States provided the Commonwealth itself took a similar cut. Indeed, I was prepared to go a lot further in the interests of the national economy if the Commonwealth was prepared to do the same. I was prepared not only to accept the 3.5 per cent real cut in Commonwealth grants that the \$1 billion cut required, but to go to a 5 per cent real cut if the Commonwealth matched those cuts with similar cuts in its own expenditures. I offered that but the Commonwealth refused.

Mr Hamill: They must have treated you as a joke.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Yes, it does that all the time. Unfortunately, it is treating the people of Australia as a joke, too. The people of Australia will ultimately wake up to what sort of people members of the Opposition and the Commonwealth Government are.

Mr Braddy: Is that why you lost four seats in Queensland?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: Yes, we lost four seats. The Labor Party went down in its vote but gained four seats.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order!

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The outcome of the Premiers Conference has proven clearly that the Commonwealth's commitment to smaller government is just a sham, nothing else. The Commonwealth Government lacked the courage to take up my offer, which would have shown its members to be men of conviction. The Commonwealth Government was not even prepared to match the 3.5 per cent cut that it required of the States.

Because the Commonwealth has refused to grasp the nettle, the outcome of the Premiers Conference so far as Queensland is concerned was a disaster. We had to take the medicine with no chance of curing the disease. It is a terrible disease that inflicts Canberra.

The \$1 billion in Commonwealth funding cuts across the States cost Queensland \$172.9m. The 1987-88 State Budget is therefore being framed with our revenue estimates reduced by this amount.

Let me say one thing: we will adjust our Budget to live within whatever resources we have. We will present a balanced Budget for 1987-88, as we have always done and will continue to do. We will do the things that the Commonwealth Government is unwilling or incapable of doing. Let there be no doubt about that.

This Government has a long and proven record of responsible Budget management. In this regard, I would particularly draw attention to the comments of the Business Council of Australia in its recent long-term study of the performance of the Australian States. It stated—

“In terms of total expenditure, Queensland stands out as the low spending State, spending 15 per cent less than the six State average.”

It further stated—

“ Queensland has chosen to have a low spending/low taxing fiscal regime relative to the other States.”

The Queensland Government has chosen to do that.

The Business Council's figures show that Queensland's taxing effort has represented, on average, only 84 per cent of the taxing effort of the other States.

The Institute of Public Affairs, in the most recent edition of its *Facts* journal, shows taxes, fees and fines per head for Queenslanders at \$607. That compares with \$929 in Victoria and \$925 in New South Wales. That is a tremendous difference.

We have always believed in playing our part in minimising the impact of Government taxes on the community, and we will continue to do so.

Let me, then, sum up the position. All Governments, of whatever political persuasion, are agreed on the need for a marked reduction in the level of public-sector expenditures. Only systematic and thorough reductions in expenditures at all levels of government will achieve this objective in this State. It is a policy that the Queensland Government has supported and adopted for many years. Unfortunately, and despite all the talk, the Commonwealth Government has passed the buck to the States.

The outcome of the May statement and the Premiers Conference is that the Commonwealth Government has demanded a level of sacrifice in terms of cuts in State expenditure that it is unwilling to deliver itself. It is grossly unfair and inequitable, and the Commonwealth Government should be condemned for it. My offer to the Commonwealth Government for a five per cent cut across the board still stands. It is not too late for the Commonwealth Government, if it has the courage, to take up that offer.

In the meantime, the Queensland Government will be reviewing its services and programs to live within whatever resources are available. The challenge of a loss of \$172.9m in Commonwealth Government funding will be met in a responsible and positive way by the Queensland Government. The Queensland Government will not turn away from the tough decisions, as the Commonwealth Government has.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate—Leader of the Opposition) (11.45 a.m.): All that needs to be said about the Premier's contribution is that it comes from a man who presides over the worst State economy in Australia. He presides over a State that has the highest level of unemployment and that is suffering a decline in employment opportunities; moreover, Queensland is the only State to record a decrease in private investment. He is the Premier who is devoid of any knowledge of economic strategy. By his own inaction as Premier and Treasurer of this State, he ensures that Queensland makes as minor as possible a contribution towards economic recovery.

Three weeks ago, the Commonwealth Grants Commission again held its public hearings into Queensland's submission during its relativities review. It is always interesting to listen to what Queensland public servants say about the functions of the Queensland Government and the performance of Queensland's economy. Again the Opposition was not disappointed, because the public servants confirmed much of what Opposition members have been saying.

The first point to be made is that the Queensland economy is performing poorly. Although the Treasury officials did not go into the full range of economic indicators which point to a worsening economic situation, it was interesting that they chose to highlight the low incomes of Queenslanders and to point out that average weekly earnings have been declining over the last five years.

Queensland has, of course, the lowest incomes in Australia, but whereas in 1982 average weekly earnings comprised 98.4 per cent of the Australian average, by 1986 incomes had fallen to 95.8 per cent. Queensland and its workers are clearly falling

behind. Queensland families are suffering declining living standards relative to their counterparts elsewhere in Australia. Low incomes of Queensland families were also identified through taxation statistics. Queensland has the lowest number of tax-payers and the lowest taxable income per thousand population of all the States.

The point to be made is that the benefits of development have not flowed through to average Queenslanders.

The type of development which has occurred has been concentrated in the hands of a few individuals and companies, but the ordinary Queenslanders is falling further and further behind.

This Government's obsession with restricting the benefits payable to workers and its continual clamp-down on wages and conditions, through such forums as the Industrial Commission, are having an effect. The latest proposals for extending a contract labour system will further depress wages and conditions in this State.

The Queensland Government operates on a system of patronage, providing high wages and conditions for the selected few while arguing against the extension of benefits to the ordinary worker. The public service is one of the best examples of this approach. Permanent heads are being paid salaries which are among the highest in the country. Some Queensland permanent heads in charge of very small departments are paid substantially more than their Commonwealth counterparts who, by comparison, have far greater responsibilities and duties. Permanent heads in Queensland were allowed to write their own salary packages and to give themselves massive superannuation entitlements and other perks. At the same time the ordinary public servant in Queensland is among the lowest paid in the country. Professionals such as teachers, engineers and health-care workers are underpaid.

I find it incredible that the Premier can give massive salary increases to his own personal staff but continually fulminates against pay increases for the average worker in this State.

On taxation issues some very interesting statistics were produced. They showed that, for small business, Queensland is a high-tax State.

Stamp duty comparisons were made between Queensland and Victoria. They illustrated that on a whole range of conveyance duties, Queensland is a very high-taxing State. The Queensland Stamp Duties Office calculated that in 1984-85 it collected more than \$36m in stamp duty on transactions which would not—and I repeat “not”—have been collected if the transactions had been carried out in Victoria and subject to Victorian stamp duties. Queenslanders paid \$36m in stamp duties to this high-taxing Government, which they would not have had to pay had the same system applied in this State as applies in Victoria.

The transactions include the disposition of units in private unit trusts. In Queensland ad valorem conveyance duty applies to the gross value of the assets, whereas in Victoria, duty is payable only on the net value of the assets held in trust. The same goes for the disposition of shares in companies which are the trustees of discretionary trusts. In Queensland duty is payable on the gross value of the assets, while in Victoria only a nominal amount is paid.

Small businesses in Queensland are hit through the duty payable on the sale of businesses. The example that the Queensland Treasury gave to the Grants Commission included the sale of small businesses such as newsagencies, milk runs, taxis, retail establishments, fast-food outlets and hotels.

In this so-called low-tax State, stamp duty is payable on the full value of freehold, leasehold, good will, plant and equipment, stock, leases of equipment and anything else that is transferred. In Victoria, duty is applied only where freehold is transferred and then only to the freehold and associated chattels. Any transfers of leases in Victoria attract duty only at a lower lease duty rate.

That brings in a substantial amount of extra stamp duty in Queensland compared to what small business has to pay in Victoria. So much for this Government's professed policies of support for small business. Quite frankly, anyone buying a small business in Queensland is slugged to the hilt. I hope that every small-business person in Queensland confronts the Premier and complains that he or she is sick and tired of being slugged large amounts of stamp duty which their Victorian counterparts do not have to pay. Perhaps one of the reasons why Queensland has the highest bankruptcy rates in Australia is those high Government tax rates which apply to Queensland small business.

Of course miners do not escape, for when mining leases are transferred, duty is payable, and that duty can be very substantial. But if a mining lease is transferred in Victoria, no stamp duty is payable.

Intellectual property is also hit in Queensland. Trade marks, patents, registered designs, copyright and franchises are also hit in Queensland with very significant amounts of stamp duty. But Victoria does not impose stamp duty on those transfers.

Assignments of debts and life policies are dutiable in Queensland but not in Victoria. Perhaps the Premier will return to the Chamber and explain why that is so. Assignments of partnership interests are taxed more heavily in Queensland than in Victoria.

The partition of real property is taxed more heavily in Queensland than in other States. For instance, Victoria and Tasmania do not impose any duty at all on the division of personal property, while New South Wales taxes it to a much lesser extent.

Another interesting little example is the sale of real property. If, before a transfer is made by the vendor to the purchaser, the purchaser on-sells the property in favour of a subsequent purchaser, ad valorem duty applies twice in Queensland but only once in Victoria.

I find it fascinating that while the Premier runs round and tries to give the impression that Queensland is a low-tax State, his own Treasury officials are giving evidence to the Commonwealth Grants Commission detailing how Queensland is a high-tax State for small business. The Queensland Government does not miss you when you try to purchase a small business in our State of Queensland. The upfront slug of stamp duty is enormous compared to what is paid in other States, particularly Victoria.

Because the Grants Commission is clearly very sceptical about Queensland's anti-avoidance measures, pay-roll tax avoidance was another matter that was again raised as an issue at its hearings. Some of the other States have suggested that Queensland is not sufficiently active in catching the crooks. This State relies largely on cross-checking with Workers Compensation Board records to try to pinpoint the avoiders of pay-roll tax. In fact, the Queensland Government has the policy, "If you get away with it, good luck to you." Honest businesses are being forced to carry the burden imposed by the non-payers. If the State had effective pay-roll tax enforcement procedures, perhaps the burden of pay-roll tax could be reduced for everybody.

I understand that the number of pay-roll tax inspectors has not been increased for years. I think Queensland still has only 11 inspectors of stamp duty and a further nine assistant inspectors. I also understand that only a couple of them are stationed outside the Brisbane area. Those people have absolutely no hope of doing strategic audits to ensure that firms that should be paying pay-roll tax do so.

I understand also that strategic audits have not taken place since the mid-1970s, but that Victoria and the other States rely heavily on strategic audits for enforcement of their pay-roll tax provisions. Because in Queensland we have a Premier and Treasurer who does not care, all that happens is that inspectors go into a location when there is a tip-off that a particular firm may be rorting the system. The amount of pay-roll tax lost because of the inadequate staffing level can only be guessed at, but it has been suggested that perhaps tens of millions of dollars is involved. It might be remembered that a Commissioner of Stamp Duties was appointed this year, but that was only after the position had been vacant for well over 12 months. I believe that gives a clear indication of the attitude of this Government to this very important area. The Government

does not seem at all concerned that it may be slugging the honest firms too heavily because it is letting the non-payers get away.

Queensland appears to be very slack—very slack indeed—when it comes to the policing of its taxation laws. On the issue of statutory corporations, the Queensland Treasury comments that this financial year Victoria expects revenue of \$452m and that New South Wales expects to receive \$91m. Would honourable members believe that Queensland expects to receive nothing? The Treasury failed to say why Queensland does not expect at least some repayment to the public purse from investments made on the public's behalf.

Why should the people of Queensland not expect a return from the State's energy authorities, water authorities and port authorities, for instance? The reason why both New South Wales and Victoria have imposed a return on their assets is that such a policy encourages efficiency, but "efficiency" is a word that this Government, particularly the Premier and Treasurer, cannot even spell. As a comparison of electricity prices in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria shows, a return on assets does not necessarily lead to higher charges. Queensland's electricity prices are substantially higher than those payable in New South Wales and Victoria, but no profit payments are payable in Queensland. However, they are in New South Wales and Victoria.

Far from requiring the Queensland Electricity Commission to make a rate of return payment to the Government, as usual Queensland goes the opposite way and the Government puts a 20 per cent tax on every person's electricity bill to help pay the commission. In other words, the position is reversed. In Queensland there is no requirement to ensure that statutory authorities are run efficiently and along commercial lines. Statutory authorities in Queensland are given blank cheques to pass on cost increases to the customers. Cross-subsidisation of electricity means that a poorly managed electricity board can always count on being bailed out by the more efficient boards. Hence, Queensland has nearly the highest electricity charges in Australia and tax-payers are getting no return from their investment in those authorities. Victorians, on the other hand, get cheaper electricity and a substantial return from theirs. I am talking about the submissions of Treasury officials on behalf of this Government.

Other admissions about high charges include the perennial one that the coal rail haulage yields high profits because freight rates are high relative to the low costs involved. A new one, which surprises me for a Government that professes to look after rural interests, is that Queensland—would honourable members believe it—has the highest cost of any State for the provision of irrigation water. Queensland's operating revenue of \$16.99 per megalitre is well above that of most other States and compares most unfavourably with, for example, South Australia's charges of just \$6.17.

However, it is in the provision of social services that Queensland comes out particularly badly. I am glad that the Minister responsible is in the Chamber. No wonder the Premier refused to provide me with a copy of Queensland's submission to the Grants Commission. He knew that the report contained such damning admissions about the poor level of services provided in Queensland. Fortunately, I did manage to get a copy. It was leaked to my office.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition made good use of the chapter on police services, which highlighted the appalling restrictions under which the police operate in Queensland. The sky-rocketing crime rate is starkly presented in the report, which makes good reading. It makes a complete mockery of Government claims about law and order in this State. Mr Deputy Speaker, if you read the report you will see that Queensland is the crime and drug capital of Australia.

Queensland has the highest number of drug offences in Australia and, despite what the Deputy Premier says about crime on the Gold Coast, the increasing rate of crime is unmatched. Statistics are available which show that the Gold Coast and other tourist areas such as Cairns—the growing tourism area—have a crime rate double the Queensland average. It is also interesting to note that Queensland's current crime rate is in fact nothing new. It has been going on for ages. A study found that Queensland had the

highest crime rate of any State in Australia—would honourable members believe it—over the period 1964 to 1976. When the Premier of this State talks about law and order, that is all it is—all talk.

The Queensland police force has not been provided with the manpower or resources to adequately do its job. It is the least-funded force of any State in Australia, and it has to cope with the lowest police-to-population figure of any State. Police do not have the resources for pro-active policing—that is, police work designed to prevent crime—as opposed to reactive policing, which is solving the crime after it has occurred.

In some areas of Queensland—I cite the example of the Gold Coast—law and order has virtually broken down, with the police—the policemen who are employed by this Government—admitting that they are unable to investigate most crimes. Police have even had to warn residents not to go out at night and not to walk in the streets. That is the sort of State that Queenslanders have under this Government—under the leadership of the Premier and Treasurer.

If the Government does not face up to the seriousness of the situation and admit that crime is out of control in the tourist areas, it will, unfortunately, be tourism that will suffer. Queensland's police not only have to be given the resources to fight crime; they also need an inquiry to be conducted along lines similar to the Neesham inquiry into the Victorian police force in order to assist them to effectively determine the best way to run the force. No such inquiry has ever been held in Queensland—and, believe me, one is long overdue.

Along with the police force, education, health and welfare services in Queensland are all underfunded. All of those services need funding boosts to bring them up to an acceptable level.

In summary, the Grants Commission confirmed what the Opposition has been saying for a long, long time—that Queensland has a high-taxing, high-charging and low-service Government. One wonders where the money really does go. Queensland argues for increased funding at these hearings; but, once it gets the money, it is diverted into other areas, such as funding the Premier's jet and his trips around Australia and the world—a jet that is used more and more for his own personal interests rather than the interests of the people that he purports to represent.

The next issue I wish to speak about is the Public Sector Review Committee, commonly known as the Savage committee. Let me say at the outset that I am rather disappointed about the general nature of the report. The Opposition agrees with most of the recommendations. Most of the things contained in the report have been stated by the Opposition for a long, long time. However, I believe that the Savage committee could have been more specific and brought down clear recommendations for action by this Government. Nevertheless, one hopes that the Queensland Government does more about the contents of this report than it did about the first Savage report, which related to Government red tape. Honourable members will recall that the result of that review into red tape in Queensland was that the Government decided to keep it all. That is all it did. It decided that the red tape was there, so why cut it up into little pieces? Departments that had the job of reviewing their regulations decided that they could not live without them.

