

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 1987

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

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT**Audits Completed as at 6 November 1987 in Respect of the Financial Year Ended 30 June 1987**

Mr SPEAKER: I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General his report to the Legislative Assembly on audits completed as at 6 November 1987 in respect of the financial year ended 30 June 1987, or other period as may be relevant in certain cases.

Ordered to be printed.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed—

Reports—

Mackay Port Authority for the year ended 30 June 1987

Queensland Recreation Council for the year ended 30 June 1987

Financial Statements of the Public Trustee of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1987.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Proclamation under the Construction Safety Act Amendment Act 1987

Orders in Council under—

Forestry Act 1959-1984

Harbours Act 1955-1982

Canals Act 1958-1987

Valuation of Land (Annual Adjustment) Act 1984-1985

Supreme Court Act of 1921

Regulations under the Construction Safety Act 1971-1987

Rule under the Coroners Act 1958-1982

Reports—

Workers' Compensation Board of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1987

Accounting Standards Review Board for the year ended 30 June 1987

Companies and Securities Law Review Committee for the year ended 30 June 1987

Supreme Court Library Committee for the year ended 30 June 1987

Legal Aid Commission of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1987

Enquiry into Childhood Leukaemia in Emerald.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Small Business Development Corporation Seminars

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs) (10.03 a.m.), by leave: It is with pleasure that I inform the House of an initiative by the Small Business Development Corporation to inform business-operators of how they can take advantage of the recently introduced trading hours modifications.

As all honourable members are aware, businesses employing up to six people at any one time or businesses of the types on the new exempt list may open at any hour they wish, seven days a week. These changes have been warmly received by small business operators and a sizeable number have already modified their hours accordingly. Many other business people are uncertain of what they should be doing in order to maximise the efficiency of their operations.

Consequently, the Small Business Development Corporation has begun a series of seminars—they are to be held across the State—that will explain the changes and help business people take advantage of them, not only for their own benefit but also for the benefit of the public.

In recent days honourable members may have noticed newspaper advertisements notifying small business operators of the date, time and place of the seminars that are to be held in their areas. These seminars begin this week and will be held on the Gold Coast, and in Brisbane, Ipswich, Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Gladstone, Bundaberg and other major centres. The objective of the program is to enable participants to establish a method of working out the most profitable trading hours for their businesses.

Included in the seminars are such topics as the fundamentals of running a competitive and profitable retail business; the factors affecting trading hours, such as the goods sold and the communities served; how to undertake store-traffic surveys; and how to find out what hours best suit the customers. The seminars incorporate lectures, discussions and a workshop for the participants.

The aim of the seminar is to get people thinking about their options and how they can best benefit from extended trading hours. The aim is not to provide the answer as to what is best. However, it will at least give them some options as to what they can do. The most important point is that business can be competitive if the operators know when their customers need them to be open, and business can trade accordingly.

The main consideration is to remove the traditional trading-hours blinkers, for want of a better word, and to rethink opening hours according to the facts as they are today. I commend the Small Business Development Corporation for that initiative. I hope that honourable members on both sides of the House will do all that they can to alert local business people to that new opportunity for them and the public.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1.

Home-loan Interest Rates

Mr BURNS asked the Premier and Treasurer—

“With reference to the announcement on 13 November by the Commonwealth Bank that home loan interest rates could be reduced to 13 per cent by Christmas and the recent announcement by Suncorp that it is reducing its home loan interest rate to 13.75 per cent for new loans—

(1) Why is Suncorp’s new low interest rate of 13.75 per cent applicable to new home loans only instead of all existing home loans?

(2) What is the breakdown of Suncorp’s current home loan interest rate structure, i.e., what different interest rates apply to home loans and how many Queenslanders are paying off loans on homes in each category?

(3) Will he provide an explanation why a family that borrows at a certain interest rate must pay extra when that rate goes up but not receive an explanation when it comes down?

(4) Will he as Premier step in and give many young Queenslanders a Christmas present by stopping the rip-off of thousands of Queenslanders by ensuring that all home loan borrowers are treated equally and pay the same interest rates?"

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: (1) Firstly, let me set the record straight so that the honourable member will not build up false expectations on the part of home-loan borrowers both now and in the future.

The Commonwealth Bank qualified its statement by saying that home-loan interest rates could fall if interest rates generally continued to ease. The Westpac bank has also put forward the view that home-loan rates could fall to 13.5 per cent within the next six months. Neither of those statements should be seen as anything more than what may happen, given favourable market conditions. What should be realised by honourable members is that both banks now offer home-loan interest rates of 14 per cent while the Suncorp Building Society offers 13.75 per cent for new home loans.

The simple reason for the difference between new and existing loan rates is that the cost of money requires a home-owner interest rate of greater than 13.75 per cent. However, to promote and encourage home-ownership and give a boost to new home construction, the society has set rates for new home-loan borrowers at 13.75 per cent while retaining existing borrowers at a higher rate but one which is still the lowest possible having regard to the cost of funds to the society.

(2) The present interest rates for new home loans are—

Vacant land 13.75 per cent

Owner-occupied loans 13.75 per cent

regardless of the amount borrowed and, unlike banks and other societies, the Suncorp Building Society does not charge existing borrowers account-keeping charges.

From 31 December 1987, the rates for existing borrowers will be—

Vacant land 14.00 per cent

Owner-occupied—

• up to \$35,000 14.50 per cent

• over \$35,000 14.75 per cent

The Suncorp Building Society has some 23 000 borrowers.

(3) When interest rates rise, obviously borrowers are required to pay more. This can either take the form of higher repayments over the same term or retaining existing repayment levels over a longer term. Wherever circumstances allow, arrangements are made by the Suncorp Building Society with the borrower to extend the term of the loan in order to hold repayments at the lowest level.

In a falling market, as is the case at the moment, the Suncorp Building Society advises its borrowers either by letter or advertisement in the press that should they wish to reduce the repayment amount, the society is happy to make such an adjustment. This is in line with the practice followed by the banks.

(4) See (1) to (3).

2. Townsville/Thuringowa Water Supply

Mr BURREKET asked the Minister for Northern Development and Community Services—

“What is his assessment of the recent attacks made against him recently by the Member for Thuringowa in relation to his, that is, the Minister’s efforts to bring a proper water supply to Townsville and Thuringowa?”

Mr KATTER: I must pay the honourable member a very great tribute for the work and effort that he has put into securing the water supply for the people of the city of Townsville. Without the very aggressive and courageous action by the member for Townsville, Townsville would not have a water supply now or in the future.

If ever I have seen a group of people who deserve sacking, it would be the members of the Townsville City Council. I must say that, and I cannot avoid saying it, because it concerns not only the people of Townsville and how they have been badly done by because of the bad administration but also all the people in the greater Cleveland Bay region. Because of the inactions of the Townsville City Council, many people have suffered. They include the people of Ingham; the people of Ayr, in respect of whom a great deal of hard work has been done by my colleague the member for Burdekin; the people represented by my colleague the member for Hinchinbrook; and the people in my home city of Charters Towers. I would like to think that the two members of this Parliament who have served on that council feel very embarrassed by the activities of that council.

Mr McElligott: Are you fair dinkum?

Mr KATTER: The honourable member for Thuringowa has stood idly by, twiddling his thumbs and taking cheap political shots at this Government, while his own area has been hit with water rates that, ultimately, will be some of the highest in the State of Queensland, because the Townsville City Council built a dam that, in fact, has not worked. I do not have to argue about the dam. It is already there. Approximately \$20m or \$30m of rate-payers' money has already been spent upon it, but there is still an inadequate water supply in Townsville. At present, in relation to water supply, Townsville is the worst-served city in this State. It has just completed a huge dam.

If honourable members opposite believe that that dam was a clever idea, I point out that the class pan A evaporation rate for Townsville is 2.1 metres. I have been advised that the average depth of Ross River Dam Stage 2 is two metres. I do not have to say any more than that, and I do not have to tell the people of Thuringowa that—and let me home in on Thuringowa—because they know that when they turn on a tap they cannot water their lawns. They are standing by and watching their gardens and everything else that they have worked hard to put together die—as is the economy of that area.

Not only has there been a massive waste of public funds in that area; I am astounded that I have been sent literature relating to an advertising campaign that has been carried out against this Government, which has given a grant of \$4m. Not one cent has come from the ALP Federal Government. Rate-payers' money is being used to launch a vicious attack against this Government.

Honourable members may think that it is hard for members such as the honourable member for Townsville to secure financial assistance from Townsville; but there is also the problem that the Townsville City Council is the only local authority in north Queensland that has broken ranks with north Queensland over the World Heritage listing issue.

If honourable members believe that that city is not building up a large fund of hatred throughout the rest of north Queensland, they are kidding themselves. That local authority is isolating itself and creating hostility with the rest of north Queensland. If it continues to do so, that situation will continue.

The honourable member for Thuringowa is laughing. He thinks it is funny that Cairns presently has \$1.7 thousand million worth of tourist development taking place while Townsville has a meagre \$0.27m. The honourable member thinks that that is cause for jocular and laughter. He thinks that the building of an unsuccessful \$30m dam is a further cause for humour.

The honourable member for Thuringowa believes that the waste of his own rate-payers' money through advertisements inserted by Mr Dobinson which venomously

attacked the Government has been totally responsible for securing that pipeline. For 10 months this Government has assailed that city council in an endeavour to get that pipeline built, and for 10 months that council has studiously and strenuously fought off every single effort to build that pipeline. The reason why it does not want that pipeline built is that it will leave the Ross River Stage 2 development as a \$30m monument to stupid actions and mistakes on the part of the Townsville City Council. That is the reason why, for 10 months, that council has stood aside and fought against every effort that has been made to build that pipeline.

The city council's actions are also coloured by the fact that its members believe that rates will rise. Obviously, if people want an adequate water supply, they have to pay for it. They must have industrial and tourist development. However, the Townsville City Council does not want tourist development or industrial development. The council consists of negative and socialist-thinking people who do not think that way. All they think about is the money that they can save, not the money that they can secure and the jobs that they can secure for their children. They are not interested in securing jobs for their children. All they are interested in is getting re-elected at the next election by having some of the lowest water rates in the State of Queensland, as they do at present. They can have that, but they cannot have an adequate water supply at the same time. That is the quandary that they are in.

The honourable member for Thuringowa has laughed throughout all of this. He thinks that it is extremely funny. The people of Townsville who watch their gardens, trees and lawns die will not find it very funny.

I pay the member for Townsville a great tribute for his courage and tenacity in getting a water supply for the people of Townsville.

3. Gold Production

Mr DAVIS asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

“With reference to the 1986-87 financial year—

(1) What was the value of gold produced (a) in the State and (b) by the Kidston gold mine?

(2) What amount of royalty did the State receive from gold produced (a) in the State and (b) at the Kidston gold mine?

(3) How many gold mines were in production in the State and what amount of gold did each mine produce?

(4) How many mines were under construction?

(5) How many mining leases for the production of gold were held by potential gold producers?

(6) How many authorities to prospect for gold had been issued to gold prospectors?”

Mr AUSTIN: As the answer to the question is quite lengthy, I ask that it be incorporated in *Hansard*.

Mr SPEAKER: Permission granted.

With reference to the 1986/87 financial year—

(1) Value of gold produced 1986/87:

(a) State	\$260,414,583
(b) Kidston Gold Mine	\$138,744,972

(2) Royalties received during the 1986/87 financial year in respect of gold were as follows:

(a) State (including Kidston)	\$3,810,046
(b) Kidston Gold Mine	\$2,859,021

As royalties are received in arrears, the sum of \$951,025 received from gold producers other than Kidston would essentially represent royalty on gold sales during the 1985/86 financial

year. However, as Kidston pay royalty on a quarterly provisional basis the above royalty would largely relate to 1986/87 sales.

(3) (a) There were 140 gold producers operating in Queensland during 1986/87.

(b) The top eleven (11) producers in Queensland accounted for 95.7% of the value (at mine) of Queensland gold production for 1986/87. These producers are listed below:

	\$
(1) Kidston Gold Mines Ltd	138,744,972
(2) Elders Resources Ltd	40,416,064
(3) Mt Morgan Ltd and Australian Anglo American Gold Pty Ltd Joint Venture	35,394,666
(4) Pan Australian Mining Ltd	12,207,036
(5) Cracow Mining Venture	7,792,579
(6) The North Queensland Company Ltd	5,314,317
(7) Rimeki Pty Ltd and A.D.R. Joint Venture	3,047,070
(8) Palmer Gold Limited	1,763,090
(9) W. & S. McGrath	1,509,550
(10) A.U.R. N.L.	1,488,890
(11) M.R.X. Pty Ltd	1,421,285

The remaining 129 producers accounted for only 4.3% of the State's total value of production.

(4) 13 major gold mines were under construction or came into production in the period. These were:—

MINE	COMPANY	ESTIMATED PRODUCTION oz per annum
Agricola	Astrik Resources NL	28 000
Cracow	Costain Australia Ltd	46 000
	Sedimentary Holdings Ltd	
	Cracow Gold Ltd	
Croydon	Central Coast Exploration NL	54 000
(2 mines, joint plant)	Pancontinental Mining Ltd	
Dimbula	Cambrian Resources NL	5 000
Guilford Rose	Diversified Mineral Resources NL	12 500
	Central Victorian Gold Mines NL	
Lucky Break	East West Minerals NL	10 000
Mt Freda	Diversified Minerals Resources NL	18 000
Mt Leyshon	Pan Australian Mining Ltd	75 000
Pajingo	Pajingo Gold Mine Ltd	64 000
Ravenswood	The North Queensland Coy	25 000
	Carpentaria Gold P/L	
Red Dome	Elders Resources Ltd	70 000
Starra	Cypus Minerals Aust. Co.	100 000
	Arimco Ltd	
	Elders Resources Ltd	

(5) Granted mining leases current as at 30th June, 1987 totalled 3,694. To extract the required information as to which mining leases actually include gold using the current manual register system would be a very time consuming and costly exercise. However, during 1986/87, of the 673 new applications received 474 had gold nominated as one of the minerals intended to be mined.

(6) Authorities to Prospect are normally granted for all minerals and not specifically for gold. Authorities to Prospect for all minerals existing as at 30th June, 1987 totalled 763. It is estimated that of these in excess of 80% would have gold as the primary target. 481 Authorities to Prospect for all minerals were granted during 1986/87.

4. Additional Flights for Overseas Visitors

Mr VEIVERS asked the Minister for Tourism, National Parks and Sport—

“With reference to recent media reports of a rift within the ranks of the Commonwealth Cabinet concerning the urgent need for additional overseas flights

to bring the ever-increasing number of tourists to Australia and, in particular, to Queensland—

What is the position of the Queensland Government on this important issue?"

Mr MUNTZ: It seems that, at long last, at least the Commonwealth Minister for Tourism is beginning to recognise the validity of the case that the Queensland Government has been outlining for some years, namely, that many more flights are needed to cope with the influx of tourists into Australia. The Commonwealth Government has a policy of protecting Qantas from competition, to the detriment of the Australian tourist industry and the creation of jobs for young Queenslanders.

The present capacity crisis arises from three key issues—

1. The abysmal lack of long-term planning by the Federal Government and a belief that the best interests of Qantas and Australia are synonymous, when clearly they are not;
2. The lack of funding to allow Qantas to buy the aircraft needed to meet demand; and
3. A continuation of the policy aimed at not allowing any other airline to take up the capacity that Qantas cannot manage to handle.

As a result, the Australian tourist industry is not allowed to grow faster than Qantas can grow. Because of these ridiculous policies, tens of thousands of Queensland school-leavers have not got a job. The QTTC, in its long-range forecasting, has been warning of this event for years but the Federal authorities have not listened.