Everyone remembers the Premier's promise to slash the number of quangos in Queensland; but what did we find when they were counted recently? They had bred like rabbits. For the last three years the Opposition has been calling for the type of regulations proposed by the Savage committee to be introduced. It is amazing that it has taken so long for recommendations of that sort to be made. It is essential that the economic and social objectives of each statutory authority be made explicit. These are the points I wish to make. It is essential that quangos have uniform accounting and reporting procedures. It is amazing that that needs to be pointed out in a committee report to this Government. It should have been in place years ago.

Most people are oblivious of the full extent of the web of statutory authorities that operate in Queensland far away from the scrutiny of the members of this House. These same people, who are the tax-payers of Queensland, are funding the operations of these statutory authorities. In 1983, after Opposition pressure, the Queensland Government ordered an investigation into the operation and staffing of quangos. In reality, that investigation simply resulted in December 1984 in the publication of a book on statutory authorities. This register listed only 626 quangos but, by its own admission, it did not give a complete picture. It did not include Queensland's 134 local authorities, 20 joint local authorities and 30 Aboriginal and Islander councils. Even more staggering was the admission in the register that, while it did list 27 quangos under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Primary Industries, it omitted 242 other primary industry quangos that were identifiable by reference to the statutes. If one adds those to the 626 quangos already identified, one arrives at a total staggering figure of 1 052 quangos operating in Queensland. The register was recently updated and, instead of the number of quangos being reduced in line with the Premier's promise—that is what he told the public of Queensland—it in fact increased by 166, producing a new total of 1 218 quangos in Queensland.

The truth is that the Bjelke-Petersen Government has allowed quangos to run riot. Years ago the Premier himself admitted that quangos in Queensland employed more than 50 000 staff and had budgets totalling almost \$4 billion; yet he continues to do absolutely nothing, as the Premier and Treasurer of this State, to curb the waste and inefficiencies evident in Queensland quangos. He continues to do the things that honourable members know he does repeatedly. Now the people of Queensland and those in other parts of Australia know that the Premier has become an expert at putting the blame for his incompetence at the feet of everybody except himself. He talks a lot about spending restraint, yet he does not even start to put his rhetoric into practice in his own back yard.

Labor's economic policy for the 1986 State election identified savings of at least \$45m that could be made if the quango problem was addressed. Those savings were based on an easily achievable 1 per cent productivity improvement throughout the quangos that existed at that time. Labor's policy also provides for the establishment of a public bodies review committee to overhaul the quango system and to rationalise or eliminate altogether those unnecessary statutory bodies that all honourable members know exist in this State. If that approach were taken, ongoing savings to the public purse would be much greater. Ultimately, I believe that hundreds of millions of dollars would be saved. The savings are there to be made. All it takes is the political will to tackle the quango monster.

Fire brigade boards are identifiable as one area in which most of its quangos could be abolished. Two years ago the Opposition said that fire brigade boards exist simply to provide cushy jobs for National Party supporters. The former Minister for Administrative Services, Martin Tenni, admitted that openly. Queensland's 81 fire brigade boards could largely be abolished. As one of my colleagues said, they could perhaps be done away with completely. New South Wales, which has a population that is greater than that of Queensland, operates with only four fire brigade boards.

I am particularly interested in the recommendation to abolish the Mortgage Secondary Market Board. It is obvious that for years that board has done nothing. Those honourable members who were in this Chamber three years ago will recall the way in which at the close of the session the Premier raced through legislation establishing the Mortgage Secondary Market Board. That board was going to do wondrous things. It is fascinating to read the board's annual report. Although it lists the staff members and the location of its office, it is completely silent on anything it has done. It tells honourable members nothing about its activities because it has not done anything. The only conclusion I can reach is that it was set up to give Sir Edward Lyons a job and some office space. The market has been one of the more spectacular failures of the Premier and his Government.

Honourable members will recall that the former Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, Mr Harper, became a public embarrassment because of the number of times

he had to amend legislation that set up the mortgages secondary market. The Premier's grandiose claims that the mortgages secondary market would turn Brisbane into the financial capital of Australia was truly the standing joke of the decade. Nothing has been heard of the mortgages secondary market since. It is no wonder that the Savage committee report states that this non-existent market does not need a board and, in particular, Sir Edward Lyons, to look after it.

Treasury and the lack of Government economic direction attract particular criticism in the Savage report. Treasury is regarded as "nothing more than a financial control outfit which has failed to improve budgeting processes and which has failed to provide adequate advice on economic developments". Those words are not mine. Although it is not mentioned as such, the report argues for the introduction of program budgeting. For many years the Opposition has been saying that program budgeting is needed. The recommendation that a separate economic policy unit be established in the Premier's Department is straight out of Australian Labor Party policy. Because of the lack of adequate economic advice being given to the Queensland Government, this State has suffered. Treasury has seen its role as largely one of controlling the purse-strings. I can understand that. Surely that is its job. It is largely one of controlling the purse-strings of this State, not one of providing economic advice to the Government. Indeed, it is amazing that it has been only during the last few months that Treasury has set up an economic policy section at all. Given the reluctance of Treasury to put adequate resources into such a unit, it is probably just as well that such a unit should be established within the Premier's Department. One can only guess at what lost opportunities by inadequate economic advice have meant to this State.

Labor's policy of setting up a Cabinet subcommittee to advise on Budget preparations has also been adopted by the Savage committee. It is appalling that Queensland Cabinet does not have a Budget committee to oversee its preparation. Effectively, the Premier and Treasurer of this State has abandoned this function and has left it entirely up to the public servants.

I am informed that the Premier's role in the preparation of the Budget—and I have always expected this; in fact, I think most honourable members have—is limited to making a few suggestions to the Under Treasurer. No other Government in this land of ours has abandoned this function to its public servants, as has our State of Queensland.

The Savage committee's recommendation to abolish the Public Service Board and its department does not seem to have been very properly thought out. If that decision, or recommendation, is a result of internal bickering amongst some of the people in the public service, that is indeed a shame. It is by no means clear that the abolition of the Public Service Board and its department will result in any efficiencies. That is what the Opposition is about. It wants this Government and the public service to be efficient. Experience in other States has shown that this is not necessarily so.

What abolition of the Public Service Board will do, of course, is increase the power of the permanent heads. All honourable members know that that is going to happen. By controlling the purse-strings, Treasury will exercise control over staff numbers. That does not augur well for the chances of service departments such as education, health and welfare to successfully argue for increases in staffing levels.

The comments of the Savage committee on the superannuation scheme simply reiterate the Opposition's criticism earlier this year of the changes to the scheme. Clearly, the large superannuation pay-outs to top public servants are viewed critically by the committee.

The Savage committee report is basically a total indictment of the Bjelke-Petersen Government. It is an indictment of the Premier's failure to implement the necessary reforms in the Queensland Public Service. It is an indictment of his failure to ensure public service efficiency. It is an indictment of his failure to ensure that the Government receives adequate economic advice. It is an indictment of the Government's failure to bring statutory authorities under effective control.

There are several other important issues that I want to address in this debate on the Appropriation Bill. The first of them is the public funds scandal involving the Premier's former press secretary, Allen Callaghan, his wife, Judith Callaghan, and other people. It is now 20 months since I first raised details of that public funds scandal. In April of this year, Allen Callaghan was gaoled for four years for the misappropriation of public funds. I suggest that it is particularly appropriate that this House considers aspects of the misappropriations in which the Callaghans were involved as part of the debate on the Appropriation Bill.

At the time of Callaghan's gaoling, the Deputy Premier commented that he considered the matter to be finished. To date the Premier has not honoured his promise to publicly release the Auditor-General's report into that public funds scandal. Last year he gave an unequivocal commitment that the Auditor-General's report would be made public. There was no room whatsoever for misinterpreting what he said. His own words were, "It will be made public."

The public is entitled to know the full details of how two trusted and senior Government employees were able to misappropriate nearly \$80,000. After all, we are talking about the public's money. I hope that Mr Gunn takes on board the promises that the Premier made. I hope also that whoever responds during this debate will be able to inform this House of the whereabouts of the report into the public funds scandal in this State, which this Government promised to table.

Throughout 1986 the Premier claimed that, firstly, police inquiries and then court proceedings prevented the release of the report. The Premier told this House that he has made clear to the Auditor-General his desire to release the report. He said—

"It is therefore in the interests of justice that the report not be tabled at this time, pending the outcome of police investigations."

It also needs to be emphasised, however, that it is not up to the Auditor-General to decide if and how the report should be released. This report is the property of the Government, specifically the Premier and Mr McKechnie. It is their decision whether to release it or not. It would be deliberately misleading for anyone to suggest that the release of the report depends on Mr Doyle.

Until the Premier agrees to honour his promise to publish the report, the Opposition and the public can only presume that the Government has something to hide. The non-appearance so far of this report highlights the myth of the independence of the Auditor-General.

There is a mistaken but nevertheless widely held belief that the Auditor-General reports and answers to the Parliament as head of the Government. It needs to be appreciated by all, particularly by members of this House, that in virtually all cases the Auditor-General first reports to the relevant Government Minister. The Auditor-General is not obliged to report directly to the Parliament. He has a discretionary power, but he is not obliged to do that.

I had hoped that the Savage committee of inquiry into public administration in Queensland would recommend action to place the Auditor-General on a more independent footing than he is on now. That is one of my criticisms. The Savage report makes reference to the perception of independence of the advice of the Auditor-General. The Labor Opposition is far more interested in the reality of the independence than any perception that might exist.

I turn now to another matter involving the appropriation of Government funds, that is, the Government funding of Ministers' defamation actions against members of the Australian Labor Party. It needs to be said loudly and clearly that Queensland is the only State in Australia in which Ministers, by their decisions, allow themselves to be publicly funded in defamation actions that they initiate, whether those actions be against members of the Australian Labor Party, members of the Liberal Party or ordinary people whom the members represent in other parts of Queensland. I regard this practice as contemptible and a reprehensible abuse of Government power.

The Premier and his Ministers have put themselves in a position in which with unlimited funding at their disposal for such legal actions, they can and do financially terrorise their critics. At least one ministerial staff member—the private secretary to the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing—has also gained Cabinet approval for public funding of a defamation action that he has initiated.

I have already apprised the House of an attempt on Tuesday of this week by the Premier's press secretary, Mr Peter MacDonald, to serve a so-called writ of summons against me claiming unspecified damages for alleged defamation. I do not think that there is any disagreement that the attempted service of that writ by solicitors instructed by Mr MacDonald by facsimile transmission to my office in Parliament House constitutes a serious breach of privilege. As I said yesterday, this House did itself a huge disservice in not having that matter referred to the Committee of Privileges. I only hope that that mistake can be remedied. However, it does not seem that the Government has much initiative in that area.

I want to explore further matters associated with that so-called writ. I call on the Premier to immediately disclose whether that legal action by his press secretary is being publicly funded. I might add that I sincerely hope that it is not.

Apart from the writ issued against me, another has been taken out against *Sunday Mail* journalist Marion Smith. Both writs claimed damages for an alleged defamation published on Sunday, 2 August. Although the alleged defamation is not specified, the writs presumably relate to an article in last Sunday's *Sunday Mail* that referred to a Queensland Cabinet memo and an accompanying letter to the Premier, from Mr MacDonald's consultancy business, lobbying the State Government on behalf of the company Queensland Wire Industries Pty Ltd.

I now table a copy of that memo, dated 14 July 1987 and signed by the Cabinet secretary, and a copy of Mr MacDonald's letter to the Premier, dated 2 July. I also table a copy of an article published in the *Courier-Mail* on 16 July announcing Mr MacDonald's appointment as the Premier's new press secretary.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents on the table.

Mr WARBURTON: That article, quoting Mr MacDonald, leaves no doubt that his appointment was, to all intents and purposes, agreed and settled prior to the 14 July memo from the Cabinet secretary. Mr MacDonald was quoted as saying that "Sir Joh" had approached him about the job soon after he had accepted the temporary position of Queensland National Party media manager during the Federal election campaign. Mr Hassad, who is the Cabinet secretary, has no part whatsoever in all this. He simply puts his name to memos as directed by Cabinet. That memo addressed to all Cabinet Ministers reads—

"At yesterday's meeting of Cabinet, the Honourable the Premier and Treasurer requested that Ministers extend every possible support to the company Queensland Wire Industries Pty Ltd and its products.

A copy of a letter of representation on behalf of the company is attached."

That letter of representation is Mr MacDonald's letter to the Premier lobbying for State Government support for Queensland Wire Industries.

I ask the Premier to specify today precisely what constitutes the "every possible support" he has requested all Cabinet Ministers to extend to Queensland Wire Industries. I also ask the Premier to tell the House whether State Cabinet has approved the three measures of support specified in Mr MacDonald's letter to him on behalf of the company.

I have tabled a letter. I ask all National Party back-bench members to have a look at it, if they are interested in what is happening in their Government. The points made by Mr MacDonald on behalf of Queensland Wire Industries are that that company should receive concessional electricity rates, preferred negotiating status with State

Government departments and a special industry development grant from the Government. One only has to read that letter to see what the company wants. What it wants—and I do not blame the company for trying—is all State Government instrumentalities, including the Railway Department and the Queensland Water Resources Commission, to buy the company's products over those of every other supplier. The company wants to be the preferred supplier.

It is plain that the Premier and Mr MacDonald are embroiled in a serious conflict of interest. Let us examine the facts. The secretary to Cabinet has advised all Ministers of the request made by the Premier to extend “every possible support”—and I think everyone would know what “every possible support” means in respect of this Government—to a company that has lobbied the Government for special support through the Premier's new press secretary, who is one of the most senior members of the Premier's personal staff.

I believe that the conduct of the Premier and the Government in this matter is highly improper. I am convinced that the great majority of Queensland people and Queensland businesses and industries would support me in this view.

I want to make the next point clear: my criticisms have nothing to do with the right of the company involved to lobby the Government for special support or, for that matter, the right of the Government to approve that company's requests. My criticism has nothing to do with that at all. But the Premier's approach to Mr MacDonald to work as his press secretary, and Mr MacDonald's acceptance of that appointment prior to the issue of the memo from the secretary to Cabinet to all Ministers, cast this matter involving public funds in an entirely different light. Once again this National Party State Government is open to totally valid accusations of conflict of interest and cronyism.

On a related matter—the Premier has continued to withhold details of Mr Peter MacDonald's employment contract. At the time of his appointment Mr MacDonald was quoted as saying that these details were between him and the Premier.

Who does Mr MacDonald really think he is? Obviously he needs reminding that he is not working for the National Party any longer—that that is not what he is doing—but that he is working for the Queensland Government. He is working for the people of Queensland, and the people of Queensland, not Premier Petersen, are paying his salary. Because of that, the people of Queensland deserve to be told, and surely this House deserves to be told, the full details of how much he is being paid and the terms and conditions of his employment.

The Premier is obliged to specify the arrangements under which Mr MacDonald will continue to work as a private public relations consultant. Will Mr MacDonald continue to lobby the Government? That is what the Labor Party wants to know, as it is apparent that that is the way it will be. Despite the fact that he is an officer in the Premier's Department, and on the Premier's personal staff, will he still be in a position to be able to continue, on behalf of his clients, to lobby the very Government by whom he is employed? I also ask whether Mr MacDonald's terms of employment require that he divorce himself from any private work which entails lobbying the Government and its Ministers?

Frankly, in this so-called State of private enterprise, in which the Government continually says that everybody needs to get a fair go, one wonders what the other consultants in the private sector think of this very unique arrangement. One wonders just what they think when they see advantage given to one of their particular consultant colleagues.

A further matter that I wish to raise involving the appropriation of tax-payers' money is that of ministerial expenses. The cash credit system of ministerial expenses presents one of the best examples of the lack of accountability that exists in the State Government's financial administration. The cash credit system, not commonly known to many people, is open to extreme abuse. It can, and I suspect that in certain cases it does, work as follows: a Minister draws a cash cheque for \$200, \$300 or perhaps \$400.

The Minister then, when he spends this money for whatever purpose, issues a docket for reciprocal expenses or incidental expenses. No receipts are supplied. The docket is merely signed or initialled by the Minister.

If one wants to probe, one finds that it is common knowledge in all departments that if auditors from the Auditor-General's Department observe a Minister's signature on an expenses docket they do not challenge the authenticity of such a transaction, even if there are no receipts to support the expenditure involved.