American airlines that have been working with the QTTC to develop marketing opportunities in Queensland are prevented from even applying officially for landing rights because of the Commonwealth's incapacity to negotiate bilateral agreements with the USA. Talks have failed three times in the past 14 months. Everything remains at a standstill, freezing the Qantas position as the only carrier into Queensland from America. With its Sydney/Melbourne thinking, we are locked into a position where Queensland, with only 5 per cent of the seats from north America, services 27 per cent of the bed nights to Americans in Australia, while Sydney, which gets 81 per cent of the flights, cannot sell more than 32 per cent of the bed nights in the whole of New South Wales. So, apart from Qantas' lack of planning, lack of capacity and lack of staff, it is also sending the planes that it has to the wrong places.

Sydney is critically short of beds, so Qantas uses that as the reason why there should be no more flights into Australia. Queensland is able to service the additional demand. I say again that, if the people coming to Australia want to see Sydney, they can come to Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Cairns and they can see Sydney by day. I am sure that Ansett or Australian Airlines would schedule a day flight, providing breakfast on the trip, so that people could see Sydney Harbour and the Sydney Opera House and return to Brisbane in the evening.

The QTTC has been conducting talks with Qantas on a quarterly basis for some years and continues to press for the entry of other airlines to boost capacity to Queensland. The five additional airlines now servicing Queensland are due to this effort and only days ago a commencement of flights by Thai Airways into Cairns and Brisbane on a one-stop basis from Europe was announced. However, it is not enough to cope with demand. Queensland's efforts to develop tourism are stifled by tunnel-visioned Canberra policies. I issue another challenge to Canberra and Qantas to have a trial open-skies policy during the bicentennial year—at least during Australia's Expo 88 to be held in Brisbane—to give all airlines across the world an opportunity to come here, prove that they have the services and that they can transport the people wishing to visit Brisbane. It has been brought to my attention that there are tourists and business people wishing to visit Queensland who have to wait two to three months to be able to secure a seat on an international airline. In the present situation, that is ridiculous. Qantas has nothing

to fear. I repeat that its service is second to none in the international airlines sphere. It will prosper in healthy competition.

A necessity exists to maintain very strict safety regulations. However, there is no reason why the Federal Government at present should not consider immediately an open-skies trial policy during Australia's 1988 bicentennial year to prove that the need exists, to assess the results of the trial period at the end of 1988 and to go from there.

Perhaps Qantas needs some protection, but it certainly does not need protection to the extent of 50 per cent of that market. Maybe it needs 25 per cent or 20 per cent. A need certainly exists for a trial period. I challenge the Federal Government to at least allow that trial to operate during the period that Expo will be held in Queensland.

5. Staffing Scales in State Schools

Mr SCHUNTNER asked the Minister for Education—

“With reference to his statement on 8 October about staffing at a State high school, in which frequent reference was made to the staffing scale used by the Education Department—

(1) What staffing scales have been used in 1987 for staffing (a) State primary schools and (b) State secondary schools?

(2) What staffing scales will be used in 1988 for staffing (a) State primary schools and (b) State secondary schools?”

Mr POWELL: (1) (a) As indicated in my statement of 8 October 1987, my department makes every endeavour to maintain class sizes at the levels recommended by the parliamentary select committee. For primary schools these are—

a maximum of 30 pupils in Years 4 to 7;

a maximum of 25 pupils in Years 1 to 3; and

a maximum of 25 pupils in multi-aged groupings.

(b) In 1987, the allocation of teacher numbers in State secondary schools was based upon a staffing scale which has been used since 1983. This scale, which is based upon enrolment figures in each school, is used as a guide to ensure equity of staffing in schools throughout the State. However, I would emphasise that the scale is a guide, and departmental staffing officers consider the special needs of individual schools before allocating a final number of staff.

(2) (a) My department will again endeavour to maintain these class sizes in 1988.

(b) In 1988, this staffing scale will again be used as a guide for staffing State secondary schools.

6. Teacher Aides

Mr SCHUNTNER asked the Minister for Education—

“With reference to statements in the Budget that there would be a rationalisation of teacher aide provisions in State schools—

What is the new scale for providing teacher aides to schools?”

Mr POWELL: Revised entitlements will apply to primary and secondary schools from January 1988.

Primary

The entitlements of schools with enrolments of fewer than 36 students remain unchanged. Schools with 36 or more students receive teacher aide entitlements which vary in direct proportion to enrolments. For example, a school with 36 students has a new entitlement of 30 aide hours per week and a school with 500 students has an entitlement of 50 aide hours per week. Entitlements are provided in multiples of two

hours. Primary schools with attached secondary departments receive an additional 35 hours per week.

Secondary

All schools receive teacher aide entitlements which vary in direct proportion to enrolments. For example, a school with 200 students has a new entitlement of 66 hours per week and a school with 1 200 students has an entitlement of 108 hours. Entitlements are provided in multiples of two.

7. **Voting Irregularities in State and Federal Elections**

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

“With reference to certain irregularities and possible corrupt practices that are apparently being investigated by the Federal Police in the seat of Capricornia in the last Federal Election and to certain other alleged election irregularities—

(1) Will he assure the House that irregularities such as people voting twice or deceased people voting, did not happen in the seat of Broadsound at the last State Election?

(2) Is he aware of a large number of people enrolled in the Federal seat of Leichhardt who do not appear to reside at the address at which they are enrolled?

(3) Will he investigate whether the ALP in North Queensland knows anything about the ‘dummy’ names on the roll?”

Mr CLAUSON: (1) An examination of the records for the electoral district of Broadsound at the last election would indicate that no case was identified when an enrolled elector voted more than once in the election. No information is available to suggest that any enrolled elector who was deceased at the time of the election voted at the election.

(2) The question of enrolment of electors for the Commonwealth electorate of Leichhardt is a matter for the Australian Electoral Commission and the Commonwealth Government to consider.

(3) The extent of knowledge of the Australian Labor Party as regards enrolment is a matter for that party to comment upon.

8. **TAB, Betting Debts**

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

“Have there been, in the past, any amounts of money, outstanding as unpaid TAB telephone or credit betting indebtedness, written off as bad debts or debts, as a result of betting activities by (a) members of the public, (b) staff members of the TAB, (c) Board members of the TAB or (d) past Board members of the TAB?”

Mr HINZE: It must be clearly understood that there is no credit-betting at the TAB.

(a) Yes, as regards bad debts. However, these circumstances have occurred as a result of incorrect recording of transactions by the TAB and the figure in any one year has only ever been an extremely low figure when compared with the annual turn-over of the TAB.

(b) No.

(c) No.

(d) No.

9. Gold Coast Highway/Tweed Heads By-pass Connection

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

“What is the cost incurred by the Main Roads Department on roadworks connecting the Gold Coast Highway to the Tweed Heads by-pass?”

Mr HINZE: The initial cost of the Bilinga Interchange was \$3.25m. An additional amount of \$250,000 was spent to complete the four lanes of the by-pass to match the program determined by the New South Wales Government.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**Reopening of “Black hole” at Brisbane Prison**

Mr WARBURTON: In directing a question to the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to the letter of the 13 November which the Premier received from the Honourable Justice Marcus Einfeld. Justice Einfeld, President of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, asked that the Premier or Mr Neal speak to him when he visits Brisbane next Monday, and he also asked that he be permitted to view the prison cells known as the Boggo Road “Black holes”.

I ask: is it correct that the Premier has refused both these reasonable requests and, if so, will the Premier explain why?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The honourable Leader of the Opposition must realise that a Minister is in charge of that department and he has the responsibility for such things. If I, as Premier, acceded to every request that I received from all sorts of people, I would be doing nothing else, perhaps. All sorts of people make representations to me. Those representations involve going to a bank and getting a loan for them, and many other things.

The honourable member must realise that this particular area has been visited by other important parliamentary people and, indeed, the press. What is new about it at this point of time, I do not know. I suggest that the honourable member direct his question to the Minister concerned. I am sure that I do not have the time to take him by the hand and lead him around.

Class Sizes

Mr FITZGERALD: In directing a question to the Minister for Education, I inform him that on 6 October this year the honourable member for Mount Coot-tha, Mr Schuntner, criticised the State Budget on the grounds that class sizes could rise and that that could adversely affect the quality of education. On 4 November 1987, his Liberal colleague the honourable member for Mount Isa, Mr Beard, was quoted in an editorial in the *North West Star* as suggesting that instead of cutting teacher aide hours it would be better to have increases in class sizes. I have seen no denial of that from Mr Beard in the *North West Star*, either. I ask the Minister: given that the Liberal Party yet again wants to have two bob each way, what is the Government's priority—the employment of teachers or the employment of teacher aides?

Mr POWELL: I thank the honourable member for the question. I am aware of the apparent dissension in the ranks of the Liberal Party with regard to the policy that should be adopted on education. I understand that there is also some dissension about its leadership.

This Government's policies are fairly clear. The Liberal Education spokesman said that class sizes should remain static, but then the Liberal member for Mount Isa said that it would do no harm to allow class sizes to rise. So there is apparent dissension within the Liberal Party. It is fairly clear that the Government is adhering as nearly as possible to the recommendations of the parliamentary select committee on education, that is, that in the early-childhood areas the class size should be 25 and for the rest of

the classes it should be 30, except where there is a multi-age grouping, in which case it should also be 25. I see no reason why in 1988 that should change.

I am aware of a campaign which I can only term devious. At the moment it is being conducted throughout the State by two unions. Honourable members will know that public meetings are being called throughout the State by those two unions to try to frighten people as to what might happen in schools in 1988.

Mr Mackenroth: I addressed one last night, and they're pretty worried.

Mr POWELL: I could imagine that they would have been pretty worried after they had been addressed by the honourable member.

I think it is fair to say that the allocation to education in this year's Budget is certainly tight. However, it is also true to say that the priorities of my department are clear, that is, to provide trained teachers for class groupings according to the class sizes that I have just enunciated.

I know that last night in my own electorate somebody addressed a parents and citizens association and put forward all sorts of nonsense. For example, that person said that next year class sizes would rise to 34 or 35. That will not occur. It was also indicated that the resources of the school concerned would be removed. It is a large primary school. The resources spoken of were music teachers and physical education teachers. That is not true, because the department is maintaining the amount of money that it is spending on music, physical education and special education.

For anybody to be going around the State trying to incite people to write to members of Parliament and complain because there will be a lessening in the amount of money available for special education and resource teachers is just plain devious. Their claims are false. These people need to be exposed for what they are.

Mr Gygar: Rubbish! Come into my electorate.

Mr POWELL: The honourable member for Stafford can protest as much as he likes. When it comes to telling the true story, he finds it very difficult to fit the facts in. He does not like the truth to be exposed, because it proves that his good story is in fact false.

As these people are moving around the State, all they are doing is trying to frighten others. If they were to do it in March next year, they might have some data on which to base their claims, but that data would not substantiate the falsehoods that they are trying to spread. As I have said in this House before—I say it again and I am quite happy to argue it in any forum—the priority of the Government ought to be to supply trained teachers to teach children. That is what the Government's priority is, and always has been.

Food Contamination from Plastic Food-wrappers

Mr FITZGERALD: I ask the Minister for Health and Environment: has his attention been drawn to press reports of a plastic wrapper used on certain meats and cheeses and the leaching of chemicals into the contents? Has any such plastic been used in Queensland?

Mr AHERN: A couple of weeks ago, my attention was drawn to press reports of a plastic product used in New South Wales that contained a plasticiser, which is a product to make the plastic more flexible, that produced a leachate that was contaminating cheese and meat. I immediately instructed officers of the Health Department here in Queensland to conduct extensive tests to ascertain whether there is any such product here. I am happy to say that, from our thorough investigation, no such product was detected here.

From reports coming out of the Health Department in Sydney, it does appear that one or two rolls of wrapper were used wrongly in food preparation by a Sydney supermarket chain. The product did not come into this State. I want to assure the consumers of Queensland that my department watches these matters very closely. There

are national standards for food-wrappers, and those standards will be strictly adhered to in this State.

Reopening of "Black hole" at Brisbane Prison

Mr COMBEN: In asking a question of the Minister for Corrective Services, Administrative Services and Valuation, I refer to his intention to open the notorious Boggo Road "Black hole" and his statement last night concerning the supposed black activist cell in Brisbane prison that planned to take prison officers hostage to highlight land rights claims. I now ask: will he advise what evidence acceptable in a court of law he has to support his wild allegations? What material has he forwarded to the police? Will he say where the evidence, if any, came from? In view of a recent search of Brisbane prison and the "Black hole" cottage industry area revealing no evidence of such a plot or conspiracy, I ask also: is the internal gaol security system that uncovered the so-called plot the same security system as that which allowed the prison master key to go missing recently? Was not his statement last night in actual fact a last-ditch attempt to justify his unpopular action and to preserve his precarious Cabinet position?

Mr NEAL: I thank the member for his question, which just shows how out of touch with the prison system he is. If he thinks that I will not treat seriously the reports that come to my notice about events that may take place in the prison, he has got another think coming. Of course I must treat them seriously.

I draw his attention to a recent occurrence in a southern prison when an inmate was reported to have a bomb strapped to him. It was subsequently found that he did not have a bomb strapped to him but, nevertheless, that report was treated very, very seriously. Similarly, any reports that I receive as Minister responsible for prisons in relation to intelligence gathered by internal security must be treated with the utmost seriousness. I am responsible for the security of the prison, the safety of the public in general and also the safety of prison officers. From time to time reports on all sorts of things are received. Obviously they must be investigated and followed right through.

Death of Mr P. W. Ashwell at Stuart Prison

Mr COMBEN: I direct a further question to the Minister for Corrective Services. As he is the Minister responsible for the safety of the public, I refer him to the death of Mr Phillip Weara Ashwell three weeks ago at Stuart prison. I ask: will the Minister advise the House why only eight officers were on duty at Stuart prison to guard 400 prisoners on the night of Mr Ashwell's death and why, according to the Minister's own spokesperson, as reported in the *Daily Sun*, it took "only 10 minutes" for the cell to be opened after prison officers realised that Mr Ashwell was attempting to commit suicide?

Is there not a clear case of negligence in the Minister's departmental administration? Why did it take five days of media questions to the police and to the Minister's own department for the Minister to admit that the death had occurred? Why did the Minister actively suppress the details of that death for five days?

Mr NEAL: As far as the death of the particular prisoner is concerned—let me state quite categorically that I did not suppress anything at all. It is quite incorrect and mischievous of the honourable member to suggest such a thing.

As far as any death in our prison system is concerned—first of all, the moment that a death is reported a doctor is called in. The matter is placed in the hands of the police. Investigations to ascertain the cause of death are carried out by the doctor. If the matter is then placed in the hands of the coroner, it is up to the coroner to determine whether or not there will be an inquest. It is not a matter for the Prisons Department to decide.

In relation to the other parts of the honourable member's question—I am informed that the incident occurred some time after 3 o'clock in the morning, when prisoners are locked in their cells and when it could be expected that they would be asleep. Of course, a minimum number of prison officers are required to be on duty at that time.

As far as prison officers are concerned—they have a very difficult job to carry out and they cannot be in all places at the one time.

Financial Allocations by Queensland Government Development Authority

Mr LITTLEPROUD: In directing a question to the Deputy Premier, I refer to the operations of the Queensland Government Development Authority. The Opposition has continually referred to the \$1.53 billion allocation in the Estimates for the QGDA for the 1986-87 financial year and has alleged that this Government has not disclosed where this money has been placed. I ask: will the Minister inform the House how and where these moneys have been allocated?

Mr GUNN: I thank the honourable member for his question. It is one that should have been asked by the Opposition because all along it has made noises about how this money is allocated. If members of the Opposition sit back and listen instead of interjecting as they usually do, I will go through this and they will get an indication of where this money went to.

The new money for statutory authorities is as follows: domestic, including Railways, \$370m; Expo, \$45m; Gateway Bridge Company, \$120m; Queensland Water Resources Commission, \$69m; local authorities, including the Brisbane City Council, \$27m; Main Roads Department, \$43m; Port of Brisbane Authority, \$24m; and other statutory bodies, \$172m—a total of \$915m. In addition, the offshore allocation in the Estimates relates to the Loan Council's global limit for offshore borrowing on-lent to authorities, including the Queensland Electricity Commission, the Department of Transport, etc.—a total of \$315m.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order. I call the Deputy Premier.

Mr GUNN: This is very, very important——

Mr BURNS: I rise to a point of order. The Minister is not answering the question. He has got the wrong Dorothy Dixier in his hand. He is answering the next question. The honourable member asked a different question, and the facts being stated have nothing to do with the question that was asked.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order. There is no point of order.

Mr GUNN: I know that the Opposition does not want to listen to this answer, although it gives the Opposition what it has asked for for a long time. The Opposition asked for details of this refinancing and it asked for the areas to which the money was distributed. I am giving the Opposition that information.

The refinancing of promissory notes was \$75m, which made a total of \$100m. In regard to the offshore allocation, the Queensland Government Development Authority multicurrency loans that were on-lent to various semi-Government and statutory authorities and the non-QGDA debt, including the QEC and the Department of Transport, amounted to \$128m.

Mr Burns: He asked about——

Mr GUNN: The Opposition should listen. The honourable member put one question on notice and asked this question without notice.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The first question was on notice. The honourable member for Lytton must remain quiet.

Mr GUNN: The honourable member's interjection indicates that he does not listen. That question was put on notice, and this question was without notice.

The Queensland Government Development Authority multicurrency loans that were on-lent to various semi-Government and statutory authorities, including the QEC and the Department of Transport, amounted to \$128m, making a total of \$200m.

Mr BURNS: I rise to a point of order. Am I to understand that the answer on that long piece of paper is a reply to a question without notice and that the Minister just happened to have it hanging under a curl on his arm? Or was he handed a Dorothy Dix because he does not have the ability to answer the question?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. I call the honourable member for Sherwood.

Mr INNES: Thank you, Mr Speaker——

Mr GUNN: I rise to a point of order. I have not completed my answer.

Mr Hamill: Are you going to table your thoughts?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Ipswich! I will allow the Deputy Premier to complete his answer.

Mr GUNN: I will complete the answer. It would be physically impossible to have all this information in my head. I must read it out. This is a complete document and something that the Opposition has been talking about for a long time. This morning I am giving the Opposition the information. Because it negates the argument that the Opposition has put forward over a long period, it is very important.

The total of \$1,530m was the estimate for the 1986-87 financial year and was based on the amounts that I have given and explained to the House.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the honourable member for Sherwood.

Mr INNES: I am sure that——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no need to comment.

Fitzgerald Inquiry; Legal Costs of Hon. D. F. Lane

Mr INNES: In directing a question to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, I refer to a report last Tuesday in the *Australian* that last week in Cabinet—the new leak-proof Cabinet—the Attorney-General offered to give the Solicitor-General advice relating to the Premier's submission proposing the payment by the Government of the costs of the appearance of the Minister for Transport before the Fitzgerald inquiry and that the Minister for Transport stated that he did not think that the Attorney-General should. I ask:

(1) Is not the Queensland Government represented by senior counsel?

(2) Is it not customarily the responsibility of the Attorney-General to put submissions to Cabinet on the question of a Minister's legal costs, and why did the Attorney-General not put the submission in this case?

(3) Did the beneficiary of the decision, the Minister for Transport, participate in the discussion which led to the decision to pay his costs?

(4) Can the Attorney-General give any other instance in which costs have been agreed to be paid for a Minister by the Queensland Government when the matter was not directly as a result of allegations relating to the Minister's ministerial responsibilities?

Mr CLAUSON: I see that the princeling pretender to Sir William Knox's porcelain throne has decided to ask this question after much conjecture in the local media about the matter.

In reply to the honourable member—in view of the circumstances, I cannot comment upon any Cabinet decision. However, I would point out that, in view of the circumstances, no application was put to me about the fees to be paid on behalf of the Honourable the Minister for Transport. I took nothing along to Cabinet on that day in relation to that matter. The reports in the press are totally misinformed.

Attempted Enrolment of Mr J. Herbert in Merthyr Electorate

Mr INNES: I direct a further question to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General. In view of the Minister's continuing obligation for the electoral rolls, has he, as the Minister in charge of the Electoral Act, instituted inquiries as a result of the evidence given before the Fitzgerald inquiry to ascertain whether irregularities under the Act occurred in the attempted placement on the roll for the State seat of Merthyr of one John Herbert, at Jordan Terrace, Bowen Hills, in September last year, just before the close of the State rolls? If he has not, will he?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! On the grounds of sub judice, I will not allow that question.

Shafston House

Mrs HARVEY: I ask the Minister for Northern Development and Community Services: can he advise the House of the attitude and intentions of the Commonwealth Government towards the sale of the historically important Shafston House? Further, can the Minister assure the House and the people of Brisbane that, should the historical home with its extensive grounds be sold to an interested party other than the Queensland Government, this Government will take every possible step to ensure that the historical integrity of that site is protected from any high-rise buildings being built there, a move that would be tantamount to putting high-rise buildings in the centre of sites such as the Charters Towers historical precinct?

Mr KATTER: Yes. The matter has been raised in the House previously. I thank the honourable member for bringing forward the matter again. I point out to honourable members that the honourable member for Greenslopes has been responsible for the restoration of the beautiful Queen Alexandra Home. I think that it is one of the premier buildings in the State of Queensland.

Mr Vaughan interjected.

Mr KATTER: I think that it is important to express appreciation when people have done a damned good job. That is the important thing.

Mr Vaughan: I saw through you on ABC this morning; you made a goat of yourself.

Mr KATTER: I take the honourable member's interjection. He thinks that it is a joke that the Federal Government is about to sell off Shafston House to a developer. That is what he is saying at present. He is saying that it is a joke. I regret deeply that he would see it that way.

The area concerned has a beautiful outlook over the Brisbane River. Building commenced on Shafston House in the 1860s and I think that it was completed in the 1870s. It is a very old home. Although the Californian redwood is the largest tree in the world, the Moreton Bay fig is one of the biggest trees. Queensland has about 10 very large and very old Moreton Bay fig trees. The Moreton Bay fig tree in the grounds of Shafston House would be one of the oldest trees in the State of Queensland. As far as our heritage is concerned, it would be a tragedy to destroy the view from Shafston House, of the parkland, the river and the tree.

Having said those things, I point out that the Queensland Government approached agents for the Federal Government. Like the other people who attended a meeting, I most certainly considered that discussions were taking place on the basis of a price of \$1m for the building. We may have been misled, but that was our understanding. The agents said that they would contact the Federal Government and come back to us. They said that at that stage it was a private sale. The following week the agents came back to us and said that the Federal Government had decided to put Shafston House up for public auction, which means that it would not be able to have any control over who purchased the house. In fact, a developer could purchase it at auction. If it was a private sale, the Federal Government would say, "We only need to talk to you if you are going

to develop it in accordance with some sort of preservation guide-lines that we would like to see you carry out.” However, the Federal Government has put it up for public auction. The Federal Government has told the Queensland Government that it is considering a reserve price of \$2m. There is no way that that site—and I have looked at it very, very closely—can be preserved at the price of \$2m. There is no way that anyone could meet the interest and redemption payments on a loan of \$2m by keeping the site as it is. The Federal Government is forcing a situation in which nothing can happen other than a developer’s securing that site. Even if a developer preserves the house, he will have to erect some sort of building in front of it so that he can show a return on his capital investment. We are looking down the gun-barrel. The site could be redeveloped and destroyed for ever; it would be taken away from the people of Queensland.

I appreciate the honourable member’s question and the way in which she has been, once again, fighting to preserve one of the more beautiful buildings in the State of Queensland. I am confident that ultimately we will beat the Federal Government in its endeavours in respect of Shafston House. Public opinion will turn very violently against the Federal Government when the people of Brisbane and Queensland realise what is happening.

Brisbane River Ferries

Mrs HARVEY: I ask the Minister for Transport: who licenses ferries on the Brisbane River? Does the Minister expect an increase in ferry numbers as a result of increased needs for Expo 88 travellers?

Mr LANE: With respect to the licensing or authorisation of ferries operating on the Brisbane River—in the first instance, the responsibility for the safety of ferries comes within the portfolio of the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services, because boats must have marine survey certificates before they are allowed to operate commercially.

Controls are exercised over those vessels with respect to landing rights and their access to the river bank, whether it be by pontoons or is above or below high-water mark, and whether the Lands Department or the Brisbane City Council authorises those ferry stations.

For some time this Government has considered the establishment of an economic licensing system within the Department of Transport to control the number of ferries that operate on the Brisbane River, particularly those ferries that provide commuter services to bay islands or fulfil an urban public transport role, as do buses and suburban trains.

The Government is considering the establishment of a full licensing system to control the routes over which ferries can operate. The obvious benefit of that would be the maintenance of the financial viability of individual ferry services so that they can upgrade or maintain an adequate standard of facilities and services to the public.

With respect to ferry services for Expo 88—one of the leading ferry-operators will be the Golden Mile Ferry Service. That company intends to operate ferry services to and from Expo 88. That team of people is co-operating with the honourable member for Greenslopes and her Brisbane River Committee to enhance and upgrade the use of the Brisbane River as a transport artery and a method of servicing Expo during next year.

Comments by Sir Edward Lyons about Premier

Mr BURNS: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer him to reports in this morning’s *Sydney Morning Herald* in which his financial minder, Sir Edward Lyons, is reported to have promised the *Melbourne Age* newspaper that he would leak inside stories about the Premier unless the newspaper refrained from publishing certain facts about a former neighbour of Sir Edward’s on the Gold Coast.

I ask: can the Premier explain that statement of Sir Edward Lyons and the apparent about-face in his attitude towards the Premier? Further, what sort of inside stories could Sir Edward leak to the media that would be damaging to the Premier?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: I am surprised that a man with the experience and background of the honourable member for Lytton would believe anything that he reads in a newspaper.

Political Future of Senator John Stone

Mr BURNS: In directing a second question to the Premier, I refer to Senator John Stone's purchase of a \$500,000 mansion at Buderim and to reports that he is presently considering two career options. The first involves the knocking-off of Adermann, the Federal member, moving to the House of Representatives and challenging Sinclair for the leadership of the National Party. The second involves a reputed offer from leadership aspirant Mike Ahern for Stone to become the Under Treasurer if and when Ahern becomes Premier on the Premier's retirement.

I ask: can the Premier give an assurance that that loyal gentleman Senator Stone will not be taking the place of Sir Leo Hielscher as head of the State Treasury, and can he assure this House that, as a Senator-elect for Queensland, Stone will serve his time in the Senate and will not seek to move to the House of Representatives, as National Party rumours suggest?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: I know that the honourable member is just joking. He is trying to make a joke out of this issue. This House would really be interested in the wash-up and the outcome of what is happening within his own party.

Fitzgerald Inquiry, Interim Report

Mr BOOTH: I ask the Deputy Premier: in view of the length of time that might expire before the Fitzgerald inquiry concludes, has he given consideration to asking Mr Fitzgerald to prepare an interim report?

Mr GUNN: In case Opposition members do not understand, this question was without notice. It is entirely up to the commissioner himself whether he wishes to furnish an interim report.

With regard to superannuation pay-outs—I am awaiting legal advice from the Solicitor-General on the superannuation legislation. Until I receive that advice, I cannot comment. However, certain possible courses are open. The Government will examine them at the appropriate time.

With regard to Inspector Barnes' retirement—I place on record the fact that that was approved by Sir Terence Lewis on 28 May, not by the present commissioner.

Visit to Somerset Hills State School by Minister for Education

Mr GYGAR: In directing a question to the Minister for Education, I refer to his statement in the House this morning that he is happy to explain and defend the Government's education policies in any forum. I ask: will he therefore accept the invitation sent to him by parents at the Somerset Hills State School to come to that school and explain why his department has cut teacher aide hours by 50 per cent, removed the teacher/librarian, which effectively closed the library, removed the school secretary and refused to take any of the special circumstances into account when staff allocations were made?

Mr POWELL: If I had the time and was given sufficient notice of the date of the proposed meeting, I would be delighted to go to the Somerset Hills State School. My diary, like most other Ministers' diaries, is filled up roughly six months ahead. However, for the benefit of the honourable member, who obviously has great difficulty in understanding plain English, I point out that each school is given an allocation of resources according to the number of children attending that school. If a school has an allocation

and the number of children at the school decreases, quite clearly the allocation must change.

I am not familiar with the numbers at the Somerset Hills State School. If, however, the school is to lose its teacher/librarian and its secretarial assistance, it is clear to me that the number of children at the school has declined to such an extent that the school is not entitled to those particular resources. If we maintain resources of that nature at schools that have a declining population, it would be totally unfair to schools that have an increasing population. Therefore, as a department, we must look at the allocation of resources across the State and, where a school's numbers drop, it falls into the next class of school, there being thresholds at 35, 100, 300 and 600. Once the schools pass over those particular thresholds, they change their classification.

As well as that, throughout the intermediate areas, for example, in the class 3 schools, which range from 100 to 300, a teaching principal is usually appointed——

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr Gunn interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wolston and the Deputy Premier!

Mr POWELL: I am attempting to explain the allocation of resources. In a class 3 school that has under 169 children, the principal is a teaching principal. As soon as the school numbers exceed 169, the principal becomes a non-teaching principal; therefore the allocation of resources to the school changes.

If honourable members are interested in knowing the allocation of resources, I would be happy to supply them to schools in their own electorates.

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

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Police, Superannuation Fund Pay-outs and Staffing

Mr BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11 a.m.): Today, I wish to talk about the situation in which police are being allowed to resign and walk away with hundreds of thousands of dollars of superannuation payments before they have been cleared and exonerated of recent allegations against them. Every day the press reports another case of suspect police deciding to take the money and run. In the meantime, it seems to be the attitude of the Police Minister, Mr Gunn, that there is nothing wrong with the Government's giving golden handshakes to these deserters.

Legally there might not be any present avenue for superannuation payments to be withheld pending the bringing-down of the commissioner's report, but that can soon be changed. Police who have been named before the inquiry and around whom exists the smell of corruption should not be permitted to leave the force with their massive superannuation payments intact. It is totally improper that those corrupt cops who have sought indemnity from the commissioner and who have lost their superannuation entitlements should be the only ones to be financially punished when everyone knows that the corrupt police who just happen to be lucky enough to be at retirement age may escape any financial penalty at all. It is not good enough to accept what the Police Minister said this morning in the House. He said that a decision was made by Commissioner Lewis in May. If Commissioner Lewis is stood down, it seems to me that Ministers should be making a decision to the effect that no determinations should be made in relation to superannuation concerning Acting Commissioner Redmond or Commissioner Lewis.

Superannuation is a financial reward for years of dedicated public service to this State, but what Queenslanders are quickly finding out is that many police officers have put service to the criminal community above service to Queensland.

All Mr Gunn says about this is that it is just too bad; that we cannot do a thing; and that we have got to let the crooks take the money and run. From that sort of statement it appears to me—and I am sure to the majority of Queenslanders also—that the Deputy Premier is more interested in not being a hindrance to suspect police than in doing the right thing by all the people of Queensland—by the tax-payers and by the honest members of the superannuation funds.