The Savage report that was released this week recommends that the Auditor-General should be appointed under an audit Act separate from the financial administration legislation and its multiplicity of regulations, thus acknowledging the perception of independence. I repeat: the Opposition is more interested in the reality of the Auditor-General's independence than in any perception that may exist. The Auditor-General ought to be appointed by the Parliament and he should report directly to the Parliament through the Speaker.

Because legislation is pushed through by this Government, or by virtue of the Treasurer's instructions pursuant to that legislation, the Auditor-General should not be placed in a position in which he is obliged to go to the Minister if he perceives that some problem exists. He should not be obliged to try to work it out so that everything is okay, or ends up okay, without having to report to the Parliament. That should be his responsibility. At this particular time he does not have it. They are the sorts of things that would establish and guarantee the publicly accountable independence of the Auditor-General's office.

The Auditor-General would not be furnishing, as he has to under the present legislation, secret reports—and that is what they are: secret reports—to individual Ministers for their private consumption. I refer to reports such as those on the Callaghan corruption capers.

As I have indicated, these reports are yet to see the light of day. They remain locked away gathering dust in the offices of the Auditor-General, the Premier, the Minister for Industry and Technology, Mr McKechnie, Mr Stan Wilcox, Sir Terence Lewis and the Solicitor-General. Everyone has a copy except the members of this Parliament, who are entitled to see how one of the top public servants in this State, who was previously an employee of the Premier, was able to rort the system. Members of this House ought to be able to see for themselves what is contained in the Auditor-General's report so that they can ascertain what has been left out of the information that so far has been given to them. The Queensland public, whose money was illegally squandered, have not seen hide nor hair of those reports.

State Government auditors cannot be expected to blow the whistle on Ministers who they might think are rorting ministerial expense accounts; that is a job for a parliamentary public accounts committee. The Opposition has been saying that for a long, long time. That is why the Opposition wants a parliamentary public accounts committee; it is one of the reasons why the Government, particularly the Cabinet, does not want one. Investigation of ministerial expenses is a job for a parliamentary public accounts committee. The point I make is that in Western democracies—not just in Australia—the Bjelke-Petersen Government alone has refused to set up a parliamentary public accounts committee.

In conclusion, I say that its refusal begs the question. The point that has been made to me right across the State, particularly recently, is: what has the Government—particularly the Ministers of this Government—got to hide?

Mr SIMPSON (Cooroora) (12.36 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I support the Appropriation Bill (No. 1). Quite clearly, the speech of the Leader of the Opposition was a denigration of the splendid performance of this Government. Many people commission independent surveys in an endeavour to find the bottom line on which the performance of a Government can be assessed. One indicator is that with their feet people from other States have shown confidence in the Queensland Government by

migrating here. They do that because they know this State is better run, that it offers greater job opportunities and that there are greater opportunities for a better quality of life than in any other States. They are the sorts of things that are on the bottom line. The Opposition has only rhetoric. That is typical of the Labor Party; it is big on talk and small on action. The Opposition's Federal counterparts are big on government and small on the rights of individuals.

Mr De Lacy: How did they go in the election?

Mr SIMPSON: The Labor Party gerrymandered the Australian electorate. With a decrease in the Labor vote of nearly 2 per cent across Australia, it gained additional seats. It is about time that the people of Australia knew that, although the Labor Party received only 50 per cent of the votes, it gained 58 per cent of the seats.

Mr Burreket: Gerrymander!

Mr SIMPSON: Yes, that is right.

While I am on these figures, I will give the House the statistics State by State. In New South Wales, Labor received 50 per cent of the vote and 55 per cent of the seats. That is another example of the gerrymander. In Victoria, Labor received 51 per cent of the vote and 61 per cent of the seats.

Mr FitzGerald: Shame!

Mr SIMPSON: Yes, it is a shameful gerrymander.

In Queensland, Labor received only 49 per cent of the vote, yet gained 54 per cent of the seats. That is a shameful gerrymander. In South Australia, Labor also received only 49 per cent of the vote, yet it gained 61 per cent of the seats. See how the Labor Party can rig the boundaries in that State. In Western Australia, Labor received only 49 per cent of the vote, but gained 69 per cent of the seats. What a shocking gerrymander that is. That is what Opposition members have often said about the percentage of votes that the National Party gets in Queensland. Members of the Opposition should hang their heads in shame.

Hawke and his Labor Party are trying to abuse foreign affairs powers under the Constitution, to change the Constitution of Australia, and to take from individuals in this State—people with a community of interest—the right to be properly represented. Instead of people in suburbia being able to vote with people in suburbia with like interests and people in the bush being able to vote with people in the bush with like interests, the Federal Labor Government has gerrymandered the electorates so that they start in the centre of the city and extend way out into the bush. There is no community of interest. That is what the Federal Labor Government has done.

A survey that was conducted in May this year by the Australian Bureau of Statistics reveals that Queensland had the second-highest population growth in Australia, at 1.85 per cent. The national average was 1.46 per cent. New South Wales had a population growth of 1.34 per cent; Victoria, 1.11 per cent; South Australia, 0.83 per cent; Western Australia, 2.65 per cent and Tasmania, 0.89 per cent. That is an indication that people are showing their assessment of good management in this State by coming to Queensland.

Queensland's natural population increase was the second-highest in Australia, at 0.87 per cent. The natural population increase in New South Wales was 0.77 per cent; in Victoria, 0.73 per cent; in South Australia, 0.69 per cent; in Western Australia, 1.05 per cent; and in Tasmania, 0.78 per cent. The Australian average was 0.81 per cent.

Queensland's interstate migration gain for the 12 months ending 31 December 1986 was 13 227, or 1 102 a month, or 254 a week. For the same period—and honourable members must note this—New South Wales lost 10 804 people; Victoria lost 10 882; South Australia lost 3 514; Western Australia gained 6 809 and Tasmania lost 87. The rate of growth for Queensland was plus 0.51 per cent; New South Wales, minus 0.20 per cent; Victoria, minus 0.26 per cent; South Australia, minus 0.26 per cent; Western Australia, plus 0.48 per cent and Tasmania, minus 0.02 per cent.

Mr Burreket: Can you tell us why all these people are coming to Queensland?

Mr SIMPSON: Yes. It is because the Queensland Government is interested in the small bloke, in small business, and the rights of individuals. The Queensland Government does not believe in the Moscow pimping card. The Queensland Government believes in lower taxes and an incentive for people who are productive. In addition, of course, Queensland has a good climate, which attracts many unemployed people to this State.

Government members have often heard from the Opposition that nothing but a pack of geriatrics are coming to Queensland from other States. It is interesting to note that 62 per cent of those migrating to Queensland are in the 15 to 34-year age group. Opposition members will have to admit that those are interesting figures. Only 12.7 per cent of the migration is in the 55 years and above age group. It is quite clear the majority of people who are coming to Queensland are young, active people who are adding to the productivity of this country.

Mr FitzGerald: Contrary to what the other side often tells us.

Mr SIMPSON: That is right. It is not unusual for the Opposition to hoodwink or mislead the public, as Mr Hawke did during the last election.

In March this year Queensland lost 2 400 working days through industrial disputes, or 2.9 per cent of all working days lost. The number of working days lost in New South Wales was 40 600; in Victoria, 20 900; in South Australia, 2 200; and in Western Australia, 11 300. The total number of working days lost in Australia because of industrial disputes was 81 000.

People come to Queensland to work. They do not come here to strike. They realise that the work ethic has its own reward, but, on the other hand, Australia is being short-changed by the mismanagement of the Hawke-led Labor Government. Australia's gross national debt has now blown out to a figure of over \$105 billion.

Mr Littleproud interjected.

Mr SIMPSON: That is right. Of course he tried to smooth it over by saying, "What does that matter?"

That figure means a debt to every individual Australian family of \$26,000. It is frightening that that is the kind of debt that the Hawke Government has accumulated in this country due to its mismanagement.

Activity in the building sector, both domestic and industrial, is a good barometer of Queensland's performance. During May the number of dwelling-units approved in Queensland was 1 985, which is an increase of 15 per cent over the previous month's figures, and above the Australiawide figure, which decreased by 13.7 per cent. This is a clear barometer of the performance of the Queensland Government when compared with the figures throughout Australia under the Federal Government. Nineteen per cent of all dwelling-units approved in Australia were in Queensland, yet Queensland has only 16 per cent of the total population. Additionally, there was an increase in the value of new residential buildings approved in Queensland.

In May, the total value of non-residential buildings in Queensland was \$129.4m, which was an increase of 15.5 per cent on the previous month. Nationally the value fell by 10.5 per cent. If one compares these figures with the figures in May 1986, one finds that in Queensland there was an increase of 79.7 per cent, whilst the national figure dropped by 1.8 per cent. The differences in those figures is very marked. They are extracted from a comparison made by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, so it was an independent assessment.

Queensland performs well when one looks at the export figures. Queensland is the leading export State in Australia, exporting 22.6 per cent of the nation's exports. Looking at the Consumer Price Index, for the 12 months ending March 1987, one sees that Brisbane had an inflation rate of 8.7 per cent. That figure is lower than any other State

capital figure and lower than the national average of 9.4 per cent. Those are the reasons why people come to Queensland. It is cheaper to live here. The national inflation figure during the December quarter was 9.8 per cent. These figures can be compared with the inflation rates in other countries in the world. Sweden's inflation rate is below 6 per cent, Switzerland is below 5 per cent, Canada and France are below 4 per cent, the USA is approximately 3 per cent and the inflation figures for West Germany and Japan are negative. When one looks at Australia's inflation rate compared with inflation rates throughout the world, one can see how poor is the performance of the Federal Government.

People come to Queensland because it has the lowest taxes per head of population. The Queensland Government manages this State well, and the whole idea of the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) is to help the Government continue to do just that. Queensland remains the lowest-taxed mainland State per head of mean population. Queensland's per capita tax is \$735.78. Figures for the other States are as follows—

New South Wales	\$1,032.71
Victoria	\$1,066.40
South Australia	\$ 806.82
Western Australia	\$ 845.76
Tasmania	\$ 723.45

It can be seen that Tasmania is the only State with a lower per capita tax than Queensland. The per capita tax in Victoria is 40 per cent higher than that in Queensland. The Leader of the Opposition said that Victoria was a wonderful State because it has lower taxation. However, as can be seen from the ABS figures, that is not so. The Leader of the Opposition is trying to mislead the Parliament, and that is very sad and serious.

Opposition members often state that electricity charges in Queensland are higher than those in the other States of Australia. To be honest and straightforward, I must say that Queensland has the second-highest domestic electricity tariff and the second-lowest industrial or commercial tariff. In the time remaining to me, I would not be able to provide the tariffs for all the States.

As to average weekly earnings—because of the high percentage of people in part-time employment, Queensland does not do as well as some of the other States. Often it is not understood that many people come to Queensland because of the life-style that it offers. Average weekly earnings in the States are as follows—

New South Wales	\$385.00
Queensland	\$360.50
Western Australia	\$387.10
Victoria	\$391.70
South Australia	\$350.30
Tasmania	\$370.90

It is clear that the management of this State by the Queensland Government shows up in a far better light than that of the high-taxing Hawke Government, which, during its period of office, increased taxes by 25 per cent, increased Government spending by 30 per cent, ruined the Australian dollar and created the highest foreign debt ever. The Hawke Government has the highest-ever current account deficit. It is no wonder that people will rue the day that they returned the Hawke Government.

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (12.51 p.m.): Today I would like to tell this Parliament the story of Henry Alexander Patterson, otherwise known as Harry. Harry Patterson is your average Queensland citizen. Now an age pensioner, he was a good family man and a well-liked and greatly respected citizen of the Mackay area. He is also a justice of the peace. Never a stirrer or trouble-maker, never disobedient of authority—in fact, he is a very polite and softly spoken man. One could not call him an agitator, but, like all other citizens of this great but badly administered State, he is a firm believer that truth and justice are the right of every Queenslanders.

Unfortunately, Harry now finds himself at the centre of a gross example of intrigue, manipulation of evidence, perjury and court cover-up such as I have never before known;

all because he exercised his right to defend himself in court over a summons to pay an on-the-spot fine of \$30. It was alleged that he exceeded the speed limit on one of Mackay's streets.

On a quiet Sunday afternoon on 16 February 1986, Harry Patterson's two-tone Valiant sedan, registration number PVP-089, was stopped by Constable William Bernard Graham. Harry was issued with an on-the-spot ticket No. 7435981/3 for driving at 70 kilometres per hour in a 60 kilometres per hour zone and fined \$30. Everything was done correctly at that point by the police at the scene, although Harry stated that, according to his speedometer, he was driving at 35 miles per hour.

The next day Harry had his speedometer checked by a competent authority and it was found to be accurate, so he lodged an objection in writing at the Mackay Police Station. This was properly acknowledged and an investigation followed. His objection was rejected, and on 23 July he was issued with a summons to appear in the Mackay Court House at 10 a.m. on 27 August 1986. The date was later changed to 10 September 1986, and that is when all the problems occurred.

Harry Patterson had been ill on and off during the period from February to September 1986. Because of his age he admits that his memory of names is not what is used to be, but he still has a strong memory for faces.

He now admits that he made a mistake in not seeking legal assistance and, instead, tried to conduct his own defence. I will come back to the events in the court on that day at a later stage, as those events are central to this whole matter.

However, I point out that, when the police evidence was being given, Harry Patterson endeavoured to point out that none of the police officers giving evidence was the one who had issued him with the traffic ticket.

The court records now show the result of file No. 3247/86, namely that, on that September day, Harry Patterson was convicted of speeding, he was fined and was apportioned costs totalling \$65.25.

That dejected man—disgusted, because he felt that he was not able to properly present his evidence—became confused and indeed lost in the format of the court. Naturally, that is understandable.

Some days later he sought the advice of a solicitor, who said, "Look, Harry, pay the fine. It is only a speeding charge. Forget all about it. If you take it up with the police, they might take it out on you at a later stage."

However, being a man of high principle, Harry thought that people in high places would listen to him. On 5 November 1986, when he was feeling a little better, Harry sat down and wrote letters to His Excellency the Governor, Sir Walter Campbell, and the Minister for Police, Mr Gunn. He set out his problem, his account of his treatment in the court, and his allegations of a police "ring-in"—to use a racing term.

On 11 November the Governor's official secretary correctly, politely and kindly advised Harry that he had forwarded his letter on to the Minister for Police for his action.

I want to make it quite clear that I do not intend to involve His Excellency any further in this matter whatsoever. I mention him only to demonstrate the faith that Harry Patterson had in the Queensland legal system.

Eventually Harry received a reply, dated 27 January 1987, from Mr Gunn. It was obviously taken from a typical police report and it told him what he already knew about his case. It also stated that, if he had been aggrieved, he could have, within 28 days, appealed against the magistrate's decision. It was further suggested that any other action should be taken by the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General.

By that time—no doubt the worry worsened his health—Harry had suffered a long bout of illness. As a result, his daughter, who lives at Kallangur, had to write to the

clerk of the court seeking additional time for the payment of the fine. By that time Harry Patterson felt that, if he did pay the fine, not only would he virtually be pleading guilty to the original alleged offence but he would also be accepting the wrong that had been done to him in the court.

Unperturbed, and confident that his search for justice would succeed, when he was well again Harry wrote to Mr Clauson on 19 May 1987. Mr Clauson could not be bothered to properly examine Harry Patterson's plea for justice and passed it on to his under secretary to answer, with the comment that "as this action was heard and determined by a court of competent jurisdiction" he was unable to intervene.

Harry Patterson, senior citizen, justice of the peace and a kindly and loving citizen of Queensland, then came to see me to tell me his story. His independent spirit had been broken, his health affected and his faith in the system shattered. But worse was still to come for him. Early in July, despite a sympathetic feeling for him by some officers at the Mackay Police Station, through an administrative mix-up he was taken from his boardinghouse to the Mackay Police Station and held in custody until his fine was paid.

I continued my investigations into Harry Patterson's case. As a result of my inquiries, I intend today in this Parliament to point out the way in which justice—Bjelke-Petersen Government style—is administered in this State of Queensland.

I return to the events that occurred in the Mackay Magistrates Court on 10 September 1986 when Harry Alexander Patterson, whilst endeavouring to conduct his own defence, claimed the police officer who was giving evidence and calling himself William Bernard Graham was not the officer who had issued him with his traffic ticket.