In last week-end's *Sunday Mail*, it was front-page news that Inspector Barnes decided to jump ship early and collect his \$220,000 superannuation, in spite of the fact that he had been named as offering bribes. In yesterday's *Telegraph* it was reported that suspended Commissioner Lewis wants to get out as soon as possible when he reaches 60 in February next year. It is reported that he is expecting a superannuation pay-out of three-quarters of a million dollars—not bad for his well-paid years in the police force.

When it comes to amending legislation, this Government has shown no hesitation in the past to deprive workers of any superannuation entitlements they may have. Everyone would recall the sacking of the thousands of SEQEB workers, many of whom were close to retirement age. The Government showed no compassion for them. They had provided long and dedicated service to Queensland, but they were sacked without any remorse from this Government; and they were sacked without any consideration for the fact that they all lost their superannuation entitlements. Yet they were workers who were not criminals; who did not associate with or protect criminals. The Government did not care a hoot about whether they were left financially destitute by the withdrawal of their superannuation entitlements; but, when it comes to a few crooked cops, the Government says, "We've got to pay out as quickly as possible. We can't hold them up; we can't restrict their benefits. We can't wait and see whether they are found to be corrupt and therefore liable to dismissal with the loss of their superannuation entitlements. Oh, no! We've got to give them their golden handshakes as quickly as possible." It would be a simple matter to amend legislation so that superannuation payments are delayed until the inquiry makes its report to the Government.

What I suggest to the Deputy Premier is that the Act be amended so that police retirees are eligible only for the payment of their pension entitlements and so that they are not allowed to convert their pension to a lump sum until the inquiry makes its report and tells Queenslanders of its recommendations. The Act should be amended to provide a sunset clause to limit its application. The Government could handle this type of situation from that legal position.

Such a course of action would impose no financial hardships on retiring police. It would not carry any stigma, because all police would be affected temporarily and those police who have not been named before the inquiry and who have not had charges laid against them would suffer only a minor interruption of a few months, at most, before they could convert their pension to a lump sum if they so desired; but those police who are found to be corrupt and who have retired would not receive their massive golden handshakes, and action could be initiated against them.

The Police Superannuation Fund is massively supported by public funds. I see no reason why the public should not have a say in this matter. All honourable members would recall that for years the Police Superannuation Fund, because of the way in which it is set up, has been actuarially unsound, requiring massive supplementation from consolidated revenue to keep it viable. I understand that at the moment the Police Superannuation Fund is in a satisfactory position, but the latest report showed that, for the \$8m that members contributed in 1985-86, the Government contributed over \$20m from consolidated revenue.

The Police Superannuation Fund's annual report, like the annual report of the Police Department itself, has not appeared for the 1986-87 year, so honourable members do not know what the current situation is. This is public money that the Government is talking about, and the public is becoming increasingly annoyed about the Government's allowing corrupt cops to walk away with pay-outs and not suffer any financial penalty for their treachery to the police force and the public of Queensland.

Emergency legislation has always been the forté of this Government. The legislation sausage-machine has been made an art form in Queensland, and I see no reason why action could not be quickly taken. Of course, it is fine for this Government to introduce emergency legislation to take away the civil liberties of Queenslanders, as was done during the Springbok tour, but apparently it is not willing to suspend superannuation payments to corrupt police officers.

Another result of the Deputy Premier's inaction is that police who may have been considering applying to Commissioner Fitzgerald for an indemnity against prosecution will now think again because they may decide it is better to sweat it out for a while in the hope that they will receive their superannuation pay-outs before they get caught.

The only hope that Queenslanders have that justice will be meted out to these individuals is that the Taxation Department gets in for its chop. The Deputy Premier and Police Minister should stop pussyfooting around on this issue making half-hearted excuses why corrupt cops should get their superannuation.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: He should stop leaking, too.

Mr BURNS: My colleague says that he should stop leaking, too.

Nobody, be it the police, politicians or anyone else for that matter, who is named before the inquiry should receive any pay-out from the public purse until he has been cleared by the inquiry. That is the only fair and reasonable course of action which does justice to all concerned, namely, the many thousands of honest contributors to superannuation funds who are now being asked by the Deputy Premier to permit pay-outs to corrupt cops, and the corrupt cops themselves, who in no circumstances should be entitled to superannuation, particularly when it involves hundreds of thousands of dollars.

I want to continue to speak briefly about police issues and the present lack of police numbers in this State. There is an urgent and obvious need for additional police in Queensland. I do not think anyone argues about that, except the Government. This Government's Budget was a failure to the ordinary citizens of this State concerned about law and order. The resources of Queensland police are stretched to the limit. It is increasingly difficult for the police to satisfy increasing community demands on both a reactive and a proactive needs basis. The inability of the police force to combat a growing crime rate rests almost entirely with a lack of manpower and facilities.

Thanks to successive National Party Governments, the Queensland police force has the worst population-to-police ratio of any force in Australia. The official figures show that there is one police officer for every 525 people. Other States average one officer for every 450 people. Real budgetary cuts this year have slashed overtime, and country police officers on leave may not be replaced.

When I was in Charleville I was told that, when a policeman goes on annual leave from a little one-policeman station, no-one is sent out to replace him because cuts have been made in the amount set aside for the daily travelling allowances. In the past a policeman would go out there and would be paid so much a day. Now one is not even sent. There is no thin blue line for the people in the country areas that this Government, when it used to call itself the Country Party, represented.

Down on the Gold Coast and in other tourist areas, crime is out of control. Since 1983 the Gold Coast has recorded a crime growth rate of 12 per cent compared with a growth rate for Queensland as a whole of 8.2 per cent. The Government's answer is that the rich areas should rent themselves a cop; hire a gun; get someone to protect them. An off-duty policeman is then paid by the local community. What happens to a poor community? What happens to large Housing Commission areas and large working-class areas where crime is out of control? They cannot afford such a scheme. There are no businessmen in those communities to collect money, as they have done in Surfers Paradise, to pay for extra police. Therefore, those people do without.

At Christmas-time down on the Gold Coast the ordinary policeman has his leave cancelled. He is not allowed to go on leave. He is forced to stay there and work right through that period. After Christmas he takes his leave and the number of active police in the area decreases. Next year it will be worse because policemen from all over the State have been invited to submit their names to come to Expo on the basis of a couple of months' service. No-one will be available to replace them. That means that the problem in the areas that they leave will be compounded. The police union argues that an extra 1 200 police are needed for Queensland. Certainly, an extra 500 police are currently required if our population-to-police ratio is to be reduced to the national average. Lack of support by the Government for police has given an open invitation to criminals to come to Queensland.

Mike Gore, of the white-shoe brigade, emphasised lawlessness on the Gold Coast in his promotional brochures for Sanctuary Cove. He said, "The streets these days are full of cockroaches." That is the most hateful statement that I have ever heard a man make about Australians. He goes on to say, "And most of them are human." In other words, that is his view of the ordinary Australian. He continues by saying, "Sanctuary Cove is an island of civilisation in a violent world and we have taken steps to ensure it remains so." He will hire his own policemen. People should not have to do that. The growth of those enclaves of people who are building brick walls around little villages and selling them off for large amounts of money is an indication of the Government's failure to provide the necessary basic law-and-order services that everybody in this State is entitled to. This Government has trumpeted about law and order throughout the State. It can take action against unionists and a few church-leaders singing hymns in the street, but it cannot do anything to stop the corruption in the police force and to stop the criminal element taking over our cities and streets.

Australian Constitution

Mr McPHIE (Toowoomba North) (11.10 a.m.): Last Tuesday in this Chamber, in answer to a question about the proposal to amend the Australian Constitution, the Premier said that this Government would fight every move to change any of the freedoms that the people have enjoyed since Federation. The Premier's statement virtually coincided with the release of a green booklet entitled *Australia's Constitution—Time to Update*. That booklet is a summary of the reports of the advisory committees of the Constitutional Commission. It is nothing more. It is not a definitive document, and it should not be viewed as such by people when they are considering the comments in it.

I think it is time to pause and reflect on what this commission is all about. The Constitutional Commission is a political set-up that was brought into being by the socialists down in Canberra, who are hell-bent on turning this country into a republic. At present the Constitution contains no provision for a review to be carried out at any stage. There has been no demand by the people of Australia for a review of the Constitution. In fact, the ALP's perceived need originates from 1975, when Prime Minister Whitlam was sacked by the then Governor-General of Australia. The ALP has not been able to accept that dismissal. The fact that Mr Whitlam, when sacked by the Governor-General, departed the scene, after fighting on for only another day, shows that he accepted his dismissal. That shows that it was a legal and binding dismissal by the Governor-General and that it was within the bounds of the Constitution. A succession of Federal Governments has not been able to accept the continual rejection by the people of Australia of constant fiddling with the Australian Constitution. Quite a number of referendums put up by Federal Governments, including the Fraser Government, since 1975 have been rejected.

In December 1985 an ALP Government in Canberra set up the Constitutional Commission to review the Constitution. That ALP Government selected its own ALP commissioners. Members of the ALP hold a firm majority on that commission. The Labor Government appointed people to five advisory committees that it itself determined. Again the members of the Federal Labor Government appointed people of their own ilk so that they had a firm majority. The intention is quite clear; it is an intention to

rewrite the Australian Constitution to the Labor Party's advantage. The intention is to make Australia a republic. If that is ever put to the vote, I am sure it will be rejected by the majority of Australians.

If honourable members look at what is proposed by the commission, they will see that everything is to be changed. The green booklet contains recommendations for a great host of changes. The proposals are to change the Constitution in just about every way and to change it permanently.

Mr Ardill: It is a century out of date.

Mr McPHIE: The intention is to change it permanently to suit the likes of the honourable member for Salisbury, not the people of Australia.

Mr Simpson: The people of Australia have shown they don't want change.

Mr McPHIE: The people of Australia are saying that they do not want change, and they are saying it more and more consistently. As time goes by, they will continue to do that.

Mr Ardill: The Constitution is only about States' rights; it has nothing to do with people.

Mr McPHIE: I ask the honourable member for Salisbury to consider the advisory committees. Can he name the five advisory committees and outline their powers? Of course, he cannot. He sits over there making a noise.

One of the five advisory committees has to consider aspects of executive government, another has to consider the distribution of power, another has to consider trade and national economic management, another has to consider individual and democratic rights under the Constitution—that is worth remembering—and the last has to consider the Australian judicial system. The Australian judicial system must stand alone, yet the Federal Labor Government is fiddling with it.

All the recommendations contained in the green booklet and many other publications have been distributed to the Australian public at a cost of millions and millions of dollars to tax-payers. All that printing and distribution is part of the biggest snow job that I have ever seen. Through sheer weight of paper the Federal Labor Government hopes to confuse and snow the people of Australia to try to make them accept the changes and accept this so-called new Constitution being put into place at the end of next year.

I will examine some of the recommendations of the committees. The committee that is considering executive government wants to get rid of the Governor-General. Why does it want to get rid of the Governor-General? Because a Governor-General who was appointed by an ALP Government and was doing his job properly sacked an ALP Prime Minister who was not doing his job properly. Of course that committee wants to get rid of the Governor-General. The ALP wants to see that happen. It wants to get rid of State Governors and any connections with the Queen and the Royal Family and turn this country into a republic. That is what that committee is bent on doing.

The second committee is considering the distribution of powers. The ALP wants to centralise all powers in Canberra. I might mention that that fellow Fraser, who was a conservative Prime Minister, had the same idea. The ALP wants to centralise all powers in Canberra——

Mr Vaughan interjected.

Mr McPHIE: The honourable member for Nudgee should not forget that he is a member of a State Parliament, as is the honourable member for Lytton. He should be sticking up for States' rights.

This committee should not be in place at all. If anyone should be reviewing the distribution of powers in the Constitution, it should be the State Governments, the State

Houses that make up the Federation that is the Commonwealth of Australia. It is the Constitution of the States and the Constitution of the people of Australia. It is not the toy of those socialists down in Canberra to do with it what they like for their own political purposes.

The third committee is considering trade and national economic management. There are two sneaky clauses in the recommendations of that committee. One of them relates to a new section 51.1A. It is an overriding clause on anything to do with trade or national economic management. If one goes to the end of its area of authority, one finds that it overrides virtually anything internally or externally. It is a very sneaky clause. It is a subparagraph to a subclause. The idea is that nobody will know that these overriding powers have been put in place so that the socialists in Canberra can do what they like. At the same time, the ALP will get rid of section 92, which is the very corner-stone of trade between the States and protects the free-enterprise and the private-enterprise systems.

The fourth committee is considering individual and democratic rights under the Constitution. That is the only protection that the people of Australia need, and that is the only protection that they have got. We do not want the recommendation regarding a rewording of the Bill of Rights and the ID card as put forward by that committee. That has been rejected, and we do not want to see it again.

The fifth committee is considering the Australian judicial system. I want to know why these people have the right to fiddle with our judicial system. It is the very corner-stone of law and order in this country, and it must be left alone. The Westminster system has served this country and other countries very, very well over many hundreds of years. Australia has independent courts, and they must remain that way. There is no way in which the people of Australia should fall for a change and for the giving-away of their rights through stealth, as is being done by this Constitutional Commission.

Honourable members should not be misled by the contents of the green booklet. They are only recommendations of advisory committees to the parent committee, the Constitutional Commission. The ALP Constitutional Commission is due to report to the ALP Government, its masters, on 30 June next year. Honourable members should not be conned into approving any of the recommendations of those advisory committees and saying that they look good, because collectively they do not.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr McPHIE: I have more to say yet. Members of the Opposition should not try to get rid of me because they do not like my hitting on the truth.

If the Federal Government is to have any credibility at all, it will knock back some of the recommendations and it will hold a referendum in December 1988, at the end of our bicentennial year. It will be a big con act. The ALP will say, "Here is your new Constitution. Why don't you approve it?" The Australian people will not fall for that.

The multitude of changes is so great that they will be put to the people in a referendum. The simple question will be, "Yes or no?" in relation to the new Constitution. The ALP thinks that the Australian people will fall for that. Not on your life! The Australian people are not suckers. They will toss out the lot. Honourable members opposite should just wait and see. The Australian people will not accept the socialists taking over and the Fabian system of stealth in taking over our Constitution.

Only one change is required to the Constitution as perceived by people who think and understand, and that is a requirement that a referendum be held to ratify or otherwise any provisions that are being foisted on the Australian people by external treaty clauses. If that is done, such unconstitutional action as was used over the Franklin Dam will be got rid of. The Franklin Dam decision, based on external powers that were not written into the Constitution, is contrary to the intent of the Australian Constitution.

Time expired.

Teacher Aides

Mr UNDERWOOD (Ipswich West) (11.20 a.m.): I rise in support of the 5 000 teacher aides in 1 600 schools throughout the length and breadth of Queensland who work so hard and for longer hours than they are actually paid for.

The decision by the National Party Government to reduce teacher aide hours is nothing short of calamitous, on both educational and humanitarian grounds. Teacher aides are now an integral part of the classroom and the delivery of education to Queensland's children. Modern curriculums and teaching methods demand the services provided by a professional aide work-force. The cruel and heartless attack on the families of teacher aides by this Government is outright proof that this Government is Christian in name only, and evil in deed. Deserted wives and single spouses who have struggled to raise and care for their families on their 30 hours or so of employment as teacher aides have been deserted once again by this National Party Government—a Government that squanders public funds on its own pleasures and desires, whilst cutting back funds that are so urgently needed in the delivery of adequate and proper services to the people of Queensland and, in particular, to the children of Queensland.

In presenting the Budget for 1987-88 that was approved by each and every Cabinet Minister and Government member, the Premier and Treasurer, Sir Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, said in one of the most deceitful statements in the Budget—

“The Government has decided to rationalise present teacher aide provisions for primary and secondary schools to remove anomalies. This will result in some increased entitlements for small schools and reduced entitlements for larger schools.”