I have here a transcript of part of those court proceedings, the first section of which reads as follows—

"Prosecutor:	I call William Bernard Graham, please Your Worship, witness duly sworn:
XD by Prosecutor:	Your full name is William Bernard Graham?
W. B. Graham:	That's correct.
	You're a Constable of Police attached to the Dalby Police Station, Traffic Branch?
	That's correct.
	As of the 16th of February, 1986 were you then attached to the Mackay Police Station?
	That's correct.
	Do you know the defendant in these proceedings, Henry Alexander Patterson?
	Yes, I do.
	Do you recall Sunday the 16th of February, 1986?
	Yes."

Let us look at the real facts. Yes, police officer 5613, Constable William Bernard Graham, did issue the traffic ticket to Henry Alexander Patterson on Sunday, 16 February 1986. The very same Constable Graham was transferred to Dalby on 7 August 1986 and was stationed there on 10 September 1986.

However, Constable Graham was on duty in Dalby on that day and could not have been in the witness-box at the Mackay Court House. Who, then, was the police officer in the Mackay court room who swore himself in under oath as Constable Graham? Who gave evidence as Constable Graham? Who identified Harry Patterson as the man to

whom he had issued a traffic ticket earlier in the year? Who continued to perjure himself in the court room for 10 minutes, despite the plea and then the outcry of Harry Patterson?

What was the role of the police prosecutor in this affair and the other police officers who either gave evidence or were in attendance in the court room on that day?

And what about the magistrate, who has since retired? He is a man who was renowned amongst the local legal fraternity as having a strong leaning towards police evidence, and who was well known by, and who also knew well, the members of the local police force. The real Constable Graham would have given evidence in his court room during his service in Mackay, so he must have known that the police officer giving evidence as Constable Graham was another officer.

The Fine Cotton ring-in is minor compared to this affair. I want an immediate investigation at a high level of this scandalous matter—perjury, conspiracy and cover-up. They are all there and all were used simply to make sure a poor old man was convicted of a minor traffic charge.

In his later inquiries in an attempt to obtain justice, Harry claims he was told confidentially by a senior police officer that this procedure was quite often undertaken by the police as it cost too much to bring an officer from Dalby to Mackay to give evidence in a minor traffic case.

The other question, of course, is: why did not either Mr Gunn or Mr Clauson, or both, make the proper inquiries regarding Harry Patterson's allegations of a ring-in? Their participation in the cover-up of this incident, although perhaps not deliberate, is certainly negligent and they are just as much a part of the court room ring-in scandal as the Mackay police and the magistrate!

The people of Queensland must be assured that the courts of this State are places of truthfulness and justice. For them to be used in the way that they have been against Harry Patterson is a gross misuse of their powers. Those involved should be taken to task and punished accordingly.

Furthermore, the enormous miscarriage of justice that Harry Patterson has suffered must be rectified and his conviction quashed. Harry Patterson is a brave man and his belief in the system that should protect the little man in our community is something that I will fight to protect.

Although today's headlines deal mainly with prostitution, gambling and organised crime, the average citizen is more interested in the integrity of the courts. If that disappears, then the whole of our system is corrupt and dishonest.

Those who for convenience or for any other reason want to abuse their privilege of office in the way that those involved in the Harry Patterson affair have done must be brought to accountability.

Sitting suspended from 1.01 to 2.30 p.m.

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (2.30 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I support the Government in its continuing efforts to develop this State for the benefit of the people who live in Queensland and of the people who wish to move to Queensland to live. Bearing in mind the number of people who are finding it to their advantage to live in the beautiful State of Queensland, I am pleased to see the efforts that the Government is making to develop the State.

When the Premier and Treasurer introduced the Appropriation Bill, I was amazed to discover that the Commonwealth Education Department employs some 1 800 public servants at a cost of \$60m per annum. They do not teach at all. For the expenditure of that amount of money, not one student is taught anything. In contrast, the Queensland Education Department, which is continually fighting for additional funding to provide the extra teachers who are required, employs 30 000 teachers and has a head office staff of only 500. It costs the Queensland Government \$10m to employ that staff. That is a good indication of the duplication of funding and services that occurs. The money that

the Commonwealth spends on duplication could be better spent by the States in the areas in which it is most needed.

I compliment the Minister for Education on his efforts to meet the needs of the department and the parents and students in this State. The needs of education in Queensland are increasing, and it is frustrating to learn that funding is not available to meet those needs.

I noted some of the comments that the Leader of the Opposition made. I take objection to one of his points. When referring to boards and statutory bodies, he said that most fire boards in the State should be eliminated. I wonder what his thinking is when it comes to providing a service to the community. That is an indication that Opposition members are trying to centralise all power and authority.

The boards are spread throughout Queensland. They meet the needs of the people in their particular areas. No-one is better informed about what is happening in an area than the person who lives in that area. That is reflected in the membership of the various fire boards, hospital boards and ambulance boards. The members of those boards work for many hours for little remuneration. However, they do not regard remuneration as being of paramount importance; to them, providing a service to the community is the most important matter.

If the boards were eliminated or their number reduced to any large extent, the input from the local community would also be reduced. That would be a bigger disaster than anything that has been suggested about increasing funding or services. The cost of funding fire boards and fire services is minimal when compared with the overall Budget.

There has also been quite a bit of discussion on and criticism of the increase in fire levies. The criticism has been levelled at the amount of the increase. But I have not heard too many people compare what they are paying at present, even with the increase, with what they would be paying if the previous insurance levy system had continued. With an insurance levy on a house or property of \$1.10 per \$1,000, on average, it would have been far more than the \$72 levy that is being imposed for Brisbane and the \$58 that is being imposed for Gympie. I am not saying that it is easy to find funding; I am saying that it is difficult to do without those services. It is almost impossible to imagine living in this day and age without the protection of fire brigades in the centres in which they are situated.

I pay a compliment to the fire brigade boards that are established throughout the State. In my electorate of Gympie, the fire brigade board fulfils an enormous role. Officers of the fire brigade carry out their duties splendidly and are a credit to their superiors.

At the Gympie fire station, the vehicles are kept in immaculate condition. The equipment is also very well kept, which is a credit to the officers responsible. The maintenance of such high standards within the limits of the funds that have been allocated is also a credit to that fire brigade board.

I am aware that suggestions have been made about changes in funding arrangements. I do not say that change will not occur; indeed, it is possible that further changes will eventuate. However, I ask those who criticise change to bear in mind the difficulties associated with the previous system of financing fire services from the collection of insurance levies.

From time to time, statutory authorities come in for a share of criticism. I ask those who criticise to examine what the various authorities, boards and bodies are doing for the community.

Statutory authorities are an essential part of the machinery of government. They are responsible for tasks that departments and local authorities are unsuited to carry out. If a large number of statutory authorities have been established, it should be remembered that they have been established at the request of industry and that they are supported financially by industry. In some instances, industry contributes 100 per cent

of the costs associated with statutory authorities. In most cases, industries contributed 80 per cent of the cost.

By maintaining a register of statutory authorities, the Government monitors the number of statutory authorities. The Government is more concerned about performance and efficiency in terms of both the authorities' contributions to the community and the feed-back that comes to the Government as advice than about the number of statutory authorities.

The Government's management of statutory authorities is based upon the following principles: the creation of a statutory authority on the basis of clearly defined need; progressive increases in operational autonomy concurrent with improvements in performance and accountability; maximum operational autonomy consistent with the needs of the authority and compliance with Government policies; clear accountability to the responsible Minister and to Parliament; regular internal and external appraisal of performance; regular updating of the objectives, functions, powers and management of statutory authorities; and termination of the statutory authority when that authority has fulfilled its objectives, or when, due to changing circumstances, those objectives can be better achieved by other means. When people set out to criticise statutory authorities or examine the role that they play in the community, the principles that I have listed and the important part that statutory authorities play ought to be taken into account.

In common with most honourable members, I have received in the post a trickle of objections to the Government's policy on contract employment.

Mr Davis: What do you mean by a "trickle"?

Mr STEPHAN: I said "trickle", but I suppose that some parliamentarians would receive more objections than others.

I find it difficult to understand the mentality of people who sign a contract that does not reflect either the original provisions relating to employment or the present intent of the Government in bringing about contract employment. Early comments suggested that the contract employment policy would reduce job security by offering only a 12-month term of employment. That has never been stated. The suggestion was that under the terms and conditions specified in a contract, the contract period should be 12 months. If in 12 months' time either the employer or the employee wished to do so, the contract, including the terms and conditions set out, could be renegotiated.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr STEPHAN: I am not too sure what the member for Brisbane Central is babbling about.

Again I point out that minimum conditions of employment must be followed, and they will be followed. The claim that job security will be reduced because 12-month terms of employment are being offered is misleading and is not correct. It is terribly inaccurate. It is the contract that is for 12 months, not the employment.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr STEPHAN: Although the honourable member is probably here for a term of three years, anybody who works for wages can have his job terminated on 7 or 14 days' notification. Under those circumstances there is no guarantee of continuity of employment. The Minister has borne in mind many of the comments that have been made on this matter and he is in the process of making major changes to what was originally proposed.

As I see it, the real fear is with the unions. They are concerned about their loss of power. That really is what it is all about: the loss of the unions' power over their members—the employees. The unions fear that the employees will not want to belong to unions and that the amount of money that is paid to them by way of union fees will be reduced.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr STEPHAN: I can hear the honourable member babbling. That is the fear of the unions. That is what they are worried about. The unions like to be able to stand over people and tell them what to do. They say to the people, "You shall pay us the money. You shall belong to the union under these terms and conditions."

It has been interesting to note the number of wives who, after they realised that their husbands had signed the postcards, have rung up and said, "I didn't realise my husband was signing that. I didn't realise that he was going through this process. I don't agree with what my husband has done." It is interesting to note that the wives have taken that stand, bearing in mind the pressure that their husbands would have been under to sign the postcards. Most of the postcards are being hand-delivered by the union representative in the area. I have received only two postcards with stamps on them. The rest of them have been hand-delivered.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr STEPHAN: As I said, the rest of them have all been delivered by the union representative. Is that what the honourable member calls a freedom of choice? That is an enormous response—two postcards delivered with stamps on them. Two people were prepared to spend 37c on a stamp.

I will now refer to the positive area of growth in this State. At times people do get carried away by thinking that Queensland is perhaps a backward State. However, in the last couple of years industrial stability has been achieved. I suppose that honourable members opposite have noticed that. For example, I suppose they have noticed that, in the last few years, there has not been a power strike and that people have not been without power. I have not heard anybody mention that at all, but it has not gone without notice. Many other areas of industry have also noticed that there has been far less disruption in Queensland's work-place than in the work-place of any other State. For example, in March, 2 400 working days were lost in Queensland as a result of industrial action. That is 2.9 per cent—nearly 3 per cent—of the total number of working days lost in Australia in that period. In New South Wales, 40 000 working days were lost; in Victoria, 20 000; in South Australia, 2 200, and in Western Australia, 11 000. A total of 81 000 working days was lost in Australia in that period, and of that total, 2 400 were lost in Queensland. That is a pretty fair sort of a record for Queensland.

I should not say that the mining industry is the main culprit, but possibly it is the industry whose employees, at times, are working under varying and fairly adverse conditions. However, that industry was the most unstable of all. For the 12 months ended March 1987, it recorded 486 000 working days lost, which was 35 per cent of the total number of working days lost in Australia in that period. So the mining industry accounted for about one-third of the number of working days lost.

The coal industry was responsible for the loss of 299 000—almost 300 000—working days, which is 22 per cent of the total number of working days lost. That gives an indication of the magnitude of the number of working days lost for that one industry. If that figure is taken out of the total number, it shows that the other industries in Queensland worked reasonably satisfactorily.

Although I do not have much time remaining, I wish to point out some of the things that the Commonwealth Government is inflicting upon the States. Many people mention the difficulties now being faced by small business. With high interest rates and the taxation policies of the Federal Government, no wonder it is difficult for small business to compete against worldwide competitors.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah—Leader of the Liberal Party) (2.46 p.m.): Unfortunately my voice is not good, so I may not be able to make a lengthy contribution to the debate.

Mr Palaszczuk: Is this your swan-song?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: No, not a chance.

The debates on this Appropriation Bill and on the one that will be presented after the Budget provide the opportunity for a wide-ranging discussion on aspects of the Government's management of the State's economy. I was pleased to see that the Premier drew attention to the duplication of services in this nation. I hope that the fact that the Federal Government has an enormous Education Department, the functions of which could be quite easily administered by the States, is highlighted. The Federal Education Department is an enormous cost to the tax-payer. It is simply a watch-dog over schools and creates enormous paper warfare for schools throughout the nation. Most of those functions could be performed by an auditing process. It has reached such a ridiculous stage that clerks well down the line in the Federal Education Department are ringing up school principals and seeking information that the principals have already supplied in returns. When the principal says, "What you want is on page 28 of the return I sent in", the clerk says, "I am sorry, that part of the document is not in my hands; it is in the hands of somebody in some other department." That this nation has two education departments to administer education is absurd. It has always been, and will continue to be, a State function.

Mr Davis: Why didn't you get rid of it when Fraser was in?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: He was just as guilty as Hawke is in regard to these matters. The honourable member cannot get me on that one. I was just as critical then.

Mr Davis: You weren't.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Yes, I certainly was. I can remember that they were the days when the honourable member for Brisbane Central was not even in Parliament. He was outside trying to screw little service station people round the countryside and putting taxi-operators out of business.

Mr Davis: For that, you will never get any more cheap petrol.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: The honourable member did not have cheap petrol; it was "cheapie" petrol.

The Commonwealth Education Department could delegate all its authority. The distribution of funds could be done far more efficiently by the States themselves. In years past the States did just that, and did it quite well.

The Premier also highlighted the duplication of health services. The Constitution provides that in certain areas the Commonwealth has a role to play in the provision of health services; but the duplication of the administrative services for our hospitals and the domestic operations of the health services in this nation, which are already competently handled by the States, is another absurdity and another cost to the nation.

The Premier might care to give some attention to one other item that I wish to add to the list, that is the duplication of the judicial system of this nation. For more than 70 years State courts—Supreme Courts, District Courts, county courts and Magistrates Courts—handled the Federal jurisdiction without any trouble at all. The lawyers were trained in the same law schools; they learned the same law; they practised the same procedures. In all that time, they had no trouble in handling the Federal jurisdiction. However, in recent years the nation has seen the growth of a Federal judicial system with enormous consequences. New buildings have been constructed to house the justices, their associates and the support systems that they require.

I notice that, in its recent economy drive, the Federal Government has redelegated some of the jurisdiction back to the States, particularly in the magistracy. Even the Federal Government has found it too expensive to have a duplicated system. That is another area in which services have been duplicated in this nation at enormous cost to the tax-payer.

I want to draw to the attention of honourable members some information that was published this morning. I refer to the unemployment figures for the month of July.

Again, Queensland tops the poll. Queensland will continue to have the highest—if not the highest, then certainly the second-highest—unemployment rate in this nation right throughout the rest of this year and all of next year. That will continue because of the special significance of intensive labour in this State. It is extremely difficult to understand the circumstances of intensive labour in this State because of the nature of our labour-intensive industries.

Mr Davis: Why didn't you get rid of pay-roll tax? That's one of your favourites. You never did it when you were in, but you want it done now.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I was well on the way to making the break.

Mr Davis: I asked some of those people over there and they said you never mentioned it when you were in Cabinet.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I will not waste time on the honourable member for Brisbane Central. I refer him to my Budget speech of 1976. The honourable member can look that up himself and he will be able to read exactly what I said. I said then that pay-roll tax is an anti-social tax which is in the same category as chimney taxes, window taxes and hearth taxes, and that it is a tax on employment. In order to lead the way in Australia in giving pay-roll tax relief, Queensland saw fit to break the gentlemen's agreement that existed at that time.

While I am on the topic of pay-roll tax—in the last two years pay-roll tax revenue in this State has increased by 16 per cent.

Mr Comben: How did you get your picture in the Griffith University annual report?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I get my picture in all sorts of places.

Receipts from stamp duty also increased by 20 per cent in that time. The burden of this falls on small businesses—the small people in the community.

About 80 per cent of the revenue from pay-roll tax comes from approximately 20 per cent of the employers. In recent times there might have been some variation to that. Nevertheless, the burden of pay-roll tax on small businesses in my electorate is enormous.

Although the pay-roll tax scheme in this State is the most generous scheme structurally in Australia, the burden falls very heavily upon our industries, more so than it does in Victoria, because of the high proportion of labour-intensive industries in this State. This particularly adversely affects the hospitality and tourist industries.

Today there are hosts of small employers who are paying pay-roll tax but who, a couple of years ago, with the same number of employees, were not paying pay-roll tax. This highlights what is going on in the community.

If the small employers of this State were given relief from pay-roll tax—which could easily be done by raising the threshold from \$300,000 to \$600,000—between 8 000 and 10 000 jobs would become available immediately through small employers. This morning I was talking to an employer who said that if he got relief from pay-roll tax, he would employ another five people. He is a small employer in this State.

Mr Davis interjected.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I imagine the member for Brisbane Central was getting pretty big, because he was wiping out all his competitors, putting them out of business, with the help of ACTU Solo, which is one of the worst things ever invented by the member for Brisbane Central and his colleagues.

Mr Gygar: Nearly as good as Bourke's store.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: And Hawke's pub—all the socialised industries.

Pay-roll tax relief is a partial answer to the unemployment problem in this State, which is very significant because of Queensland's high proportion of labour-intensive industries.

I deal now with the Savage report, a copy of which is in front of me. Several honourable members have had the opportunity of reading this report, which contains a number of matters that are of interest. I congratulate the Government on initiating the Savage report. This committee is not the only one that has been led by Sir Ernest Savage. This report is a very valuable document. The Government is not obliged to adopt all the recommendations in the report, and there are some recommendations that Treasury will not want to adopt.

The Savage committee has highlighted the difficulties that exist in the running of Government: the duplication of services within the Government; the friction that exists between some departments, which has not been resolved; and the number of statutory authorities, some of which could be abolished or merged. All of these measures could reduce the cost of Government. Whether or not the Government adopts all the recommendations is quite irrelevant; the fact is that the Savage report has highlighted a number of areas where the cost of government can be reduced. Even if the Government ignores other recommendations, I hope that it will adopt recommendations that will lead to a reduction in the cost of Government.

In regard to Queensland's industrial relations, Queensland has a Minister for Industrial Affairs and yet the bulk, or nearly all, of Queensland's industrial relations do not come under the authority of that Minister. Most industrial relations are handled by individual departments, such as the Railway Department, Public Service Board and, more recently, the electricity authorities. Very little of Queensland's industrial relations on the Government's part rests with the Department of Employment and Industrial Affairs. It is interesting that each of these departments has built up its own industrial relations section, quite often duplicating each other's efforts and getting in one another's way.

I will give the House a good example of this. In Queensland during the electricity strike one of the employers endeavoured to stand down his employees because of the lack of service his company was receiving from supporting industries. The parties went to the Industrial Court to apply for a stand-down order. Believe it or not, in spite of the Government's stating that it would support employers in their fight against the unions and stating that it was determined to crush the electricity unions who were acting irresponsibly at that time, the advocates representing the Government—not the employment and labour relations advocates—opposed the application for a stand-down order by a private employer who was trying to save himself from going broke because of the strike. That is to be found in the records of the court, and I have read the transcript. It is unbelievable. The left hand did not know what the right hand was doing.

The Queensland Government has an industrial relations department in the public service in one area, the Department of Employment and Industrial Affairs in another area, and electricity people in another area, and it cannot even co-ordinate its approach to the Industrial Court in a case in which an employer was attempting to get a stand-down order so that he would not be prejudiced. Because of the lack of electricity, he had no work for his employees.

It was not deliberate; it was just sheer stupidity, which arose because their departments are not under the one umbrella or are not working together.

It is a recommendation of the Savage committee that these bodies be amalgamated in some way. Additionally, the report recommends the abolition of the Public Service Board in its present form. I am pleased that it recommends a part-time public service board which would work quite satisfactorily, as it does elsewhere. The report recommends that there be a board comprising three permanent heads, to be appointed from the senior permanent heads already in the public service, who, together with a secretariat, could quite adequately handle a part-time public service board.

Mr Davis interjected.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Government departments grow and reach an enormous size simply because there are no checks and balances. One matter that could have been attended to by the committee is the creation of a Department of the Legislative Assembly. In other parts of the world where the Westminster system applies, a Department of the Parliament has been established. The establishment of a Department of the Legislative Assembly in this State is long overdue. I am sure that the creation of a Department of the Legislative Assembly would assist the Speaker enormously and lead to better management of the Parliament and its precincts. It is a fairly small item. However, it is not mentioned in the report.

One other interesting part of the report is the subject of statutory bodies, which are listed in it. A large number of statutory bodies are recommended for amalgamation and some are recommended for abolition. I was interested to hear the honourable member for Gympie refer to this matter. Apparently he is not aware that the Government has before it a recommendation for the abolition and regionalisation of a number of statutory authorities. Quite obviously, some statutory authorities can be amalgamated comfortably because they perform similar functions. Their amalgamation would reduce the cost of administration. Some people hold the view that all quangos should be abolished. Most statutory authorities were established with the unanimous approval of Parliament. They were not dreamt up out of Parliament; they were supported by Parliament and are necessary in the administration of the State. They are also necessary because they attract people with expertise that is not available in the public service.

Mr Elliott: Like the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: That organisation has been working very satisfactorily, and I have said so.

The Savage committee has reported that many statutory authorities could contract out a number of their functions. They do not have to do every single thing. They can still hold their authority and position while administering checks and balances. However, they do not have to do everything. Peppered throughout the report are recommendations that, by delegating some of their responsibilities to private enterprise, they can achieve economy and obtain better control. That would place less strain on the Treasury, on consolidated revenue and on other sources from which they obtain funds. There is room for improvement.

I am pleased that the report was commissioned and that it is available for discussion. I hope that the recommendations that the Government can adopt comfortably will be adopted as soon as possible and that the matters that require further investigation will be investigated further, to reduce the cost of Government.

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (3 p.m.): A rather topical subject at present is the creation of efficiencies to reduce the cost of running the public arena. Generally speaking, during the last Federal election campaign people from all walks of life, and, hopefully, from all political persuasions, were interested in trying to lower the cost of Government.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: Unfortunately, the honourable member has nothing to talk about because members of his party are on public record as saying that they are not interested in lowering the cost of Government.

Mr Davis: That is untrue.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is exactly what has been happening. During the last Federal election the members of the Labor Party were the only people who, basically, were still advocating high taxation and high public expenditure. There is no use in the honourable member's talking about it; he is right out of the debate.

It is most important that honourable members realise that there are many areas in which we can and must cut public expenditure. First of all, one must look very seriously at the Federal arena and, at the same time but to a lesser degree, at the State arena and the overlapping and duplication that occurs in Federal and State departments, instrumentalities and so on.

As one honourable member said, it is incredible that, of all those people who are employed by the Federal Department of Education, not one of them is a teacher.

In order to ensure that there is at least some continuity in education standards right across all the States, it is necessary that the various Ministers for Education correlate their ideas, as has been done in other sectors.

Bodies have been set up to discuss various aspects of education planning. I believe that Queensland can get just as far as the other States. Obviously unanimity has not been reached on the way in which the various education departments will be administered. The Federal Department of Education has become a gigantic bureaucratic system with not a teacher amongst its 17 000-odd employees.

Mr Davis: How many?

Mr ELLIOTT: There are 17 000-odd.

Mr Davis: Rubbish!

Mr ELLIOTT: I challenge the honourable member for Brisbane Central to go to the Parliamentary Library, have a look at the figures and see which of us is the closest to it. It ill-behoves the honourable member to come into this House and attempt to make out that this is not the case. Regrettably, it is.

I will not be drawn into an argument with the old babbling brook. He always endeavours to make honourable members' speeches for them.

It is also important that one considers the proliferation of Federal commissions. There are commissions for this, commissions for that, commissions for the future, and so on. Quite frankly, they are totally out of control. In common with Opposition members, many Government members in Canberra are unaware of the number of people who are involved in some of those commissions. I do not have a clue about the numbers. If the honourable member were to challenge me on those numbers, I would have to agree that I do not know the numbers.

The amount of money that is being spent on all those weird and wonderful conceptions is absolutely frightening. One must take a long and hard look at them.

As the Federal Treasurer so aptly put it, this nation is turning into a banana republic. Every day, Australia is going down that track.

Mr De Lacy: Tell us about the barley board.

Mr ELLIOTT: I will mention the barley board in a minute.

It is also important to look at the semi-governmental bodies, boards and so on. In this day and age, when all sorts of economic stringencies are called for, we cannot afford in any way, shape or form to say that any one of those operations is sacrosanct or can afford to rest on its laurels and say, "We are efficient. There is no need for us to be looked at at all."

Consultants should be used much more than they are at present. People who are experts in their field, or alternatively private enterprise consultants, should be put into the various boards and bodies to challenge them to demonstrate where they are making efficiencies and to justify what they are doing. Because they were efficient 10 years ago, and because they were doing a certain thing in a certain way 10 years ago, that does not necessarily mean that today all of the functions of particular bodies are still relevant. It is important also to look at the various boards and bodies in our own electorates.

There are many areas in my electorate, as I am sure there are in other members' electorates, that are very concerned with Government expenditure. One cannot speak only about cutting Government expenditure, which many members have been talking about today, even though it is very important. Some sort of balance has to be achieved as to the services that the community needs. It is very important that the Government does not forget about the education system or the need for roads and so on.

I turn now to the amount to be appropriated together with the expenditure by the Main Roads Department. I have been part of deputations, together with the Premier, the Minister for Main Roads and other people, in respect of a route used by northern traffic that is travelling through the centre of the Cunningham electorate—through Oakey, across to Pittsworth and down through Millmerran—to Melbourne. Much more traffic now uses that route.

Mr Davis: Why?

Mr ELLIOTT: That is a reasonable question. It is the first reasonable question that the honourable member has asked today.

Mr Littleproud: What do you mean "today"?

Mr ELLIOTT: I will extend it to "this year".

It should be understood that because a new road has been opened through Millmerran to Goondiwindi, that is now the best route to the Newell Highway from Brisbane, the coast or the north. That road does not have as many hills and carries fewer private cars. If someone drives on that route in a truck, he changes gears hundreds of times less than he would on the road through Warwick. Consequently, the main body of heavy traffic is now using the new route. That is something that has to be accepted.

Now that the road has been developed and opened up, it has to be accepted that the appropriation of funds by the Government should take into account what the traffic-counters have established, which is that heavy vehicles are using it. Therefore, it is important that the Government endeavour to upgrade some of that route. I put it to this Chamber that the Oakey-Pittsworth section of the road needs to be upgraded to main road status. I am asking for a more realistic appropriation in the Main Roads allocation and then, in turn, I ask that that be looked at by the Main Roads Department.

For many years, consideration has been given to planning by-passes around many towns. Pittsworth now has a by-pass. For many years, a by-pass has been planned around Oakey on the Warrego Highway. Because of the financial stringencies at the moment, that project is probably some time away.

An Opposition member: Ten years.

Mr ELLIOTT: It could well be 10 years. I doubt it, but it may be 10 years.

Mr FitzGerald: The Gatton by-pass has been put back another year.

Mr ELLIOTT: The Opposition's Federal colleagues are cutting back every year on the amount of money that they are prepared to allocate to the roads in this State.

The Government has to look at the reality and realise the safety aspect. Children and traffic do not mix, particularly the large number of vehicles that travel through Oakey every day on the western highway at a time when the buses are leaving the schools.

Mr Davis: I was up at the Oakey races.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is good. I am pleased. I am sure that they welcomed the honourable member.

It is important to realise that safety aspects are paramount. The Government cannot wait until the by-pass is constructed to take the traffic away from where the children are boarding buses in front of the Oakey High School. It must construct a traffic turnaround so that the children can enter the buses without having to cross the road. I urge that the appropriations made to both the Department of Education and the Department of Works give special consideration to the matter of safety.

The allocations assigned to the provision of kindergartens and pre-schools in the community should be examined as a whole for the State of Queensland. I am aware of problems that exist in my electorate, associated with pre-school care, and I am sure that many other honourable members also would be aware of similar problems in their

electorates. Pre-school care has become a very important matter and the Government cannot afford to ignore it.

Statistics indicate a higher incidence of break-down in family life. More and more marriages are breaking down at an early stage. That creates a greater need for child care facilities. Those facilities are needed not merely because parents want their children to get a good start in education through encouragement that pre-school training offers, but because pre-school facilities cater for the children of many single parents who have to work. The provision of pre-school facilities not only allows parents to provide their children with a good start in life but also cares for the children of those parents who work. I urge the Government to look closely at this issue because I am aware that in Oakey, which is in my electorate, the pre-school/kindergarten centre is a very important establishment.

Over the last couple of years, extensive debate has surrounded the issue of the site for a new prison complex. Some people who live in the Brisbane area have indicated an unwillingness to see a gaol constructed in their suburb. I understand why people may feel that way. However, regardless of that point of view, communities located in the Millmerran area would welcome the siting of a prison complex there.

Mr Vaughan: Have you told the Premier that?

Mr ELLIOTT: Of course the Premier has been told.

Those people would welcome the siting of a regional prison complex in their area. Shire council representatives have accompanied me on discussions that have been held with the three Ministers involved in the proposal. I urge Treasury officials and those responsible for the allocation of funds to look closely at the area of my electorate and ascertain its needs.

As a result of the break-down of society, larger numbers of people are being thrust upon the care of the community. Young people are being sent to the Westbrook Training Centre. Those who are more mature and who continue to work against the best interests of society—those who have not benefited from correction—have to be sent to appropriate institutions. The Government must realise that a need exists for those institutions.

I realise that other members may wish to mention matters of concern to them. In conclusion, therefore, I emphasise the need to seriously examine cuts in Government spending. It is not good enough for honourable members to come into the House and continually ask the Government to provide services. The economic climate is very stringent at the moment.

A previous speaker mentioned the Savage report. I congratulate Sir Ernest Savage, Gordon Douglas, John Andrews and the other member of the committee on that report, which I believe is a good one. The report has a lot of meat in it and I believe that everyone should take notice of the recommendations contained in it. The members of the committee responsible for the report are professional people who have made their mark on society. They are very capable business people who have indicated that they know what public service is all about. The report should not be ignored.

Mr HAMILL (Ipswich) (3.19 p.m.) The Queensland Government has long presided over miserable levels of financial support for community welfare services in this State. In its 1985 report on comparative levels of State Government spending on services, the Commonwealth Grants Commission identified Queensland as the State which spent least per capita on services to children, the aged and the infirm.

It is not surprising that we have heard a testimony of the neglect of welfare services from the honourable member for Cunningham. After all, the party of which he is a member has just celebrated 30 years in Government in this State. It cannot walk away from 30 years of neglect of this very important area of Government endeavour.

The Commonwealth Grants Commission report stated that Queensland, under its old, New Right regime, spent only \$35 per head on support services to children and

families, that is, \$13 per head less than the six-State average of \$48 per capita expended on welfare services.

This Government is now posturing that it is offering a new direction to the provision of community welfare services in this State. Sadly for those in need, and for the multitude of community organisations which endeavour to fill the ever-widening gap between those services provided by the State Government and those it has shed to the non-Government sector, the non-Government sector has not received adequate financial support from this Government. Nevertheless, the official statements which preceded the introduction of the new Family and Youth Services Act held out the prospect of a more constructive relationship between the private and the public sectors in the provision and delivery of community welfare.

Indeed, the document, *New Direction: Report to staff of the Department of Family and Youth Services* and dated June 1987, contains the following statements—

“3.1 Statement of Departmental Purpose

The following statement of organizational purpose is a flag statement for the Department's New Direction.

. . .

To contribute positively to the social development and well-being of the Queensland community through services responsive to identified needs which

- strengthen the capacity of communities to care for their members;
- protect, assist and support individuals and families.”

The document continues with commitments to “shifting emphasis away from the negative and residual nature of welfare towards a more developmental role to focus on social well-being” and the “retention of statutory role with increased attention to the development of preventative and support services.”

The reality of the new direction is the exact opposite. The new direction is not new at all. The new direction is a great leap backwards into the area of residual welfare, of struggling community welfare agencies and the abandonment of specialist units within the new departmental structure.

One has only to look at the fate of The Outlook near Boonah and compare that with the high-sounding humbug for which this Government, and in particular this State's Family Services Minister, is so fond. Despite its professed commitment to preventive and support services, the Family and Youth Services Department is to end its operation at The Outlook on 1 October.

That decision must have been a hasty one as The Outlook appeared on a diagram depicting the new departmental structure in a staff newsletter dated 22 May 1987, which I table for the information of members

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr HAMILL: That diagram was reproduced in a detailed document called *New Direction*, published by the department in June 1987.

I table that document also.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr HAMILL: The diagrams clearly show The Outlook and detention centres being responsibilities of the Executive Director (Youth Services), who in turn is responsible to the Deputy Director-General (Youth and Community Services).