The Government has been so concerned about the savagery of the cuts to teacher aide hours that only now is the truth about the magnitude of the cuts coming to light, because regional officers of the Department of Education have now contacted all schools and announced the proposed 1988 allocation of teacher aide hours. The schools were then instructed that they were to decide—the principals, the aide appointment committees, which are comprised of the principals and the p. and c. associations, and teacher aides themselves—how they were to cut back on hours and who was to be sacked or to have his or her hours reduced to provide a non-living income; who was to be placed under tremendous psychological pressure to help his mates out by making a decision against his own best interests. The Government did not even have the guts to do its own sacking and cutting. The Government is happy to wallow in public funds, but it does not have the guts to stand up and implement its own decisions.

This is a decision made by a Government that not only is gutless and heartless but also has no belief in the need for better education services—a Government which believes that chalk and talk are more than sufficient to educate Queensland's children for this modern age; a Government that is basically anti-education.

As a result, Queensland's education system is the poorest in the Commonwealth. This Government is the lowest spender per capita in the Commonwealth on education—and it shows. This service was cut to the bone before the Budget, and the cuts now imposed by the Budget are seriously wounding the education service that so many people, who struggle daily and give of themselves, deliver to the maximum benefit of our children. There is no justification for the cuts in education spending in this State.

The phoney argument employed by the National Party Government of blaming the Australian Government does not wash. Since it came to office in 1983, the Commonwealth Government has appropriated extra funds and provided other facilities and services to the States for education. This has always been the case. That increase in spending in both the private and State Government sector will continue under the Federal Labor Government. So, in fact, Queensland's education budget should have actually been increased in real terms, not decreased.

The reduction in teacher aide hours applies right across the board in Queensland; it does not stop at the boundaries of ALP, Liberal or National Party electorates. Schools

in the electorates of members of all three parties are attacked by the National Party's budgetary decision. I shall cite a few examples of the reduction in weekly hours of teacher aides. At the Moggill primary school, there has been a cut of 38 hours; Mossman, 36; Norville, 34; Moura, 32; Nambour, 28; Nerang, 29; Mudgeeraba, 25; Wilsonton, 19; Ashmore, 15; and Bray Park, 22.

The reduction in hours at the high schools include Charleville, 34; Hendra, 28; Acacia Ridge, 26; Alexandra Hills, 20; Biloela, 33; Albany Creek, 27; Dalby, 23; Burnside, 21; Balmoral, 17; Aspley, 26; Beenleigh, 29; Caboolture, 21; Benowa, 13; Pimlico, 9; and Brisbane, 7. It must be borne in mind that there are about 1 60 schools in Queensland. One can see that the cuts have not been made in one particular party's electorate; they have been made right across the board.

I turn now to the increased hours. In the primary school area, Abercorn has had an increase of 2 hours; Augathella, 5; Cambooya, 2; Coominya, 4; Gilston, 8; Kilcoy, 8; Lakes Creek, 10; and Blair, 10. An example in the secondary school area is Collinsville, which has had an increase of two hours. It can be seen quite clearly that the cuts have been quite significant in the schools in which teacher aides are most needed, that is, in the bigger schools.

The Government, in a cynical political exercise, has ensured that small schools receive a small increase in hours in an endeavour to placate its own National Party members and parliamentary representatives. I assure the House that the majority of the people in those electorates who, as a matter of course, are serviced by the bigger schools will be far from happy.

I predict that the war against the Government on teacher aide hours and other support services for our children's schools, and education cuts in general, is just beginning. If the Government thinks that life is very uncomfortable right now politically, it should wait till the new year, when the school year commences in this State, to see what will happen throughout the length and breadth of Queensland, particularly in Government electorates. The heat will be really on as parents, teachers, students, the community in general and parents and citizens associations turn the blowtorch of their anger on the Government of Queensland and the National Party for what they have done to them and for what it has failed to do for them, their schools and their children.

For example, p. and c. associations will have to raise almost double the amount of money that they raised during the last 12 months. That does not mean that they will do twice the amount of work. As all honourable members know, a twofold increase in fund-raising efforts does not mean that twice the amount of funds will be raised. Last year, p. and c. associations are reputed to have raised \$26m. Because of the Budget, they will have to raise more than \$40m to provide the same level of support and essentials in our schools as they provided last year.

Departmental sources show that increases in class sizes have resulted from the abolition of approximately 750 teaching positions. There has been a virtual abolition of relief teachers for replacement of teachers who are sick or infirm—those who cannot present themselves in the class rooms. Hundreds and hundreds of unemployed teacher graduates will enter the workplace next year. There will be less money in the community for p. and c. fund-raising as a direct result of the State Government's policy, which is supported by the Liberals, to reduce pay and conditions of workers. There has been an abolition of services, which, although they might seem small in budgetary terms, are significant in terms of the problems faced by the Government. The free learn-to-swim program has been abolished because of the cut in funds provided to private and State schools. There has been a cut in the funds provided for the employment of lollipop ladies and for the hours worked by them. Every day of the week they risk their lives for a few dollars so that they can protect the lives of our children when they cross the roads. The litany of budgetary cuts and the enormous problems created by the Government in our schools continues.

The deceit of the Government's position on teacher aides is demonstrated by the recent statement by the Minister for Education, who advised unemployed teacher graduates that in the new year they will obtain Brownie points towards their selection for a teaching position when jobs become available in our schools if they work in the schools as voluntary teacher aides. If the Minister believes that Queensland's schools need those teacher aide hours, the Minister should immediately move through the

Government and Cabinet to introduce a professional service that is supported by proper pay and conditions and more teacher aide hours, not less. Our schools should not be staffed by overworked and underpaid teacher aides.

Time expired.

Mr D. Rowell; Q-Net

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (11.31 a.m.): I wish to place on record the role played by a senior public servant of unique qualities and outstanding ability who has played a major part in assisting many thousands of rural and remote Queenslanders—and, I might add, as a result, undoubtedly even more Australians—to move into the twentieth century through access to new telecommunications technologies.

One of my reasons for doing this is the impending departure of Mr Doug Rowell, who is currently the Deputy Director (Q-Net) of the Department of Industry Development, to take up a position as general manager of Q-Net Ltd as well as a director of strategy planning and development for Q-Net Ltd and a director of strategy planning and development for Icom Satellite Services Pty Ltd.

The second reason is to outline the background of the nomination of Doug Rowell for a Bicentennial BHP Award for the Pursuit of Excellence. The nomination was made by the State President of the Isolated Children's Parents Association, Mrs Teresa Cobb of Isisford. I am proud to have been asked to be a referee along with the general manager of Aussat Pty Ltd, Mr Graham Gosswwinkle.

In November 1984, the Queensland Government agreed to establish a pilot telecommunications network on the Aussat satellite. The network, known as Q-Net, was the dream of Doug Rowell. It arose from his close involvement over 30 years in telecommunications planning in both Australia and overseas. During that time Doug had conducted studies of the needs of remote areas of Australia for telecommunications. He was also responsible for establishing international telecommunications in Papua New Guinea at the time of its independence. That background provided the perspective for a vision of the potential of satellite communications to serve rural and remote communities and to improve the quality of life for thousands of Australians.

While the Federal Government, in deciding to embark upon the introduction of satellite technology to Australia, did so in recognition of the potential that it presented to the more remote parts of this vast continent, no-one had determined how this was to be achieved. The Queensland Government recognised that Q-Net could extend the full range of State services—health, education, emergency and other services—to Aboriginal and mining settlements, isolated townships, homesteads and islands throughout the State.

Under Doug's management and direction a small, highly skilled team of people has put together one of the world's most comprehensive multipurpose networks in less than 1 000 days. Q-Net now consists of voice services, including facsimile and data, serving more than 15 000 telephone connections throughout Queensland, a full packet switched data network with the potential to serve up to 500 locations, and educational television services to more than 60 Government sites and some 1 000 private receivers throughout the State. Whilst the technology is impressive, the real vision is in the application of the system.

Despite major policy hurdles, Telecom opposition, climatic, geographical and many other difficulties, Q-Net is pioneering the delivery of Government and community services not only in Queensland but also throughout Australia. The list of projects and achievements of the past 18 months is outstanding. Some examples include—

School of the Air

A trial involving students on homesteads around Mount Isa, which uses TV, computers and satellite voice-links to improve educational opportunities for outback children. Q-Net has linked the children to Australia's Davis Base in the Antarctic and a school in New Zealand, and has brought many city events and personalities within the reach of country kids.

North-west Telemedicine Project

Q-Net has installed slow-scan video equipment at remote gulf communities and linked them to Brisbane, Mount Isa and Townsville. Doctors at the remote centres have immediate access to specialist opinions for X-rays and other medical diagnostic needs. This has improved the quality of health care and reduced the need for Royal Flying Doctor Service evacuations.

Emergency services

A transportable earth station allows police and emergency service personnel to rapidly restore communications in the event of a disaster. Q-Net has already proved its value during a cyclone early in 1987 when communications to the gulf were maintained throughout the emergency.

Other areas are river-monitoring, technical and further education programs and professional education and training. Other projects also include a hospital administration program, an Aboriginal health program, special land management systems for mapping and surveying applications and high speed facsimile transmissions for the police department.

Q-Net facilities will enable new photovoltaic power-generating equipment to be installed on Coconut Island in the Torres Strait, with control links and weather-monitoring information being sent via satellite to Brisbane. Many Q-Net projects are not only pioneering the application of new technology in Australia but are also amongst important developments worldwide. The success of Q-Net pilot projects have led all other Australian States and Territories towards the establishment of State Government telecommunications networks.

Doug Rowell has made an important contribution to telecommunications policy development in Australia through the Australian Telecommunications User Group and the Commonwealth Committee on Communication, where his contributions have served to further, in a professional and productive way, the re-regulation of telecommunications in Australia. The task of policy change has rarely been rosy. It has taken an informed, objective and tenacious approach—the basic qualities of the innovator.

Recently a decision has been taken by the Queensland Government to privatise Q-Net, and this process is in progress—in fact, almost completed at present. Q-Net has now moved from the conceptual stage, through trial and development to commercialisation. This presents a copybook model of entrepreneurial development from within the public sector. Doug Rowell and Q-Net have been leading by example.

The true measure of success is with people in the remote and rural areas and provincial towns of Queensland, and, as a consequence of his pioneering work, the whole of outback Australia. Doug Rowell's vision and commitment are helping in the education of thousands of schoolchildren and adults. Lives have already been saved in the gulf country. People at Doomadgee and numerous other centres have reliable communications for the first time. Power is now available to Coconut Island and many government functions such as police, community services and utilities are functioning more effectively in rural areas thanks to the foresight and commitment of Doug Rowell.

I refer to an article in an editorial of a national communications magazine, which says in part in relation to deregulation—

“Such deregulation arguments were seldom expressed more clearly and cogently than by Q-Net's architect Doug Rowell, who slashed through Telecom's protective policies with the scalpel of a sharp mind and the steady hand of a high-level communications practitioner on numerous occasions.”

It goes on to say—

“Rowell has repeatedly demonstrated a more long-term perspective on what change is necessary in Australia's telecommunications policies and how it may be managed.”

This commitment and foresight has now resulted in the very likely provisions of a remote commercial television service for Queensland, which in turn has been noted by

the Minister for Technology in this House. It could well be the catalyst for the salvation of Aussat in its current and desirable form. That has occurred because Doug Rowell has been prepared to put planning and vision into action, and in doing so has at times risked the wrath of others who fail to recognise the social and commercial benefits of people separated via the tyranny of distance from services that the majority take for granted.

I refer to a communications newsletter earlier this year which states that the Victorian Government believes that a private network will save \$20m per year. It states—

“A key factor enabling the establishment of Vistel, as with the first state government network, Queensland’s Q-Net, is Telecom’s agreeing to allow government bodies to be included in a Common Interest Group. After complex and protracted negotiations with Telecom, Q-Net was finally set up with three separate Government common interest groups.”

On behalf of the thousands of Australians in rural and remote areas, I say sincerely, “Thank you very much, Doug Rowell.” It is in many ways a sad day for this Government, the public service and the people of Queensland that a person who can truly claim to have served the public will no longer be available to continue to assist Queensland in leading the way with imaginative, enlightened and positive initiatives such as we have witnessed during the last four years. Doug Rowell dared to be different.

Upgrading of Regional Airports

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong) (11.40 a.m.): I draw attention to the importance that airports play in this State in relation to development generally, and tourism in particular. In this area both the State and Federal Governments have a much greater role to play. In July this year, the Premier indicated that the Kingaroy airport needed upgrading because the State Government’s \$8m Hawker-Siddeley twin executive jet was unable to land there. Of course, the executive jet is used not only by the Premier but also by Ministers of the Crown; yet no other reason was given for the proposed upgrading of the airport at Kingaroy, other than the fact that the Premier’s executive jet could not land at that particular airport.

Clearly, many other airports throughout this State have a far greater priority in the need for upgrading. I refer to airports at places such as Cairns, Townsville and Maroochy. They are all areas involved not merely with tourism but also with development generally. If one examines the proposal for upgrading Kingaroy’s airport—a proposal in which the State Government was to put forward a \$1m interest-free subsidy together with \$1m that it expected to receive from the Federal Government—for a town with a population of approximately 9 000, without any other justification, it can be seen that, compared with airports such as Cairns, Townsville and Maroochy, clearly little legitimate reason exists for the Government’s proposing to upgrade Kingaroy’s airport—as important a town as Kingaroy might be. I am sure that development in Queensland will not be held up if the Kingaroy airport is not upgraded, whereas it would if Cairns, Townsville and Maroochy are not upgraded. The State Government and, particularly, the Federal Government have failed to upgrade those airports.

It must be remembered that those major centres service regional areas of Queensland. The failure to upgrade those airports is harmful not only to development generally but also particularly to tourism. Tourism requires that chartered jets should be able to come from overseas countries to Australia and land fully laden. The situation at the moment is that many jets from overseas are able to land at regional airports only if they are half laden; in other words, they cannot be fully loaded. If jumbo aircraft are fully loaded, they are unable to land at those airports.

A failure to upgrade regional airports is part of the Federal Government’s tactics to sabotage tourism and development generally in this State. If one were to compare the amount that is spent on the Sydney/Melbourne axis with the amount that is spent by the Federal Government on Queensland, one could fully understand how the Federal Labor Government is undermining development in this State generally. Members of the

Federal Labor Government know that the Golden Sunbelt States of the United States—and sunbelt areas generally—are the areas that attract tourists and development. The Federal Labor Government naturally wants to look after its voting base and is loath to come forward and spend money on upgrading regional airports in Queensland.

Extension of the Cairns airport is vital if, in the foreseeable future, Cairns is to be able to cope with the new types of charter jets as well as the increased number of international airline flights that have Cairns as their destination. Already one airline has been prevented from bringing additional flights into Cairns because the airport would be unable to cope. Townsville is in a similar predicament. Maroochy airport is already subject to the possibility of being by-passed in the future. I suppose it is correct to describe Maroochy airport as a real shambles during peak periods. People are herded in and out of the airport terminal. Even the tarmac is in need of reconstruction and relocation because it is facing the wrong direction if an increase in the number of aircraft wishing to land at Maroochy is to occur.

These issues are vitally important to provincial cities and regional areas of the State of Queensland. The opportunities to move forward and develop are enormous; yet Queensland will miss out if these provincial and regional airports are not upgraded.