It is hard to stomach the degree of hypocrisy which allows this Government to publish such lofty goals as those outlined in the new direction and then turn around and jettison that part of the department that is already achieving those goals; but the deceitful manner in which the Minister sought to justify the unjustifiable when she

appeared on the ABC's *7.30 Report* on 2 July was a shameful attempt to mislead the public over this issue.

The Minister has argued two positions concurrently in order to defend the Government's decision. The first line of argument focused on the youth diversion program, a sentencing option available to Children's Court magistrates. I quote from her press release dated 1 July 1987, which states—

“She said the centre catered for about 30 young offenders each year, had a full-time staff of 10, and had a budget last financial year of \$350,000.”

Much less prominence was given to the fact that The Outlook was the venue for training programs for both departmental personnel and the staff of a wide variety of community welfare organisations who deal with youth who are at risk.

Indeed, on the television program just mentioned, this Minister repeatedly asserted that the centre catered only for 30 young offenders, strongly implying that the centre was underutilised and therefore a flagrant waste of money. At best, her performance betrayed a total lack of capacity to handle her responsibilities as a Minister of the Crown. At worst, it showed up a Minister who set out deliberately to conceal the facts in order to mislead the public.

The Minister should have known that those 30 young offenders represent but a tiny minority of those who pass through the centre. Let me quote from page 15 of the 1985-86 annual report for the Department of Children's Services—

“There are a variety of other programs conducted by and through The Outlook:

- Training programs are conducted for Departmental and welfare agency staff. These programs include skills in the various outdoor activities, and methods of dealing with difficult youth, program design and safety.
- Staff from agencies dealing with difficult youth and officers of the Department who have been trained at The Outlook are then able to conduct their own programs using The Outlook's facilities and resources. Where appropriate, The Outlook will provide a staff member to assist in running a program, whether it be a day visit to The Outlook or an extended wilderness experience.”

I draw the attention of honourable members particularly to the following passage in the report—

“Sixty-two such programs have been conducted this year for over five hundred participants, drawn from thirty-six different government agencies and non-government welfare organisations.”

The figures for the year just passed would show upwards of one thousand participants from a similar variety of organisations using that centre.

It is obvious from the department's own report that The Outlook meets the criteria which have been identified with the department's new direction. Its emphasis is on developmental and preventive strategies; the programs are designed to enhance the self-worth of young offenders and most particularly youth who are at risk of offending. It is certainly offering preventive strategies.

The Outlook is also offering the Government and the non-Government sectors a valuable service through its staff-training programs and the consequential dissemination of the unit's expertise throughout the State, particularly to country areas. The Outlook staff travel to other centres to conduct courses for welfare workers and are available for consultation for those seeking to emulate the widely acclaimed programs which have been devised at the centre. The tangible support that is provided to other agencies by The Outlook team is the type of collaboration between Government and non-Government agencies that ought to be encouraged and not extinguished by narrow-minded bureaucrats serving a myopic Minister.

There has been no attempt by the Minister to evaluate these services when she speaks of the cost of running The Outlook and its programs. While the Government is

prepared to spend \$5m in establishing a new custodial centre for only 30 young offenders at Wacol, this Minister claims that an expenditure of \$350,000 for a program to assist 30 young offenders, prevent hundreds of other young people from offending, train scores of youth workers and reunite families is not a priority and can therefore be dispensed with.

Mr De Lacy: She has twisted priorities.

Mr HAMILL: It reflects on the whole Government.

This decision to close The Outlook reveals a great deal about the people who run the Queensland Government. The Minister released a further press release claiming that Federal Government funding cut-backs forced the decision—the House has heard that one a few times this week—but the alleged shortage of funds did not prevent Cabinet announcing on that very day that \$2m would be spent on a major upgrading of Kingaroy's airport. Nor did alleged cut-backs halt the Premier's futile intervention in the recent Federal election campaign when he flew all over Australia telling all and sundry that he would be Prime Minister, and then telling the same people that he had chickened out. Regardless of those details he campaigned in the Queensland Government jet at taxpayers' expense. Nor did these cut-backs to the Family Services portfolio deter the Minister, who claimed that service savings were necessary, from flitting off to the UK on a fact-finding tour. I would like to see a report on that.

I suggest to honourable members that it is a question of priorities. What is more important—the rehabilitation of young offenders and the prevention of offending or the self-indulgence of Queensland's Premier and Ministers?

Even the Minister's implication that \$350,000 can be saved by closing The Outlook as a departmental facility does not stand up to analysis. Consistent with her attempt to conceal the full details of the significance and contribution of The Outlook to our welfare system, the Minister has concealed the true financial implications of the centre's closure.

The Minister claims that the property is to be leased to an appropriate applicant. However, a lease will mean that the State Government will retain title to the property and responsibility for its maintenance. Yet the Minister's claim of a saving of \$350,000 includes the Works Department contribution to the maintenance of the site. In 1985-86, of a total cost to the Government of \$335,838 to run The Outlook, \$20,264 came from the Works Department budget. Therefore, the actual cost to the Department of Children's Services to run the centre in 1985-86 was \$315,574, comprising \$213,347 in salaries—for 10 salaried staff—and \$117,367 in other contingencies, including wages for non-salaried staff.

I understand that the salaries bill for The Outlook for 1986-87 was \$218,000. That was for the 10 salaried staff. If the centre is to be closed, however, there will be no savings to be had on account of wages because the Minister has stated that the staff will be redeployed within the department. Alas, details of the redeployment have yet to be made public.

It is apparent that the maximum saving to accrue to the Minister's department would certainly be less than \$90,000. I say "the maximum saving" because this figure does not take into account any subsidy which the Minister might make to some other organisation to take control of The Outlook site. I suggest that any subsidy which the Government would provide would, of necessity, be substantial as there would be few organisations outside Government that would have the expertise and the financial resources to emulate the work of those 10 dedicated people working at The Outlook.

So now we are closer to the truth. The actual financial savings to the department will be nothing like the \$350,000 figure so beloved of the Minister. The actual savings on paper will be substantially less than the \$90,000 figure which I have identified because of the need for a subsidy. But what of the real, but hidden cost to the State of the further attempt by this Government to privatise Queensland's welfare services?

As the Government withdraws its support from this valuable program, it would be wise to consider the following community costs—

- the end of a sentencing option for 30 young offenders per year;
- the end of 128 programs which last year allowed 1 000 young Queenslanders to lift their self-esteem and reduce the risk of those young people ending up before our courts, or in our penal institutions, or engaged in drug or other substance abuse;
- the end of The Outlook resources, free of charge, for more than 30 community organisations which work with our young people to help them overcome their difficulties;
- the end of a worthwhile program which builds better family relationships, real family support, through the encouragement of parental involvement in the centre's program;
- the end of a valuable resource for staff training for people from both the Government and non-Government sectors; and
- the end of a specialist unit of highly skilled and motivated staff who have provided these skills.

For those honourable members who do not believe my account, I will outline a sample of the correspondence that I have received on this vital issue. A letter addressed to the Minister for Family Services states as follows—

“Dear Madam,

I am writing to express my deep concern at your department's decision to discontinue funding to the Boonah Outlook.

Having seen your interview on the ABC's '7.30 Report', I can only conclude that the decision was made on a misinformed basis. You spoke of the Outlook servicing 'only 30 young offenders referred by the courts'. This may well be statically correct but I feel that the role that this service takes with extremely difficult and often emotionally disturbed adolescents (as yet not 'offenders') cannot be underrated. Do these young people need to become criminals before they warrant specialized attention. I feel that prevention must certainly be more beneficial and less costly, ultimately, than cure.

I am now the mother of young children but have worked previously in the welfare field and am quite familiar with the facilities and level of staff expertise at Boonah. I know of a great number of 'at risk' adolescents (both in this financial year and previous years) who have benefitted immeasurably from the services offered at Boonah, and for whom a recreation camp would be a far from satisfactory alternative.

Boonah also services many other government and non-government organisations by making available high quality training for their staff. The loss of these facilities could be very detrimental to the welfare sector in Queensland.

I urge you to re-evaluate your decision concerning this matter.

Sincerely yours

Vivienne Coleman”.

I have another letter in similar terms from Bayside Adolescent Boarding Incorporated and a second letter from Youth Action Project. I seek leave to have both these letters incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Telephone: 393 4170

Bayside Adolescent Boarding Inc.
Room 3, 105 Edith Street, Wynnum, Queensland, 4178
Postal Address: P.O. Box 69, Wynnum, Queensland, 4178

Mrs. Yvonne Chapman,
Minister for Family Services,
Youth and Ethnic Affairs,
P.O. Box 339,
North Quay. Qld. 4000
13 July, 1987

Dear Mrs. Chapman,
Re: The "Outlook", Boonah

The volunteers of the Bayside Adolescent Boarding Incorporated would like to bring to your attention the value we place on the many and varied services provided to us by the "Outlook"

Since 1983, we have had 208 young offenders and young people with behavioural difficulties from the Bayside area utilize the facilities of the "Outlook"

The volunteers of the Activities Committee have also utilized the "Outlook" and its staffs skills in training programs. So far, we have had volunteers participate in an Activities Workshop, accreditation courses, canoeing course, high adventure course and a reflection's (photographic) course. These programs were put together and presented by the staff of the "Outlook".

We do not use the "Outlook" as a 'playground', but as an important learning process for our young people in trust, self esteem, self confidence, their physical and mental capabilities, communication and so on. Also, the activities provided at the "Outlook" broadens our young peoples outlook, and gives them an understanding of new and exciting interests foreign to them in a city environment.

We sincerely believe that, not only our young people, but the young people of other organisations would be effected at being denied these experiences if the "Outlook" were to cease to exist as it does today, but more importantly, we volunteers who wish to assist with activities need the experienced staff who have the necessary skills to assist us when dealing with these damaged young people.

It is, therefore, with these beliefs in our mind, that we strongly urge you to seriously consider our young people first, before making a decision on the future of the "Outlook" and our children are denied the "Outlook" experience.

Yours sincerely,
Bayside Adolescent Boarding Incorporated

SIGNATURE
Activities Committee
Y.A.P.

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The Honourable The Minister
for Family Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs,
P.O. Box 339,
North Quay Q. 4000

Dear Minister,

As one of the many youth-orientated organisations developing Experimental Learning Programmes as effective methods for working with "at risk" or damaged young people, we were gravely concerned to learn of the imminent closure of "The Outlook".

Until now, our organisation, Youth Action Project (and the M.A.Y.S.), has used Boonah for at least three vital purposes:

- (i) regular two-day intensive self-esteem and motivational programmes for our kids;
- (ii) invaluable staff-training for our workers;
- (iii) specific training programmes for staff and young people in developing our ropes course and Experimental Learning Programme.

In our experience, Boonah is the only facility we have access to providing:

- (i) nationally-respected, high-quality staff and skills;

- (ii) methods and content equal to the most progressive youth work anywhere in the world;
- (iii) effective preventative programmes designed for many types of young people before they offend; or become victims of sexual and physical abuse, family breakdown, or long-term unemployment.

This directly correlates with Mr. Pettigrew's statement that "greater emphasis is to be placed on preventative measures with a view to minimising long-term social needs." (Introduction to "New Directions")

We believe that both the programmes and philosophy of "The Outlook" very clearly fit with the stated goals of your "New Directions", particularly 3. and 4.:

- "3. provide opportunities for young people to achieve full potential in their transition to adulthood; and if young people offend, to minimize the likelihood of their re-offending;
- 4. increase the capacity of local communities to respond effectively to their social needs and to the emergent needs of their members;"

So perhaps you can understand our fears for the future of our own Experimental Learning Programme and for our own wider staff-training needs (e.g. O.K.M.C.D., Ropes and other Accreditations, Group skills, etc.) all presently offered by your Department through The Outlook.

As these needs depend heavily on the compassion, expertise and experience of the wonderful staff at Boonah, particularly in the areas of skills, training, encouragement and inspiration, we very much need to know when and from whence this expertise will be forthcoming should The Outlook be closed.

Yours faithfully,
Paul Brill-Edwards,
Chairman,
Youth Action Project

Mr HAMILL: I am serving notice on this Government that the Opposition will not tolerate the privatisation and disbanding of vital specialist services within the Department of Family Services. It is incumbent on this Minister to come clean and tell the Parliament and the people of Queensland exactly what are her intentions in her portfolio? Today it is The Outlook. What is next?

I am advised that the child protection unit and the sexual abuse treatment program are also under threat. Although she denies these claims, we may well ask: just how convincing is this Minister? She sought to mislead us over the use of The Outlook's facilities. She sought to mislead us over the savings to the department through the closure of The Outlook. She included The Outlook in her department's structure in May and in June, but in July she was disbanding it.

If this Government is genuinely committed to a new direction in the administration of the Department of Family Services, it can establish its bona fides right away. Give The Outlook a reprieve and put your money where your mouth is on family support.

Mrs NELSON (Aspley) (3.36 p.m.): I join the debate this afternoon and address myself to a fundamental issue of importance in the rights of the individual. This has a serious implication in terms of resources, because the issue in question is one about which debate has raged during the last decade in this nation. Yet it is an issue that has not really been addressed by perhaps more than one State.

I support the Premier's remarks about the need for lower costs and smaller Government and to lower the tax burden on the individual. Taxation in Australia has reduced individuals to economic slaves to an ever-hungry, ever-increasing and ever-powerful Government. That Government is denying the most fundamental right of all citizens; that is, the right to have control over their own destiny. This, however, is not the matter I wish to raise in this House this afternoon.

We need to give back to individuals the right to control their own destiny. One of the most fundamental of those rights is the right to move around freely in society. It is the most important and fundamental right: yet for many Australian women, men and

children this right has been severely curtailed, if not denied. That is particularly so for women and children. It is no longer safe for women and children to walk in the streets and by-ways of this nation.

I have spent several months researching this issue and can show the House handful after handful of press releases taken from Queensland newspapers alone which highlight the fact that random and deliberate violence is on the increase in this nation, to the extent that none of us as parents are prepared, willing or able to allow our children the basic freedom of movement that we ourselves enjoyed during the years in which we grew up in this free country. I emphasise that Australia is supposedly a free and democratic country, where women and children are denied the right to move around freely for fear of random and deliberate violence.

I will examine some of the reasons for that and make reference to one particular press release. On 11 July, in an article in the *Courier-Mail*, criminologist Paul Wilson referred to the increasing use of television and videos. I shall quote from that article later in my speech. The reason for random and deliberate violence is an issue that I will address in this Chamber on another occasion. The American Congress has dealt with that issue at length. After a decade of research, it is convinced that there is a clear link between the increasing incidence of random violence in American society, the introduction of the video industry and the increasing sexually explicit violence portrayed on television. I refer now to something a little closer to home. I believe that our judicial and penal systems have failed to address the issue of sentencing and suitable deterrents. I shall refer also to the attitude of our society to female victims.

Every State of Australia is having serious problems with its judicial system. I have papers that outline some of those complaints. I draw the attention of honourable members to a speech made in Sydney in 1978, almost a decade ago, by a gentleman named John Ray. At that time he was senior lecturer in the Department of Sociology at the University of New South Wales. In his paper, which was titled *Towards a More Pragmatic Penal System*, he said that the first thing we must acknowledge in this connection is the very great failure of the present system to protect the public. There is absolutely no doubt about that. He stated—

“A second problem is the way in which dangerous, psychopathic rapists, murderers etc are released after only short periods and go out to repeat their crimes.”

Documentary evidence is available to show that that is a serious problem in every State of Australia. Mr Ray continued—

“A third problem is the great cost of the prison system.”

Do we do what California has done? Do we introduce a different system—a mandatory prison system? In California, it has meant that it has been necessary to construct seven new prisons in the last four years alone. According to Mr Ray, the fourth problem is the most basic one of all; that is, the failure of our penal methods to keep down the ever-rocketing crime rate. In other words, the system is not acting as a suitable deterrent. I repeat that John Ray made his speech nearly a decade ago.

I turn to an example in New South Wales. An article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 3 November last year appeared under the heading “Justice in NSW: unfair, inconsistent and confused”.

Mr David Indermaur, the Acting Senior Clinical Psychologist in the Western Australian Prisons Department, stated in March this year—

“The general view of public attitude toward the punishment of offenders is that it is punitive and opposed to alternatives to imprisonment.”

He was expressing his concern that in Western Australia the public perception and what is public practice are two different things. I have now referred to New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia.

I turn now to Victoria, which established a committee on sentencing. The chairman of that committee was Sir John Starke, QC. He stated—

“Writing in 1863, the English judge and writer Sir James Stephen deplored the discrepancy between the attention paid to detail throughout the trial and the perfunctory manner in which the sentence was fixed, ‘without consultation, advice, or guidance of any description whatsoever’.

‘Yet’, he commented, ‘the sentence is the gist of the proceeding. It is to the trial what the bullet is to the powder.’

More than a century later the guidance offered the sentencing judge is still trifling and contradictory, a confusion of disparate standards and diverse statutory provisions and regulations.”

I draw the attention of the House to those remarks. The Victorian State Government has made substantial changes to sentencing procedures. I cite a paper, *The new deal—sentencing reform in Victoria*, published in 1985 by Christopher Corns. That paper was part of a series of documents that led to the introduction in Victoria in 1986 of new legislation which made very significant improvements to sentencing procedures.

One must also look at an article that appeared in the *Australian* of 9 February 1987 headed “The growing fear on our streets”. That article, which was written by Gerard Henderson, who is not known for his Right Wing tendencies, stated—

“In 1983 alone 10 per cent of the Australian population aged 15 and over were victims of crime. During the past 12 years there have been substantial increases in the number of serious assaults and rapes (now somewhat euphemistically described in NSW as ‘sexual assaults’.”

Mr Hamill: That fellow you are speaking about, who is not noted for his Right Wing views, is that because he’s in the Liberal Party and not the National Party?

Mrs NELSON: Is the honourable member uninterested in the violence and crime that affects his wife and children? He is good at making statements about welfare. What is his interest? Is he for it or against it? Is he concerned? Does he have a special interest?

Mr Hamill: We have no problems with domestic violence.

Mrs NELSON: I am sure that the honourable member has no problems with domestic violence. Does he have no problems in Ipswich? If he is unconcerned, I suggest that he consults the statistics for his electorate.

I turn now to New South Wales. The article to which I have referred continued—

“Two young men who admitted to viciously raping a young woman in a vicarage were sentenced to five and three years respectively.”

This gets to the nuts and bolts of the third part of my argument, which I will mention in a few moments. In that case the judge maintained that the girl, who was subjected to an appalling assault, had suffered “no great trauma”. Both accused received an extra five years each for aggravated assault on other people who were present in the house when the rape took place. The perpetrators of that crime will walk free in only a few years. The victims are emotionally scarred for life. These days a murderer seldom serves more than 10 to 13 years. In those cases the punishment does not fit the crime.

Mr Davis: Can I ask you this question?

Mrs NELSON: No, I am not taking any more interjections.

I turn now to some of the headlines that refer to Queensland: November 1986—“Recent spate of knifings shocks police”; early in the new year—“Armed ‘crims’ head north”; “Our 10 most wanted”, one of whom was killed in this city last week; “The rise in violent crime”, which appeared in the *Courier-Mail* of 17 January 1987; “State worst hit by surge of violence”, another article that shows the crime route in Australia from Melbourne through to the Gold Coast; on 9 February 1987—“State killers still at

large"; "Women push family violence inquiry"; "Logan women live in fear of rapists"; "Sex attack suspect captured"; and "Judge jails rapist for life". However, "life" means nothing, because in a decade he will be released to terrorise again.

Queensland's judicial system is failing to meet its obligations. In many cases, judges throughout Australia do not take into consideration the past histories of offenders, particularly sexual offenders with known criminal histories. People are sent to gaol for three to five years but they are released within 18 months and, within weeks of their release, commit similar offences. That is what Australian women and children are terrified of. It is now random and deliberate violence for the sake of violence alone.

One of the fundamental problems is the attitudes of the judiciary and those people who administer the law. Very little literature exists on this issue. It appears mainly in media publications. In fact, quite a significant article appeared in the *Bulletin* of this week. I commend that magazine for that article. I also commend the Queensland Attorney-General for his moves towards amending the law regarding rape in marriage together with reforms in other areas that have been considered taboo for many years in most States of Australia. I am pleased that Queensland is moving towards those reforms.

One of the most fundamental problems in the public's mind regarding the administration of justice in Australia is the "she asked for it" syndrome. It is still alive and well in this country. It has a profound and subtle effect on the sentencing of violent male offenders and on the treatment of female defendants accused of so-called revenge crimes.

I draw to the attention of the House the comments of the judge in the Beryl Birch case. Everybody in this House knows of the situation in which Beryl Birch lived for 25 years. She was beaten into invalidism by a drunken and enraged husband. When she finally broke the law and took his life to save her own, the judge in that case said in his summing-up that she had no right to do that because she had had access to the processes of the law, that she could have used the Family Law Court and the Peace and Good Behaviour Act. He imposed a non-parole period of 18 months, which meant that she could not be released for 18 months. In my view the whole case was a scandal and a clear example of the judiciary being totally out of touch with public opinion when it comes to the matter of violent crimes and the sentences that should be imposed.

This is a case of a woman who had been a victim and was treated as a criminal. In fact, the attitudes expressed in that case were appalling.

An article in *The Bulletin* states—

"Dr Susanne Hatty, a psychologist with the Australian Institute of Criminology, says that police tend to see women not as victims of domestic violence but as catalysts for it. 'A lot of police sincerely believe that these battered women 'deserve' to be belted,' she says. 'In many cases police empathise very strongly with the husband, the male abuser. Obviously, if they identify with someone who commits a crime like this, they are much less likely to arrest.'"

That is only a minor problem, but it is a subtle and subliminal problem for Australian women. It is what pervades the judicial, police and prison systems and I believe it needs to be changed. The law is certainly being changed in Victoria, and in Minnesota and California in the United States.

I wish to conclude with a number of worthy recommendations. Judges in every State of Australia need to be aware that all Australian Parliaments and members of the Australian public expect them to review their attitudes regarding procedures on sentencing and their attitudes to offenders. I hope that the judiciary in this State has the good sense to take my comments on board. They are meant in the most sincere way. I believe that the judiciary will take note of what is said in the Parliament of this State, because that is where the laws are made that they are expected to uphold.

For nearly 20 years, the sentencing of violent offenders in this nation has been inadequate. It has not improved in the last decade and is one of the major reasons why a serious problem regarding violent crime exists in this nation.

The second thing that needs to be done——

Mr Lee: This headline is about violent crime.

Mrs NELSON: Yes. That is exactly what I am talking about—random and deliberate violence against innocent people walking along the street minding their own business. The member for Yeronga is quite right to highlight yet another headline.

I turn to my second recommendation, which is broad and is aimed Australiawide, but is aimed just as much at this State. A great need exists for prison departments in all States to review their procedures on placement and release programs of prisoners, particularly those prisoners who have a history of violent crime. The women of this country are not satisfied when a rapist who is sent to a prison farm absconds and rapes and murders people before he is arrested again. Certain types of people who habitually offend should never be released.

I ask the Parliament to support my recommendations. I am certain that both Ministers will take my comments on board.

Mr HAYWARD (Caboolture) (3.53 p.m.): I would like to make some comments about the Savage report—the public sector review which arrived on our desks yesterday but was selectively leaked through the press last week.

My first comments focus on the Financial Administration and Audit Act, which comes in for a fair amount of criticism.

On page 27 the report says—

“There was seen to be the need for more flexibility between financial components of the Budget to allow management to determine resource mixes to efficiently carry out policy. This would require a review of the Financial Administration and Audit Act to remove provisions that are unnecessarily restrictive.”

The committee has argued that departments should be given the maximum freedom possible to determine spending priorities that are consistent with the responsibilities and the policy framework determined by the Government. I think that the committee is trying to say that program budgeting should be introduced to replace line-item budgeting that presently exists. Although the report does not clearly state that, I think that that is what Sir Ernest Savage is trying to say.

Program budgeting is a reform of the budgetary process which is completely supported by every honourable member on this side of the House. Under the current system of line-item budgeting, only significant departures from the previous year's allocation obtain a high level of political attention. The Treasury is given a great deal of authority in the allocation of funds.

The line-item budget and the Treasury Department determine the political process of the Government of this State. In Queensland, a growth of what is termed “off budget items”, such as statutory authorities, has occurred. Items have been removed from the line-item budget for political purposes, simply to make total budget outlays of this State appear smaller and more stable.

The result of that form of budgeting has been to reduce the usefulness of the budget as a planning device because of the growth of these “off budget items”. The operations of the State are no longer taken into consideration in the Budget as it is presented.

Sir Ernest Savage has grasped the problems associated with Treasury dominance of the budgetary process. If there is any formal participation in the present Budget procedure, it is limited to Cabinet Ministers and selected interest groups—probably through representations made to Cabinet Ministers. I simply suggest that the scope of discussion in the Parliament should be expanded by having an early parliamentary debate. By

"early", I mean prior to April and prior to the sorting out of Budget programs. During such a debate, general views could be presented and public discussion could be held on the Budget, which would be introduced in October. In that way, the community could have some impact on decisions that affect accountability in this State.

The public is demanding greater openness and accountability in government. However, if Sir Ernest Savage thinks that the budgetary process can be changed, good luck to him, because it is obvious that rigidity in the budgetary process is institutionalised in Queensland. The present system of line-item budgeting provides the flexibility needed for such things as across-the-board cuts, and the authority that remains concentrated in the Treasury is a powerful force against change. They are the reasons for rigidity.

The political reality is that there is hard work involved in developing a system of program budgeting, which is what Sir Ernest Savage is urging should be implemented. It is being resisted by powerful forces. The proposals for budgetary change are linked to recommendations that the concept of efficiency auditing be adopted and become the responsibility of the Auditor-General. In the public sector review section of the report, that suggestion is contained in recommendation No. 79.

I believe that that recommendation is horrendous in its impact on Parliament. It needs to be changed to state, simply, that the concept of efficiency auditing should be adopted and that it is the responsibility of the Auditor-General to report to Parliament. I say that because one problem that exists is a lack of accountability. Recommendation No. 79 makes no provision for efficiency audits to be reported to the Parliament.

All honourable members would be aware of a number of problems associated with the Financial Administration and Audit Act in terms of the preparation of reports. Section 70 (1) states that the Auditor-General may prepare a report on any audit performed by him or any authorised auditor. Section 70.5 states that when the Auditor-General is of the opinion that observations and suggestions made pursuant to subsection (3) are of major significance, he shall forward them, together with his comments thereon, to the Treasurer and to the appropriate Minister.

Earlier today Mr Warburton referred to the Callaghan case. Quite simply, what happened in that case was that the Auditor-General relied on section 70(5) to ensure that the report was not presented to Parliament. He claimed that the report that he introduced was a progress report rather than a special report. It is evident that problems exist. The main problem with section 70(5) is that there is no requirement for the report to be released to Parliament. A major weakness is the committee's failure to make any recommendations regarding the accounting methods and procedures currently in place.

Where is the recommendation that accrual accounting methods be introduced? In New South Wales, accrual accounting is required for all trading statutory authorities, that is, all authorities that are selling goods to the public; for example, the maritime services board and the electricity commission.

Where are the recommendations regarding items of what could best be described as creative accounting? A number of examples of that exist in Queensland. Some Queensland statutory authorities are particularly creative. For example, the Public Trustee is daring enough to report provisions for painting and renovations; the Cotton Marketing Board has a provision for delivery expenses; and the Queensland Housing Commission has a \$26.4m provision for maintenance.

The problems of creative accounting, and the examples of which I have provided, were highlighted in the *Business Daily* of 28 July. The article in that publication was trying to highlight the problem that such accounting provisions create hollow logs in departments within which assets and resources that could be better used within the State are hidden.

Other State authorities are required to show superannuation commitments and foreign exchange losses and gains. That does not occur in the accounts as presented in

this State. Where are the foreign exchange losses or gains of the Electricity Commission in this State? From reading the Queensland accounts no-one has any idea.

Mr FitzGerald: What day would you like them issued on, because they change day by day, don't they? Come on, they do change week by week, don't they?

Mr HAYWARD: There is nothing in those accounts which shows whether there have been gains or losses as at 30 June of the previous year. It is a simple request. It would provide true and correct information and it would put people in a position in which they are able to analyse how a department is progressing.

In the Savage report I cannot find any recommendations regarding management training for public sector staff. I am sure that all honourable members would agree that such training is crucial if some commitments in that report are to be obtained when its recommendations are introduced.

A couple of the other criticisms that I have of the Savage report could, I guess, be described as minor, but I think they can be fairly levelled at the review. The first criticism I would like to offer is that I am not sure that adequate time was allowed in which to make submissions. The business section of the *Courier-Mail* of 14 January 1987 contained an advertisement for the Public Sector Review Committee. That advertisement was placed only six weeks before the closing date for submissions.

The other thing that concerns me is that, although no details of the sources of the submissions are provided, it appears that none were received from the general public. That is not exactly obvious, but the report states, "The sources of written submissions were", and it details a list of them. It does not appear that any submissions were received from any member of the general public.

My contention is that the report has attempted to provide some recommendations regarding efficiency and accountability of Government. However, it is my feeling that the Savage report has not grasped what best can be described as a big picture. Perhaps that is because Sir Ernest Savage and his committee did not have enough time. It seems to me that they could have gone some way further down the track.

In other words, what I am saying is that they have remained on a small canvas; they have made some attempt to look at accountability but they have not gone the full way. There should be a greater effort to look at the Financial Administration and Audit Act, particularly at section 70, about which I spoke earlier.

Fundamental to improving the productivity of administrative machinery is improving the accountability of government. Everyone knows that and everyone knows that this Government and all other Governments have to be made more accountable. As far as they go, the committee's recommendations are valid, but it is my contention that they just do not go far enough. Accounting and budgetary methods need to be streamlined. Certainly the streamlining of accounting methods was not considered within the report. My contention is that the committee adopted a half-hearted approach to program budgeting. The report should place greater emphasis on the need for management training for the people who will be required to do the work once this report is implemented.

Mr De Lacy: They don't implement reports, they just commission them.

Mr HAYWARD: I am hoping that certain elements of this report will be implemented.

I am sure all honourable members would agree that the Auditor-General should report the efficiency audit results to Parliament for scrutiny. The recommendation that has been made in the Savage report should be expanded. I agree whole-heartedly with the committee's suggestion to extend and review the Financial Administration and Audit Act. As parliamentarians, we need to hammer the concept of public sector accountability. We need to talk about it and do something about it. It is vital.

As the Premier is going to Romania for the next couple of weeks to talk about coal deals, I believe it is about time that the Queensland Government adopted a glasnost approach to the use of people's money in this State.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (4.07 p.m.): In the short time remaining in the debate I wish to make one or two remarks about the Appropriation Bill. This morning I was pleased with the Treasurer's statement that he would balance the books and that, if there had to be financial restraint, he would live within it. That is what should happen throughout the land, particularly with the Federal Government.

This afternoon I want to say something about attitudes to primary industry. During the Federal election campaign I was surprised to hear Mr Hawke state that the downturn in the economy and the balance of payments problems had been exacerbated by the \$9 billion or \$10 billion fall in the value of our primary exports.

Mr De Lacy: You said that yesterday.

Mr BOOTH: I did say it yesterday, and I will say it again, because it is very important.

In my opinion, that is where the Prime Minister should tackle the problem. In the light of that statement, one wonders why he continues to penalise primary industries with a high excise duty on diesel fuel.

Mr Prest: They should learn to live within their means.

Mr BOOTH: Right.

I will contrast that attitude to those of people throughout the world. I do not know of one great nation that has turned its back on primary industry. If this country turns its back on primary industry, instead of things getting better, they will get worse. What must be done for primary industry is that Governments must tackle the causes of its problems. The first cause that is hitting primary industry hard is the high tax on diesel fuel.

Mr De Lacy: What is this high tax on diesel? Farmers don't pay it.

Mr BOOTH: I am talking about excise. There is high tax on all of the fuel input at the point from where the farmer gets his supplies. Recently there was an increase in the rebate on diesel, and I suppose that has done some good.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr BOOTH: That has only been for about five or six months.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr BOOTH: I have just visited the United States of America. The member for Cairns should see what the farm community in that county is paying for diesel compared to what is being paid by the farm community in Australia.

Mr Campbell: How much are they paying? Twenty-nine cents?

Mr BOOTH: Much less than that.

Mr Campbell: How much? Thirty cents?

Mr BOOTH: Much less than that. In fact, farmers are paying much less than that for petrol.

Although interest rates in this country have gone down, they are still amongst the highest in the world. I am surprised that the Opposition spokesman for Primary Industries would claim that the farm community is not being pressed by high costs. I am amazed that the member for Cairns would say that.