Although the tarmac of the Brisbane International Airport is being upgraded, the international terminal itself is an utter disgrace. Brisbane is hosting the 1991 international Lions convention and it is expected that 50 000-odd tourists will come to this city. It is clear that Sydney and Melbourne are playing a role to ensure that Brisbane airport is not upgraded. The international terminal has no airport bridges. During peak periods, particularly on Thursday and Saturday, people are herded in and out of the airport like cattle. One international tourist commented to me that it reminded him of Managua in Central America—a banana republic airport.

Quite frankly, the facilities at Brisbane's international airport are totally inadequate for a city such as Brisbane, which is expanding as an international tourist destination and as an international sports and convention centre. It must be kept in mind that if 50 000 tourists are coming to this city they will expect reasonable facilities when they arrive. Fifty thousand international tourists will be taking back to their countries their impressions of our State and the impressions that they will have of Brisbane. They will find when they get out of the jet aircraft that they will have to walk across the tarmac because no air bridges are provided.

Brisbane won the right to host the international convention of Lions, which is the largest service club in the world. Brisbane had to bid to hold that particular convention. In doing so it beat Sydney and Melbourne. Once before Sydney had the opportunity to host this particular convention, yet that city could not get its accommodation act together. In that regard it failed. No doubt the Federal Government wants to ensure that in that area Brisbane does not steal too much of a march on Sydney.

As I indicated earlier, the State Government certainly has a significant role to play in assisting and in endeavouring to get additional funds for the provincial cities and regional areas. One has only to look at the way in which the Government acts and reacts in relation to its use of the Hawker-Siddeley executive jet. I am reminded that on 6 August in this House the Premier, following his trip to Romania, said that the cost of flying that aircraft to the United Kingdom and other European countries and returning was identical to the sum of the first-class fares for the group that went on that trip. To say that the cost of running the Government's executive jet flying for well over 50 hours is the same as the cost of first-class air fares, which at that particular time were \$5,299 each, for the people involved in that trip just could not be so. It cannot possibly be true. The cost of running a jet such as that would amount to somewhere between \$130,000 and \$150,000. Also to be considered are the sundry charges, namely, the cost of 50 flying hours to Europe, the cost of pilots, depreciation on the aircraft, landing fees and so on. It is clear that the State Government is involved also in gross waste and extravagance in that regard. The State Government ought to be looking at assisting the various provincial cities more in upgrading their facilities and airports.

Recently in this House the Premier tabled a list of the expenditure incurred by Ministers of the Crown in relation to the use of the State Government's executive jet. That statement was simply a total; it contained no break-down of the flying-time to the various destinations. It contained no break-down of the number of passengers that were carried. The statement said simply that the number of passengers carried was some 892 and that that included every State Cabinet Minister.

When so much is heard, as occurred at the recent Townsville convention, from the National Party about a new face coming to take over, that is certainly not the case at all. All of the Ministers are involved in the present operations of Government. They are all involved in considerations of where in fact the Government will spend money; whether money will be spent at Kingaroy for upgrading the airport and whether the Government will get a new executive jet. So, right down the line all members of Cabinet are involved in those decisions and with the Premier's retiring, no new face will be put on at all. It will be exactly the same Government and exactly the same people in power.

Time expired.

Labor Party Factionalism

Mr COOPER (Roma) (11.50 a.m.): Allegations of factionalism and infighting have been part of the accusations levelled at the National Party in recent times. Following the Townsville conference, nothing could be further from the truth. The party has demonstrated that it is big enough to accept that it can have problems, yet overcome them in a healthy, open and most democratic way. Even the media was able to see a great party, confronted by some major issues, get to work and sort them out without falling apart at the seams.

In fact, what was expected to be a complete blood-bath and schism turned out to be a coming-together and a unification that has strengthened the party immensely. No decision taken at the conference was intended as a criticism of what had happened in the past, nor was anything done for spite. In the past the party has served the people of Queensland extremely well. A firm base has been established upon which the National Party will grow and build anew. We in the National Party are most mindful and appreciative of the dedicated and painstaking efforts that have gone towards constructing that base.

Mr Stoneman: A blueprint for success.

Mr COOPER: I concur with the member for Burdekin. It was a blueprint for success.

Decisions taken reflected the opinions of the branches and, therefore, members' statements and were not taken lightly. Despite some commentaries, the decisions are not radical departures from the National Party's traditional moral values. They show a coming to grips with the realities of the times. They are a reflection of the thoughts of the members, and, therefore, of public opinion. When one looks closely, one can see that the major decisions taken were sensible and pragmatic and that they are most certainly in responsible hands.

The general feeling overall is that the National Party has shown that it can come to grips with major and sensitive issues and still prevail. Strike one for the Nats!

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr COOPER: The Labor Party is not game to have a conference. It has not had one for some two or three years.

I will examine the ALP in Queensland to see where in reality the factionalism exists. I ask honourable members to look at the question mark hanging over the ALP leadership at the very moment and to look at the shift in the balance of power and influence on the Federal executive. The emergence of the Hodder-led AWU/Socialist

Left alliance, which is now hell-bent on cleaning out Nev Warburton's Old Guard faction of 16—

Mr Stoneman interjected.

Mr COOPER: Yes, the members of the Old Guard are present in the Chamber. Because I like the look of them, I hope that they stay here for as long as they can. I hope that they stick around.

I want to know who will jump ship. Who will leap from the frying-pan into the fire—from the Old Guard to the Socialist Left, the Centre Left or the Centre Unity factions? Who will suddenly seek independence or even creep back into the AWU faction? It is a gripping and fascinating saga. The end result will be a very precarious facade of unity.

It was the State ALP president, Ian McLean, who first supported the stand by Senator George Georges against the Hawke Government's legislation to deregister the Builders Labourers Federation. I am sure that all honourable members will remember George Georges, but I am simply giving them a bit of history. Georges claimed that the Hawke Government was a survivalist Government with questionable policies.

On another issue—the member for Wolston, Mr Gibbs, said he was appalled and disgusted—he loves to get his tongue around that word “disgusted”—at the Federal Labor Party's attitude towards the abolition of penalty rates and leave loadings. He said—

“It makes me feel ashamed to be a Labor politician when I read half-hearted supporting comments by Prime Minister Hawke on the issue.”

Prior to last year's State election there was the classic boomerang effect when the State secretary of the ALP, Mr Beattie, said that criticism over recent years that the Queensland ALP has deep divisions had now become a trait of the National Party. Not long after, Joe Kruger, the then member for Murrumba, resigned from the ALP after losing preselection to a person who is now referred to as the “powder puff of the Kallangur push”—Mr Deane Wells.

Mr Borbidge: Joe was an honourable man.

Mr COOPER: Yes, he was an honourable man.

Mr Kruger made the understatement of the year when he said—

“I think the party should take a good look at itself and make sure factionalism is stamped out.”

All honourable members recall the bar-room brawl that took place in October last year at an ALP dinner held at Trades Hall that was attended by Finance Minister Dawkins. Fisticuffs broke out all round over the Federal Government's shift in policy on uranium sales. Apparently the scene was better than anything that could be seen at Festival Hall.

Who will forget the next stand taken by Senator Georges over the ID card? In December last year Georges threatened to resign from the ALP because he had had enough of the Hawke Government's departure from Labor policy. Georges condemned the Australia Card legislation as draconian and said he could not support it. How many other members of the Opposition felt likewise? My erstwhile ALP opponent in Roma said recently that, as far as Hawke was concerned, he would promise you a swimming-pool in your back yard one day but you would wake up next morning and find it in the front yard. That hardly shows any confidence in the Messiah.

Following Georges' condemnation of the ID card legislation, ALP sources said that a move could be made to get rid of him at the meeting of the national executive. However, our friend Ed Casey stepped in and said that the party would be better off without him. He accused Georges of creating factionalism in Queensland in 1979, and

the party in Queensland disciplined him for it. However, the Federal executive then intervened on his behalf and saved George Georges' neck.

It is an endless saga of factionalism and infighting that shows no signs of abating, and it will continue even after Mr Warburton is replaced by Mr Goss or Mr Braddy. Mr Warburton, of course, is well respected in the community and, as far as I am concerned, he is a decent bloke. Honourable members opposite would deny it. The repercussions after a leadership change will be horrendous.

Honourable members have witnessed the Keogh/Sciaccia conflict and subsequent fall-out. One member accused the Socialist Left and the AWU of thuggery and sleazy deals for self-indulgent political reasons. The alliance of the AWU and the Socialist Left has been dubbed the unholy alliance, and I am sure that 16 of the members opposite would agree with that.

The factional brawl even involved the Prime Minister, who said that he would rather not intervene in the Keogh case. He was told then by the Centre Left members at a meeting that the matter would have to be settled in Queensland. One ALP Centre Left spokesman said—

“The Prime Minister promised to back members who supported his uranium stand. He has broken that promise and we have to wonder how much he can be trusted.”

This is from the Centre Left of his own party. This is the man who said in his election and re-election campaigns, “Trust me.” His own people do not trust him now.

Another Centre Left source said that Mr Hawke's decision had paved the way for an all-out factional brawl and jeopardised seven of the ALP's nine seats in the House of Representatives.

Interestingly, this unholy alliance has entered into a new phase, according to an article in the *Sunday Sun* of 1 January this year, which has connotations for the current situation. The article said that members of the Labor Party were exploring an arrangement for both unions and branches to have fairer representation on the party's policy bodies and the State council and conference. The Socialist Left——

Mr Littleproud: Did you say “conference”?

Mr COOPER: Yes. I will call it a Clayton's conference.

Mr Stoneman: You realise that there is a new faction? It is called the abstaining faction, led by Mr Smith.

Mr COOPER: I must admit that I have been wondering where Geoff Smith has been lately.

The Socialist Left proposed a package of changes that would see branch representation based on the Federal electorates and introduce affirmative action.

It is history now that the unholy alliance reigns supreme and that many honourable members opposite will face the chop at preselection or will have to jump factions to survive. All I can say is that they play it rough.

I have in my possession a few interesting quotes. In the *Telegraph* of 16 January this year, the AWU State Secretary, Mr Errol Hodder, cast doubts on the Queensland ALP leader, Mr Nev Warburton. This was after the State election. He said—

“The simple answer to that is Queenslanders didn't elect the Labor Party.”

That answer followed a question as to whether Mr Warburton was the right man to lead the party at the next election. Mr Hodder said that there was now “no political figure of any consequence” in the party who was part of the previous State Labor Government.

In another article by the Australian Associated Press on 16 January this year, Mr Hodder criticised Mr Beattie, saying that the ALP's campaigns were amateurish. He said—

“We no longer hold the Brisbane City Council. We hold less seats now than we held in a much smaller State House and we hold less federal seats than we held before the last federal election.”

Mr Stoneman interjected.

Mr COOPER: I think that that one can be guaranteed, and a few others besides.

An article in the *Daily Sun* of 17 January this year stated that in his annual report Mr Hodder said that the ALP had “lost its way” and become “self-centred and inward looking”. He said—

“Too often it would seem some people in the party have been satisfied with the spoils of defeat.”

My message to the ALP in this Parliament is quite simply this: the National Party is alive and well, sans factions and very united.

At 12 noon,

SUPPLY

Fifteenth Allotted Day—Reception of Resolutions

The Resolutions reported from Committee of Supply on 13 November were presented and, on motion of Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, received.

Adoption of Resolutions

The Resolutions being taken as read—

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (12 noon): I move—

“That the Resolutions be now agreed to.”

Motion agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS

Opening of Committee

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (12.01 p.m.): I move—

- “(a) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1987-1988, a further sum not exceeding \$3,407,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland.
- (b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1987-1988, a further sum not exceeding \$5,235,292,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.
- (c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1987-1988, a further sum not exceeding \$184,924,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.
- (d) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1986-1987, the Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated not exceeding \$229,641,338 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland.

- (e) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1986-1987, the Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated not exceeding \$1,392,168,915 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.
- (f) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1986-1987, the Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated not exceeding \$3,133,686 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.
- (g) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty on account, for the service of the year 1988-1989, a sum not exceeding \$1,070,000,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland.
- (h) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty on account, for the service of the year 1988-1989, a sum not exceeding \$1,730,000,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.
- (i) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty on account, for the service of the year 1988-1989, a sum not exceeding \$80,000,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund."

Motion agreed to.

Resolutions reported, received and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

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) (12.06 p.m.): I move—

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

The Bill is the second and final Appropriation Bill for the current financial year. It seeks parliamentary approval to cover—

- expenditure included in the Budget estimate for this year, and
- unforeseen expenditure incurred during 1986-87 and expenditure for the first two months of the financial year 1988-89

to maintain Government activities until further Supply can be granted.

An amount of \$14,797.7m is provided for 1987-88 to cover anticipated expenditures for Supply services from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the Trust and Special Funds and the Loan Fund. This amount represents the total of Parts III, IV and V of the schedule to this Bill. It also incorporates the amount of \$2,560m for Supply services previously appropriated in the Appropriation Act 1986-87 (No. 2) and the further amount of \$3,410m appropriated in the Appropriation Act 1987-88 (No. 1).

Unforeseen Expenditure for 1986-87 totalling \$1,624.9m is also incorporated in the Bill. This amount has had Executive authority, but now requires parliamentary approval. Full details of this amount are set out in Parts VI, VII and VIII of the schedule to the Bill and the document *Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated*, which was recently tabled in the House. By far the largest part of this amount is represented by the sums required for the Queensland Government Development Authority. I will comment further in this regard later in my speech.

The Bill also allows for an amount of \$2,880m to provide Supply for the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the Trust and Special Funds and the Loan Fund for the first two months

of the financial year 1988-89. Adequate provision has been made within this amount to cover cost escalations in the intervening period.

The Bill is primarily the legislative enactment of the State Budget for 1987-88, which I presented to the House on 8 September. It is the corner-stone on which the financial strategy of this Government has been built both for the 1987-88 financial year and into the future. Without doubt, it will be seen in years to come as a far-sighted Budget, a Budget aimed at laying a sound basis for the future growth and development of this State.

In its assessment of the Queensland Budget, the State Affairs Division of the Institute of Public Affairs described it as a "pacesetter for the States", a Budget which "has set a standard for expenditure restraint and economic responsibility that the other States will find hard to match". Indeed, that was a very fine compliment from the institute. Neither the other States nor the Commonwealth have been able to match this Queensland Budget for its responsibility and appropriateness for the times.

I believe that it is vital that all honourable members clearly understand the importance of this Budget and its strategy, which has so rightly received the acclaim of a prestigious body such as the institute. In the preparation of the 1987-88 Budget, this Government was faced with—

- a cut of \$172.9m in Commonwealth general revenue assistance;
- a cut of \$226.5m in Loan Council global limit borrowings programs; and
- cuts in a whole range of specific purpose payments to the States in areas such as housing, roads and so on.

Those were all cuts forced on the State by the Commonwealth and really were nothing more than a poor attempt to correct the Commonwealth's own budgetary problems at the expense of the States. This is despite the fact that it is the States and not the Commonwealth that provide the basic services such as schools, hospitals, roads and so forth to the community.

The only thing that can be said about the Commonwealth Budget is that the words "balanced Budget" have crept into Mr Keating's vocabulary. It is a great pity that the words were not translated into reality. The Commonwealth's failure to come to grips with the need for restraint in its own expenditures, not just in payments to the States, means that further total Government expenditure cuts will be necessary in the future. I ask the people of Australia to be vigilant in ensuring that, next time, the Commonwealth cuts into its expenditures to at least the degree that the States had to this year. If they are not vigilant in this, the Commonwealth could again cut into funds for schools, hospitals, welfare, police and so on.

In the face of these substantial cuts in Commonwealth tax-sharing arrangements, the Queensland Government constructed a Budget which recognised—

- the severity and permanency of the Commonwealth funding cuts;
- community expectations for the provision of essential services;
- the importance both to the community and the economy of ongoing capital works commitments;
- that taxes should not be increased, nor should new taxes be levied;
- the futility of short-term expedients such as fire sales of assets; and, vitally
- the need to maintain a balanced Budget.