Mr De Lacy: I didn't say that; you know I wouldn't say that.

Mr BOOTH: That is what the honourable member is saying. I am fighting for a better deal for primary industry and the member for Cairns is battling to do the opposite. I am also surprised at the member for Bundaberg. I thought that he would know better than that.

If the Federal Government is going to improve the balance of payments position, it has to get farmers producing again. Farmers cannot produce with the present cost factor. I do not blame the Federal Government totally. Overseas prices are a big problem. However, when one visits other countries and sees the subsidies and support that exists for primary industry, one wonders how primary industry will ever succeed in this country where the policy seems to be designed to destroy it. It might well be that some members of the Federal Government do not want that to happen.

I have listened fairly intently to some of the things that have been said by Mr Kerin. He is a great one for saying, "I'll listen to you and I'll come back and discuss it." However, he does not seem to be interested in overcoming problems. That is his big problem.

Mr Hamill: You've got a Labor member in your electorate.

Mr BOOTH: I listened to the Labor member for Rankin. I also listened to Mr Kerin. Mr Kerin took part in the election campaign. Do honourable members know what he said? He said, "I'll come back and discuss the matter at a later date." He did not say that he would fix up anything. He seems to be quite happy to see primary industry destroyed.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mr BOOTH: I am surprised that even the member for Ipswich is keen to see primary industry destroyed. I find it difficult to believe. If there is one thing that the member for Ipswich should have learned since he became a member of this Parliament, it is that all of us are in this thing together.

Primary industry cannot succeed without help from secondary industry and Governments. By the same token, I do not think that the Federal Government can get out of its bind and solve the balance of payments problem unless it faces up to what is happening in primary industry.

Mr De Lacy: What specific things do you want from the Federal Government?

Mr BOOTH: The first thing that I feel—

Mr FitzGerald: He's only got a couple of minutes.

Mr BOOTH: Yes, I have not got long.

I believe that the first thing that the Federal Government should have tackled is high interest rates. Perhaps it is trying to do something at the moment. However, it must be remembered that interest rates in Australia are still amongst the highest in the world. Although honourable members read in the press that interest rates are 15.5 per cent for a privileged group, they should talk to people in primary industry and see what they are paying.

For the life of me I cannot understand why recently Telecom, which has a major effect on people in the country, has had to pay a tax on charges, which has been passed straight on to the public. Members of the Opposition know as well as I do that that is only a foolish way to levy taxes.

Mr Campbell: You know we subsidise phones in the country for millions and millions of dollars a year through cross-subsidisation.

Mr BOOTH: It is quite ridiculous to argue with somebody who seems to have a fixation that it would be an accomplishment to destroy the farm community and primary industry.

When I first became a member of this Parliament, a colleague of mine said that the attitude of the ALP in Queensland and Australia is, "It's a fine day. Let's kick a head—preferably a farmer's head." As my time is almost exhausted, I will conclude on that note.

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police) (4.15 p.m.), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contributions. The Bill that has just been debated is a small but important piece of legislation, providing as it does for the ongoing services of Government. The debate gives all honourable members the opportunity to speak on matters of financial interest. The contributions of all honourable members are welcome—although some are more valuable than others, and I refer to those speeches made from this side of the House.

As usual, the Leader of the Opposition scattered his comments over many areas. It would take too long for me to straighten him out on every point that he made. When I listen to the Leader of the Opposition and some of his colleagues, I wonder whether they are Queenslanders or Victorians in disguise who are up here for the winter. All we heard was how marvellous it was in Victoria. I think they should ask the Victorians how good it is down there. They do not have to travel far. Many of them are up here living in Queensland, where they welcome this Government's low-tax policies and firmness in dealing with unions.

To talk about Queensland being a high-tax State just shows that members on the other side of the Chamber were not paying attention at a time when they could have been learning a few facts. I will repeat the comments of the Honourable the Premier and Treasurer for their benefit—

“The Institute of Public Affairs, in the most recent edition of its ‘Facts’ Journal, shows taxes, fees and fines per head for Queensland as \$607.”

And what is the comparable figure for Victoria? It is \$929, which is more than 50 per cent higher. They have never heard of the words “low tax” in Victoria. Just ask the Victorians about tobacco taxes, petrol taxes and financial institutions duties.

While I am talking about high taxes—I thought I was hearing things when the Leader of the Opposition suggested that a levy be imposed on statutory bodies such as the electricity boards. The Leader of the Opposition, the great critic of this Government and its low-tax policies, is really shown for what he is—an advocate for higher taxes and even higher electricity charges. A schoolboy could tell him that one cannot impose an extra financial burden on electricity authorities and not expect some increase in tariffs to fund it.

Queensland is a low-tax State. That has been proven time and time again. I quote just one example. Queensland's pay-roll tax exemption level of \$324,000 for small business is almost 30 per cent higher than Victoria's \$250,000, and this Government does not increase the rate by 20 per cent when the wages bill gets over \$1.3m. I know that the honourable member for Nundah is a strong advocate of pay-roll tax reform. I think even he would acknowledge that the Government's record in reducing the burden of this tax is a good one.

At the risk of completely shattering the Opposition's views on Victoria, I point out that the maximum rate of conveyance stamp duty in Queensland is \$3.75 per \$100 while, in Victoria, it is almost 50 per cent higher at \$5.50 per \$100. As for the tax base—the Victorian Government has been trying to get the legislation to broaden its base through the Upper House for some time.

There was some misinformed comment in regard to quangos and their accountability and efficiency. I am sure that those informed persons who keep abreast of financial administration law would recall the amendments made to the Financial Administration and Audit Act in 1985-86, which dealt specifically with statutory bodies. Those amendments dealt comprehensively with accounting and reporting matters, including prescribed requirements for the keeping of accounts, presentation of financial statements and so on. All statutory bodies are now required to prepare an annual report which must be presented to the Minister who, in turn, presents the report to the Legislative Assembly. The annual report is required to contain appropriate certified financial statements. If the Leader of the Opposition is not aware of this legislation, I would be happy to further his education and provide him with a copy.

As I said at the start of my reply, I began to wonder whether the Leader of the Opposition is truly a Queenslander at heart. He speaks about lost opportunities. Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition had a wonderful opportunity recently at the hearings of the Commonwealth Grants Commission to stand beside the Government and support the State's case for a more equitable share of Commonwealth funding. He and his colleagues could have put all their energies into doing something positive for once. Of course, rather than do this, they have sought to denigrate the State's case and use it for their own selfish political ends. They are not helping Queenslanders. They are helping their mates in the other States at Queensland's expense. They complain because their mates in New South Wales and Victoria are not getting enough. It is not enough that they get all the benefits of tariff protection; they want to give Queensland's share of Commonwealth assistance grants to them as well. No way! The Government is for Queensland first and foremost.

I could go on and on about the efficiency of Government services in Queensland, the strength of our balanced Budget position, the massive developments that have taken place and the enterprise that has been shown in areas such as the Turkey power station deal, which at any time could be announced as being successful.

I will simply say that this Government is committed to Queensland and will use wisely and well the funds appropriated by this legislation. I question whether the same could be said of others who would aspire to high office.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Deaths of Aborigines in Custody

Hon. R. C. KATTER (Flinders—Minister for Northern Development and Community Services) (4.22 p.m.), by leave: In the 10 years to November 1986, no deaths of people of Aboriginal descent in custody occurred in Queensland. It is possible, but so unlikely as to be considered practically impossible, that a death could have occurred without being made a matter of public record in the State of Queensland. I could table a list of deaths in custody in the other States of Australia. Although it was supposed to have been delivered to the Opposition spokesman, I might add that it may not have been delivered at this stage. As one can see from that list, Queensland has a proud record when compared with the record of all other Australian States.

When a person in custody died at Yarrabah, I felt that that death could well have been attributable to the problems that revolved around family feuding at Yarrabah some years ago—the honourable member for Cairns was well aware of that matter and brought it to my attention—and which unfortunately also involved members of the community police force.

It is important for the House and for the people of Queensland to understand that most of those deaths followed the apprehension and incarceration of the individual by the community police—not the State police—who are themselves of Aboriginal descent. In a number of cases the apprehending or arresting officer was in fact related to the person who subsequently took his life in the cell.

After contacting many people at Yarrabah, and closely examining the evidence, it seemed obvious to me that police brutality, or anything else of that nature, was not an

element of the death that occurred in the Yarrabah gaol. That, of course, was not a matter for me to determine but one for the coronial inquiry.

When the second death of a person in custody occurred at the Yarrabah gaol, I felt that we could have a very serious problem on our hands, one that was far more than a simple justice matter to be handled with a coronial inquiry. I asked for the assistance of the Health Department, and the Minister recommended Dr Perc Tucker, the head of psychiatric services. We had a long session, in which Dr Tucker and two other distinguished academic figures in this area advised us that, in all probability, a copy-cat suicide syndrome was operating, and that, unfortunately, it would probably continue. They cited a bridge in Queensland from which at that stage, on average, one person had leapt to his death every four weeks during the previous 11 months. I believed at that stage that the problem was really attributable to the twin effects of the complete lack of power and control over their own lives and existence under a hand-out system, not to any copy-cat syndrome. The hand-out system of economic dependence removes the incentive for action and initiative, the challenge and stimulation that is enjoyed by 90 per cent of the population. On the other hand, the hand-out system is responsible for creating a person who is never able to achieve anything for himself. The motivation to act—the reason for getting out of bed in the morning—is simply not there.

I regret to say that the hand-out mentality, the second side of the coin of paternalism, is the *modus operandi* of the Federal Government, which has refused point-blank to enter into any self-management-programs, and has driven the Torres Strait Islanders to the extremist position of serious discussion of a move towards independence.

The Federal Government is still trying to impose a life-style that is totally devoid of decision-making powers in this year of Our Lord 1987.

With the bludgeoning brutality of the hand-out system undermining Queensland's program of self-management, until three years ago those people had lived their lives in a situation in which they had little or no ability to overcome the outside forces that oppressed, frustrated and depressed them. Their whole lives have been a conditioning to a perspective, an outlook of hopelessness and despair.

I do not wish to make a political point here, because I believe that many Opposition members very strongly agree with my statements. I look forward to the new Minister's changing the approach of the Federal Government. State Government members certainly hope that he does.

Some of my advisers, who are themselves of Aboriginal descent, have told me that most people are finding it almost impossible to fight 20, 30 or 50 years of this conditioning and building of behaviour patterns. Yet, my advisers say that the Community Services and Land Holding Acts—the landmark legislation of the last three years—have given unprecedented freedom, powers, ownership and territorial stimulation and incentives. Some of them argue that those incentives are even greater than those that are enjoyed by their fellow Australians.

Because some individuals are unable to cope with the sudden shattering of the old moulds, psychological problems have set in. The twin effects of paternalism—the hand-outs and the lack of any decision-making powers—have provided the explanation for the alcoholism and misbehaviour that results in people being in cells. However—and I make this point very forcefully—that does not explain why, from November 1986, some people decided to commit suicide whilst they were in those cells. If I could say that again—although the hand-outs and the lack of decision-making powers—those two problems—were the underlying causes of why the people were in cells, they do not explain why, suddenly, in November 1986, people in cells started committing suicide.

I turn now to a perception of the present situation by one person of Aboriginal descent who lived in the hand-out environment that I have described. He stated—

“Before self-management and private ownership, we were able to blame the *migilo*, the white man. Now one only has oneself to blame, and this is a hard thing to cope with.”

Another quotable observation is—

“What they don’t realise is that you can’t break a lifetime of conditioning in just a few short years.”

To overcome some of the background problems that I have described, I have introduced through my department a number of programs that will speed up the implementation of self-management and private ownership while at the same time, it is hoped, cushioning the impact. A program of rodeo and horsemanship training has commenced. In one community alone over 200 people attended such a program. The sum of \$40,000 has been allocated for the program. Also under way are programs for community and intercommunity competitions for Rugby League, basketball and country music.

In addition, the sum of \$30,000 has been allocated to the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council to purchase artefacts. Under existing initiatives, that has resulted in a 1 000 per cent increase in production and retail outlets.

Over 190 jobs for people of Aboriginal descent have been created within Queensland’s departmental housing program. Those jobs did not exist two years ago. Although the State Government has been criticised for those self-help building projects, I believe that people in the south realise the necessity to get people working.

The results of many of those programs are already apparent. Mr Eddie Holroyd at Edward River has rounded up a herd of over 1 000 head of cattle that have never before been mustered. The community at Hope Vale has commenced clearing operations, and almost 1 000 acres is now cleared in that area. That is in an area in which no significant projects of this type have been undertaken since the Premier resigned as chairman of the Hope Vale board some 30 years ago. Clearing projects have taken place, but they have not taken place with the concerted effort of private ownership of cattle on the stations.

My colleague the Minister for Justice has advised me that coronial inquiries will be held into each of the deaths in the cells, and the findings of those inquiries will be made available to anyone appointed by the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council and the Government, or anyone else such as the shadow spokesman opposite. Contrary to any press report, those decisions were taken nearly three months ago. I was appalled to read a totally incorrect statement in the newspapers. The coroner in Cairns similarly advised Mr Law of this some two to three months ago. I do not wish to be critical of Mr Powder. I believe that he was labouring under a misapprehension that he was unable to get access to those reports.

In dealing with the problem, the Government has accepted the advice of the health experts and has treated the effects of the problem as well as the cause by urging the police to undertake surveillance of people affected by alcohol in the watchhouse for three hours before moving them into a low-level detoxification unit, or at least a bed in the hospital.

I would like to thank the Minister for Police and the Queensland police for their assistance and co-operation in this program. I also thank the Aboriginal councils for similarly advising their employees, the community police, to undertake this course of conduct.

In addition, a program to make the gaols safer has been undertaken. To avoid further delays, the Government has asked the Works Department to allow the Department of Community Services to undertake the work recommended in the Powder/Law report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Health Minister and his department, and everyone who has been involved in this matter, for their help and co-operation. Although this is essentially a problem for the communities themselves and their employees, the community police, the Government most certainly does not abrogate its responsibility in this area.

I could not contemplate putting an administrator into any of the councils involved, which is effectively the only power that I have, because in each case I cannot see how the course of conduct that the police followed differed from that which would have been adopted by anyone anywhere else in the society of this State. From the evidence available to me and the evidence gathered by the Powder/Law report, brutality and force were most certainly not elements of any of the deaths. I emphasise that that is a matter to be decided by coronial inquiry at a later stage. It might have access to more evidence than I have had access to. Nor would I say that irresponsibility or negligence were elements. But I would point out that, if the incarceration procedures that I have outlined and the restructuring of the gaols are carried out, the chances of tragedies of this nature occurring in the future will be negligible.

I must emphasise that sometimes, with the best will in the world, those procedures simply cannot be carried out for one reason or another. In one of those cases, two people were very seriously injured and the policeman chose to take them to the hospital, which I believe was the right thing to do. Of course, that left the person in the cell unattended.

The public record indicates that brutality and force have been an element of 19 of the 21 deaths in custody that have occurred in other States. The two most recent deaths in Western Australia and South Australia, it would appear, however, were part of the same phenomenon as has been experienced in Queensland—genuine gaol suicides.

I accept that the matter had to be aired. However, I believe that the matter has had a full and frank airing. If my colleague who is sitting opposite is agreeable, I would very much like the press to refrain from further coverage of this matter, as it has done in the case of the notorious bridge in the State of Queensland. It looks very bad when suicide by white people is not reported because further reporting will cause further suicides but, when black people are involved, the matter continues to be reported. Our health and medical advice indicates that the more it is talked about, the more these unfortunate occurrences will occur.

I would like to state to all honourable members that I am only too happy to make available to them any facts or information that I have. However, if the situation continues, somewhere down the track the Government might have to consider yet another and far more wide-ranging inquiry.

I table the Powder/Law report, which, together with this statement, will be available to all. The Government will attempt to have implemented as soon as possible all aspects of that report.

I am sure that all honourable members applaud both men for their hard work, competence, courage and perception. I move that it be printed.

Whereupon the document was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

Mr BRADDY: I rise to a point of order. In view of the importance of this report, the ministerial statement, the national and international attention that has been given to this problem and the deaths that have occurred, I ask the Minister whether he intends to move that the House take note of his statement, thereby providing an opportunity to me and other members to debate this matter.

Mr KATTER: At a date determined in conjunction with the Speaker of the House as being suitable to the House, I would be happy to discuss the matter.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Leader of the House) (4.35 p.m.): I move—

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday, 25 August 1987.”

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 4.36 p.m.