The achievement of all of those diverse objectives at the same time was not easy. Indeed, I have said on many occasions that this current Budget has been the most difficult that I have presented to the Parliament. However, this Budget does achieve these goals and it achieves them responsibly and with equity. Most Queenslanders have

appreciated this fact. It is a Budget which—and I repeat my words in introducing it to the House—

“... not only copes with the present but provides the very necessary solid base for the future through the public sector reform proposals ...”

This leads me to what is undoubtedly a most critical aspect of the Budget—its role as a framework for the future and as an agent of change and restructuring to meet the challenges of the next decades through the Government's Policy Statement on Public Sector Reform, which was presented with the Budget.

The Government's reform policy is now being put in place. Departments and their Ministers have begun the difficult but necessary task of reviewing their programs with a view to achieving long-term reform and rationalisation of Government outlays. The Expenditure Review Committee, which was announced in the Budget, has begun the groundwork for what I believe will be one of the key elements of the restructuring. Major steps have been taken already in giving Ministers and permanent heads greater autonomy and responsibility in the running of their departments.

The Public Service Board has been disbanded and the bulk of its staff and functions redeployed in departments across the service. I am happy to report that this exercise proceeded extremely smoothly with over 145 of the 158 staff available for redeployment being placed or otherwise accommodated in just two months. I think that was outstanding. To take this step to its necessary conclusion, drafting of a Crown Management and Employment Bill to replace the Public Service Act is being completed, which will place the onus clearly on departmental managers to ensure optimum performance. The Bill will be before the House as soon as possible.

Work has substantially progressed on a rewrite of the Financial Administration and Audit Act, which will see major reform of financial and budget administration in this State. The new legislation proposed will complement relevant provisions of the new Crown management and employment legislation. The newly created Government Management Consultancy Bureau attached to the Premier's Department has already begun its advisory and support role in departments on a full-fee-for-service basis.

These changes are just the beginning. Out of this period of change will, I believe, emerge a leaner, stronger and more efficient public sector. This Government has squarely faced the challenges of the times. We are under no illusions about the likely future of Commonwealth/State relations or the difficulties that must flow from ongoing cut-backs in Commonwealth funding to the States. This Government is, however, determined to remain firm in its adherence to principles of sound financial management despite these difficulties. To do otherwise would be to fail the people of Queensland who do not want the high tax, high spending and high waste that the colleagues of members opposite have inflicted on the Commonwealth and other States. The Budget, which this Bill implements, is tangible proof of our sound approach to financial management, both in terms of what it does directly and in the framework that it lays for the future.

Before I conclude my comments, I would like to turn to one other issue arising from the presentation of the Budget to Parliament which has caused some media comment. That is the matter of the unforeseen expenditure approved for the Queensland Government Development Authority in 1986-87. I raise it in this context because parliamentary approval of that unforeseen expenditure is contained in this Appropriation Bill and it is important that the position is absolutely clear. I would have thought that the Deputy Premier's ministerial statement last Wednesday would have clarified the position, but it appears that some misconceptions—deliberate or otherwise—still exist. Accordingly, I must make it clear yet again that the authority's need for unforeseen expenditure has nothing whatsoever to do with foreign exchange losses. Let me repeat that so that no-one can be under any illusion—it has nothing whatsoever to do with foreign exchange losses. Rather, the need arose because the authority took advantage of opportunities which were seized during the year to reduce its borrowing costs by early repayment of a number of older, higher interest loans and reborrowing at lower interest rates. That early repayment was treated as expenditure by the authority and, as has been

policy, additional appropriation was needed accordingly. That additional expenditure was offset by the receipt of the proceeds of the new loans which enabled the old loans to be paid out.

At the end of the day, the authority has no increase in the level of debt outstanding because of those transactions, but does have a significant reduction in interest costs. Given that the authority borrows on behalf of statutory bodies throughout the State, that will mean savings in interest payments for those bodies for the remainder of the life of the loans. That, in turn, means that those bodies will be able to better contain charges for their services to consumers. I would have thought that the authority should be congratulated for effective management of its debt rather than being condemned by those whose only objective seems to be to try to score some cheap political points.

Had honourable members opposite, and the member who asked the question, bothered to research the subject rather than engage in shallow criticism, for which they have become renowned, they would have seen that the reason for the unforeseen expenditure is set out on page 1019 of the Budget document *Departmental Accounts Subsidiary to the Public Accounts 1986/87*. That is another case, however, in which the members opposite have not been willing to allow the facts to upset a good story, however false and potentially damaging to the reputation of the State and the State's credit. I would never expect them to do that. I can understand the Opposition's desperation to score political points in their comments on the Budget. It reflects their lack of substantial argument with the Government's financial strategy—a financial policy which has been widely accepted as the most sound and responsible in this country. This Bill sets that Budget and its financial strategy in legislation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate—Leader of the Opposition) (12.19 p.m.): Two months after the Budget was brought down, the strategy of that Budget, if one can call it a strategy, is in tatters. The Premier has been rebuffed on a number of major components of that Budget, and his Ministers, even now, are doing their best to overturn and abandon major Budget initiatives as quickly as possible.

Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen: That is not true.

Mr WARBURTON: I will tell the Premier what they are in a moment.

I said in my Budget response, "How much longer is this great State to be left to the economic mercy of a person who should have retired years ago with his delusions and discriminations?" The Premier's Ministers obviously agree with my analysis, judging by their eagerness to abandon the major Budget initiatives of the Premier. Let me advise the Premier, if he is interested enough to listen.

The Employment and Industrial Affairs Minister, Vince Lester, was the first one overboard when he moved to abandon plans to abolish the 17.5 per cent holiday-leave loading. In a major back-down, he transferred this question to the Industrial Commission for a decision. To my mind, there is no doubt that the commission will leave the leave loading in place; but the Government's position is one of total confusion on this matter. Mr Lester was also quick to appear to be more conciliatory to unions in suggesting that there was now no need for hard-line anti-union legislation as was planned. Even the Minister for Mines and Energy, Mr Austin, one of the hard-liners in Cabinet, appeared to be blessed with a new mood of conciliation when he suggested that there was now no further need for the draconian Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act.

Within two short months, the Premier's Ministers were abandoning him, with the coup de grace being delivered by the National Party's Townsville conference, which rebuffed the Premier on almost every issue. The conference supported foreign land ownership legislation. It supported condom vending machines, AIDS education in schools and sex education, while his old mate, Deputy Premier Bill Gunn, suggested he was out of touch with the party and that he should take a long holiday—even that he should go fishing on Fraser Island—while that loyal Victorian import, Senator John Stone, suggested

that the delusions of an old man should not be allowed to be imposed on the National Party. I think it was disgraceful of him to treat the Premier in that way.

Further evidence of the Budget strategy falling apart is in today's newspaper, in which it is reported that the Public Service Board will have to be reintroduced. No mention was made by the Premier of that proposal during his speech. One has to ask, if that report is correct, whether this is another example of the Premier's not knowing or not understanding what is happening in his own jurisdiction. One wonders what is happening to Government administration in this State. I think Sir Ernest Savage summed it up best when, in a recent speech to the Royal Australian Institute of Public Administration, he suggested that Queenslanders would have to wait for the Premier's retirement on 8-8-88—and this was what Sir Ernest said—before Queenslanders could look forward to any effective reform of the Queensland public sector. He made that clear, and he said that the cronyism, which was apparent in Government administration in this State, could not be properly tackled until the Premier had departed the scene. That is a "commendation", if ever there was one.

Sir Ernest Savage was obviously disappointed because the four major recommendations of his Public Sector Review Committee were rejected without any consultation whatsoever with the committee. Sir Ernest regarded these four recommendations as central to public sector reform and the development of an economic strategy designed to get Queensland's economy back on the road to growth and prosperity. The four most important recommendations were: firstly, the establishment of a cabinet economic committee to oversee Government economic policy; secondly, the separation of the departments of Premier's and Co-ordinator-General; thirdly, the establishment of an economic strategy unit outside Treasury; and fourthly, and most importantly, a complete review of the State Government's superannuation schemes.

Sir Ernest, in his usual fashion, was diplomatic, but he left no doubt in the minds of his audience that he was astonished that the State Government could set up such an important committee, such as the one that he was involved in and allow that committee's most important recommendations to be scuttled by senior public servants and, in particular, by persons connected with Treasury, without their first having obtained the views of the committee which presented the report. The Government's rejection of the committee's very sound proposals confirms once again that the Cabinet in this State is incapable of providing any form of economic leadership and constructive decision-making whatsoever.

Mr Borbidge: You have to be joking.

Mr WARBURTON: I am simply mouthing the words of Sir Ernest Savage. He is the person whom this Government put there to do a job. When he finished that job, the Government took no notice of him. That is the position to which I refer.

Mr Borbidge: Did he tell you this?

Mr WARBURTON: No. It is in his report. He said those words when he addressed a gathering very, very recently. It is there for the honourable member to see.

Mr Borbidge: Were you there?

Mr WARBURTON: I was not there, but one of my close acquaintances was. I assure the honourable member that he can believe me when I say that that was said.

Mr Casey: It took them three years to accept his brother's recommendations in relation to the sugar industry.

Mr WARBURTON: Absolutely. Shortly, I will have something to say about the sugar industry because it is very, very important to see how this Government responded to the problems within that great industry.

What this State needs is a new sense of economic direction. The Government must, as a matter of urgency, introduce a new sense of economic purpose; a new sense of

economic co-ordination and a new sense of economic planning. We in the Labor Party reject completely that misguided theory that for some reason no-one has ever properly explained how Queenslanders should, month after month, year after year, tolerate unemployment levels that are well above the national average. We on this side of the House reject completely the equally misguided theory that, again for reasons that are never properly explained, Queenslanders should accept declining income values and inferior work conditions as the normal price to pay for simply holding down a job. We reject completely that other misguided theory of the National Party that the only way to cut spending in Government is to reduce the standards of the essential services that it is elected to provide to the people that we, as members of Parliament, all represent.

As a matter of urgency, there has to be a return to our community of the entitlements that it should expect—that it should demand—in job security and job growth. Queenslanders must get value for money in their essential services and make the Government effectively answerable, through a parliamentary public accounts committee, for its spending. It is an absolute scandal that that type of committee exists as a watchdog on Government expenditure federally and in every State of Australia except Queensland. In other words, the Premier is correct; he is the only one in step. He is the only Australian in step in this great country of ours.

Almost five years ago the first Hawke Government was elected on a policy of consensus and of bringing Australia together. The same policy of co-operation is needed in our State in which, for far too long, confrontation and discrimination have been the trade marks of economic management and economic decision-making. It is, I contend, political lunacy to shut out altogether, as the National Party has done in this State, the trade union movement from the system of economic planning. It is political lunacy—sheer political stupidity—to incite a collision with Canberra on almost every issue in which co-operation would obviously be far more desirable and far more productive and in the interests of Queenslanders.

The Bjelke-Petersen Government—and that includes the Aherns, the Hinzes and the Gunns—makes collective decisions. I know that the Premier does not act unilaterally, because not long ago in this Chamber, in answer to a question, he told me that collective decisions are made. All of those people in the Cabinet have encouraged quite maliciously a belief that it is almost fashionable to engage in trade union bashing; that it is almost fashionable to engage in the victimisation of the Government's own work-force.

I wish to remind members of the Government of what they have done. At the moment there is the mess surrounding the Government's assault on the 17.5 per cent holiday-leave loading, yet the National Party still refuses to concede publicly that it is in error. Instead of admitting that it has been wrong and dropping completely this unwarranted and, I believe, unnecessary measure, the National Party continues to pursue the matter discriminately—and, I would say, poisonously—against its own day-shift public service. The Minister for Employment, Mr Lester, described them as the Government's own 9-to-5 workers.

I know that nobody would disagree that this State is a wonderful one with tremendous natural advantages in primary production, mineral wealth and tourism assets. However, this State can never reach its true heights or its true potential while the Government of the day, for the shallowest possible reasons, is hell-bent on a course of industrial provocation and industrial discontent. That just does not work.

What has to be faced is the inescapable truth that employers in the field of high job creation, that is, in secondary industry, will not risk investments involving millions of dollars when they believe that their operations risk disruption through industrial problems that are, in fact, Government initiated. The Government's disgracefully bad industrial relations in Queensland are, in practice, a serious job deterrent. They are a serious handicap—indeed, they are a crippling handicap—to the type of planned job creation that employment statistics show that Queensland so desperately needs.

Contrary to the claims of the Premier, since 1981-82 Queensland has had the worst-performing economy of any State. That five years of constant decline has seen Queensland

record, on average, the highest unemployment in the nation. I will prove the point by saying that last month the Australian Chamber of Manufactures—I put to the Premier that that is not a body known to be aligned with the Australian Labor Party—released a study of comparative State economic performances for the four years to 1986. As usual, this great State of ours recorded the highest increase in unemployment and the worst performance in the financial sector, in industrial disputes, in household income, in household savings, in building approvals, in new motor vehicle registrations and, most importantly, in average weekly earnings and lower wages. I do not know whether what I am about to say gives credit to the Premier or not, but the State did come top in one area—that is, in State Government revenue. The Government was good at that. This so-called low-tax Government had the highest increase in taxes and charges of any of the States.

Thirty years of conservative National/Liberal Government in Queensland has given the State an economy that is on its knees. It is an economy in which 9.9 per cent of the work-force is unemployed and in which almost one in four young people cannot find a job. Yet we hear the Premier bragging about the economic performance of his Government. Employment growth, which is currently improving at less than half the national average, is occurring largely in part-time jobs for females. I am quoting ABS figures; I am not just pulling these figures out of the hat. Of course, youth unemployment remains as a top priority, but the fact that the structure of unemployment is changing must not be forgotten. Today, those who are the long-term unemployed increasingly are middle-aged family men—the bread-winners who, having been retrenched, are faced with very few options for re-employment. That is a major problem. That is how life is changing in this State. Youth unemployment is very high, but I am concerned—and the Premier should be concerned—about those bread-winners. The largest number of long-term unemployed—that is, those unemployed for nine months or more—are in the 25-to-44-year age group.

If we look at where the job losses have occurred, we see that last year agricultural, mining, manufacturing, electricity, gas and water, construction, the wholesale and retail sales industry and the commercial sector all lost employment. So it is not confined to just one area in Queensland, it is right across the board. The cost of this unemployment is phenomenal in terms of the toll it takes on both families and the community as a whole.

It is interesting to note that last financial year \$686m was paid out in unemployment benefits to Queenslanders. For comparative purposes, if Queensland had the same unemployment level as Victoria, it would have 50 000 fewer unemployed—that is, 70 000 instead of the current 122 000—and \$288m—a massive \$288m—in unemployment benefits would have been saved. These figures only go part of the way towards illustrating the huge cost of unemployment to the economy. One can only guess at the overall cost in terms of lost production, exports and income flows to regions and towns, and the economic costs of family disruption.

The negative, destructive and confrontationist policies of the present National Party Government have created a climate in which businesses are refusing to invest. Only the get-rich-quick merchants—the white-shoe brigade, as they have been called——

Mr Cooper: Like Alan Bond and Packer.

Mr FitzGerald: And Abeles.

Mr WARBURTON: I always note with some degree of hilarity that, when the white-shoe brigade is mentioned, it is the honourable gentlemen on the National Party's benches who always scream the loudest. Perhaps that is an admission of their clear identification with that very esteemed group of people.

Government members interjected.

Mr WARBURTON: It again amazes me that the same gentlemen who are bellowing now are the ones who will get ample opportunity to speak in this House, but I doubt that any of them will take the opportunity to do so in this very important debate.

I will repeat what I was saying so that the message gets across. Only the get-rich-quick merchants—the white-shoe brigade—and the tourist property promoters sing the Premier's praises, because they know that with a little flattery special deals are possible, fast-track legislation is approved and even national park land is not out of the question. That is the history.

The legacy of the Premier's years is now being exposed as a legacy of failure. The Premier will go down in history as the phantom-project Premier. That is unfortunate but it is true. The Premier has made more projects disappear than Mandrake the Magician ever thought possible.

I have done a count. At the last count, \$36 billion worth of projects promised by the Premier—again, the same old story of thousands of jobs—involving 140 000 jobs have been announced by the Premier but have failed to materialise. 140 000 jobs and \$36 billion worth of projects were announced—the Premier has not just talked about them; he has announced them—but have never materialised.

The Premier and his National Party will go down in history as a Government that has opposed every national wage increase since 1977 but has the gall to say that it is concerned about family living standards. They are the political team that has presided over the further destruction of Queensland's already inadequate manufacturing base; they are the political team that has left Queensland with the highest unemployment—the worst prolonged unemployment in the nation; they are the political team that has failed to diversify the Queensland economy away from an overreliance on the rural, mining and tourism sectors; and they are the political team that still refuses to have a foreign land register for fear that it would frighten the Japanese away from their stampede to buy up Queensland.

The National Party conference said that it wants a register but the Premier has indicated clearly that it is not on. The Premier will be remembered—and I know that he will not change his ways—as the man who backed such famous projects as Milan Brych's cancer cures, Oskar's oil-seed plants and Horvath's hydrogen car—the car that ran on water—and that will stay with him.

Successful development and job creation depends upon the implementation of appropriate economic strategies; not the fanciful promotion of way-out and one-off gimmicks. Numerous reports have slammed the failure of the Queensland Government to develop and implement policies for economic growth and decentralisation. It was only four years ago—which is not a long time in politics and it was when Mr Ahern was the Minister for Industry and was part of the arrangement to get Professor Harris from the James Cook University to do this work—that Professor Harris scathingly commented on the failure of the State Government to implement coherent development initiatives. In commenting on State Government initiatives—or the lack of them—he said that no economic strategy exists, or has existed in the past except on a limited, fragmented, ill-directed and ad hoc basis.

Sir Ernest Savage, a National Party trustee and Chairman of the Public Sector Review Committee, found that Queensland was the red-tape State of Australia. As Professor Harris had done before him, Sir Ernest also concluded that development was being strangled in Queensland because the State Government had failed to provide leadership and had failed to produce an economic strategy for Queensland. As I said before, the general recommendations of the Savage report—the establishment of an economic policy unit and the drawing up of an economic strategy for Queensland supervised by a Cabinet economic subcommittee—were rejected by this Government out of hand. If Sir Ernest Savage truly thinks that there might possibly be an improvement in economic performance after the Premier goes—if he goes—he is more optimistic than I am. When the Premier goes—and I hope that all honourable members understand that there is no certainty that he will go in nine months' time—the people left behind

in control of the National Party will be those who are there already as partners with him in his worst excesses and worst economic judgments. The Aherns, the Gunns and the Hinzes, who have been chasing the Premier for a while, are not suddenly the born-again moderates as they would have us believe; they are the same tired reactionaries who have been there with the Premier through the most atrocious inequalities and extremes seen in Australia for as long as anyone here can remember.

The National Party Government's contempt and disregard of the problems of the unemployed and the low priority it gives to issues such as industrial relations, occupational health and safety, and trade-training can be measured by taking a glance at the budget of the Department of Employment and Industrial Affairs. That department is almost non-existent.

Staffing levels have stagnated for the past decade and this year a miserly \$1.75m is allocated for its so-called employment initiative schemes. These schemes cover everything from self-employment ventures and grants to community and business groups, to traineeships and the purchase of a mobile display van. I cannot wait to see that van. It is a policy of peanuts for the poor. The message from this Government is, "If you can't find work for yourself, don't expect any assistance from the Queensland Government." By comparison, this year New South Wales has allocated \$55m of State funds for employment training and apprenticeship schemes. How does that compare with Queensland's lousy \$1.75m? Queensland's 18 Cabinet Ministers spend almost that amount on travel, refreshments and entertainment.

The range of employment schemes in New South Wales is also impressive. I bring forward these matters so that the Government will examine them and, hopefully, embrace them. In addition to the CEP program, New South Wales has a youth employment scheme, a technical jobs for women program, a community management skills program, regional and local employment initiatives, workers' co-operatives, migrants employment programs, as well as a range of apprenticeship schemes. If Queensland made the same effort as New South Wales, \$27m would need to be allocated to employment schemes, not the lousy \$1.75m that has been allocated.

Manpower-planning is one area in which Governments can play a positive role. It always amazes me that there is a shortage of skilled workers when we have such high unemployment levels. The latest newsletter from the Federal Department of Employment, Education and Training lists shortages in Queensland for accountants and auditors, nurses, mechanics, panel-beaters and spray painters, boiler-makers, sheet metal workers and machinists, cabinet-makers, wood-machinists, chefs and cooks.

Vacancies for Jobstart eligible 15 to 17-year-olds and for highly skilled clerical staff are also difficult to fill. That is hard to comprehend. Obviously something is seriously wrong when that happens.

Despite the fact that Queensland is the most decentralised State in Australia, the Bjelke-Petersen National Party Government has been the ultimate centraliser. This National Party Government has taken all the economic decision-making away from the regions and transferred it to Brisbane. Queensland has no department of decentralisation or regional development, and that phantom Department of Northern Development located in Townsville has no budget. Would honourable members believe that? It is a department that has no Budget. It is merely a propaganda office for the National Party.

Mr Newton: Canberra does the same thing.

Mr WARBURTON: The honourable member should listen to what I have to say because it relates to his Government.

The only new idea the National Party Government has come up with to promote regional development is a proposal to give \$2,000 to each local authority in this State so that it can produce a video cassette on the attractions of its area. It is no wonder that two-thirds of Queensland's local authorities lost population over the past decade because of declining job opportunities.

Queensland urgently needs a strategy for economic growth which aims to maximise the rate of growth of income and employment in the State. To paraphrase the late John F. Kennedy, economic growth is the rising tide which lifts all boats. The public sector, which comprises about one-quarter of Queensland's gross State product, has an enormous role to play in determining the rate of economic growth.

In an economy such as the Queensland economy, a substantial proportion of economic inputs and most of the economic infrastructure are provided by the public sector, while the Government also determines the regulatory framework in which economic activity takes place. Accordingly, provision of efficient and effective economic services by the public sector is essential if Queensland is to have competitive growth. Queensland's high electricity charges, for instance, have driven too many industries south of the border.

Government also has to ensure that educational and training needs are being met and are appropriate to the needs of a growing economy. Transport and infrastructure have to be efficient and up to scratch. Regulations have to be appropriate for the task. A basic feature of this strategic approach to economic development is the need to improve the competitiveness of Queensland's trade-exposed sectors. Competitiveness involves factors such as technology, design, marketing and quality-control as well as the usual factors of cost and price. Any strategy will need also to identify those areas of Queensland that have competitive strengths. As a result, those competitive strengths will need to be enhanced and economic activity will need to be developed on the basis of them.

It is not difficult to identify many of our State's competitive strengths, and it is also not difficult to realise that much more can be done—and has to be done—to capitalise on the potential for further development that so clearly exists in Queensland—whether it be in the ship-building industry; the foundry industry; the agricultural machinery and equipment industry; the mining machinery and equipment industry; the electronics industry—naturally; the defence industry—and thereby hangs a tale; the building products industry; the food process industry; and of course, one of our major industries, namely, the tourism industry. Those are all areas of opportunity for our State. No doubt there are many others that I have not mentioned. All of them would provide very exciting opportunities for expansion if just a little sensible Government assistance was forthcoming. Opportunities rarely happen by themselves; they are made to happen. This cargo-cult mentality, which has been fostered by this Government, quite frankly needs to be thrown completely out the window.

Let me cite a recent example of a lost opportunity for our State, namely, the absolute failure of the Queensland Government to mount a credible campaign to obtain a slice of that submarine project.

Mr McPhie: Come on!

Mr Borbidge: It was pretty obvious from day one who was getting it.

Mr WARBURTON: If Government members choose to believe their Ministers, they may do so. However, I wish to point out some facts.

Irrespective of who won the contract for that submarine project, I intend to inform this House about the lead-up to it. That project was the biggest construction project in our nation's history. This Government behaved as if that project did not exist. Virtually no effort—that means little effort—was put into presenting our State's case. No effort was made to ensure that Queensland firms met quality-control standards, and no support was given to NQEA in its efforts to obtain contracts. As a result, Queensland has lost thousands of potential jobs. Of course, that project could have been a reality in some form, as opposed to the phantom projects with which the Premier of this State will be cradled for as long as he lives and probably thereafter.

Governments can assist with technology support and establishment assistance, financial trade support and specific regional initiatives that target particular areas. The

ALP has been considering that position for quite some time. My party's plans for decentralisation and regional and employment growth are designed for all Queenslanders, not just those privileged few who have been allowed by the Bjelke-Petersen Government to accumulate easy money at the expense of the ordinary working men and women of this State of ours.

It is absolutely impossible for any Government to plan a long-term economic strategy in isolation from the income values and job conditions of this or any other State's work-force. It is impossible for any Government to plan a development policy beyond tomorrow on gimmicks such as that tallest building in the world and the phantom projects that never really eventuate. It is even more impossible to plan any kind of economic stability on policies that demand confrontation with the Federal Government—whatever it might be—and interference in the elected responsibilities of local authorities. It is of paramount importance that trade unions, employer organisations and local government bodies be brought into the economic discussions of this State.

The National Party does not particularly like those groups of people—or one particular group. However, honourable members must understand that, in the interests of economic recovery, they must be brought into discussions. There must be an end to the hopeless situation in which cronyism seems to play a greater role than logic in where and how public funds are expended. There has to be an end to that hopeless inconsistency that the recipe for development is the unregulated approval of supermarkets to swallow up existing small businesses and jobs and the unregulated construction of office space when the amount already available is in excess of existing needs. There has to be an end to the unregulated recognition of opportunity ahead of achievement.

As I said, Queenslanders are crying out for a new economic direction. They are crying out for a Government that will give them value for money in the provision of their essential services. They are crying out for a Government that cares, and shows that it cares.

Previously, in response to an interjection from the member for Mackay, Mr Casey, I mentioned the sugar industry. When the great sugar industry was on its knees economically, it was the Hawke Federal Government, which Government members criticised, that guaranteed that price support.

Mr Austin: How much money have they put in?

Mr WARBURTON: It was the Queensland Nationals who frustrated that agreement month after month.

Mr Austin: It's all Hawke-talk.

Mr WARBURTON: Again, Mr Deputy Speaker, earlier this year when the beef industry—an industry that you understand something about—faced the loss of its exports to the United States and Japan in the pesticide scare, it was the Federal Government that came to the rescue. Government members must admit that they did not come to the rescue.

Government members interjected.

Mr WARBURTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I think that there has to be some fairness in the discussion.

Time and time again, when the economics of our primary industries are threatened—and have been threatened—it has been the Federal Government, so constantly under attack——

Government members interjected.

Mr WARBURTON: There they go again. Co-operation between this National Party Government and any Federal Government, irrespective of its political colour, is absolutely impossible. I think that the people of Queensland are finally but surely coming to

understand that. The interjections by Government members typify their attitude towards the Federal Government. It would not matter whether it was the Sinclair Government, the Peacock Government or the Howard Government, Government members would be here belting it and failing in their responsibilities to Queensland to co-operate on important matters such as primary industries.

As I said, time and time again when the economics of our primary industries have been threatened, it was the Federal Government, so constantly under attack from the Queensland Nationals, that went in to bat where it counted, particularly in respect of our overseas trading rights and arrangements. It is the same sick story in almost every corner of Federal/State relationships. The people of Queensland need a Government that will, as I have said, take a commonsense approach to relations with Federal Governments, whatever political colour they might be. The Government must stop endeavouring to turn every issue involving Federal assistance into a party-political war, as it does. It is very consistent at that. It must co-operate in a sensible and adult manner that will always be in the State's best interests.

In conclusion, I want to say that the Queensland National Party Government cannot change its stripes simply by changing its Premier. As a Government, it must accept the joint responsibility for the deficiencies, inaccuracies and discriminations that are already exposed.

The Opposition, as I have said, endorses Supply, but in doing so it condemns the Government for the thoroughly incompetent way in which it has left Queensland without any kind of budgetary guidance for the remainder of this financial year and, no doubt, well after that.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise) (2.30 p.m.): Earlier in this debate, the Leader of the Opposition challenged Government members to respond to some of the comments he made during the course of his address. This afternoon, Government members will be pleased to do so. It was very interesting indeed to hear the politically impaled Leader of the Opposition mention all sorts of matters associated with the National Party conference. Government members are waiting to see in which year the Labor Party may eventually decide to have a conference, and to see what sort of decisions will emanate from that particular gathering.

I can assure the House that the National Party Government is performing well. In recent weeks several independent reports have confirmed the impressive economic management of the Queensland Government. The Queensland economy is expected to continue to perform strongly, with buoyant domestic demand and strong export performance, particularly in relation to black coal, according to a study undertaken by the Australian Chamber of Manufactures. The same study was referred to very selectively by the Leader of the Opposition during the course of his speech. I refer to a comparative study on State economic performance for the period 1981-82 to 1985-86 which was carried out by ACM senior research economist, Steven Shepherd. That study followed an earlier assessment of State Budgets by the Institute of Public Affairs in which Mr Les McCarry, a former Western Australian Treasury chief, praised the recent Queensland Budget as the most economically responsible, whereas New South Wales came up with the lemon-of-the-year award.

The report of the IPA indicates that out of the increased taxation take per capita by Governments in Australia this year as a result of their Budgets, the Commonwealth Government will be taking \$340 per capita more and that the share of the States will also be increased as follows: New South Wales, \$71 per capita; Victoria, \$69; Western Australia, \$61; South Australia, \$75; Tasmania, \$71; Northern Territory, \$89; and Queensland, \$26. The IPA described the New South Wales Budget as an old-fashioned pork-barrel approach, aimed at buying votes for the forthcoming State election. The IPA

had no hesitation whatsoever in commending Queensland for the lead that this Government has given other Governments in Australia in what are proving to be very difficult economic times.

It is also interesting to note that the regular survey of advertised job vacancies conducted by the ANZ Bank has recorded strong increases in employment opportunities in Queensland. This report was released on 8 November and confirms a sound, upward trend in job vacancies in Queensland.

The October *Labor-Force Information*, released on 12 November, also showed a decrease of 5 000 in the number of persons unemployed in Queensland. The ANZ report shows that Queensland recorded the greatest percentage increase in employment advertisements of any State during October—an increase of 8.8 per cent or double the national increase. That increase was the sixth consecutive monthly increase in vacancies recorded in Queensland.

Figures also confirm that there had been a dramatic decrease in the number of people in Queensland who received unemployment benefits in the last six months. This coincides with action taken by the Department of Social Security to reduce the high incidence of dole fraud. The number of persons who receive unemployment benefits in Queensland decreased by a massive 18.7 per cent between March and October. In the 12-month period ending in October, the number of people receiving unemployment benefits fell by 10.2 per cent.

It is relevant to note that in that 12-month period, coastal resort areas, such as Cairns, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast, witnessed a substantially greater decline in the number of unemployment benefits recipients than was the case for the State as a whole, which confirms the long-held view of this Government that massive social security fraud has been taking place in regard to unemployment benefits. For example, Cairns recorded a decrease of 22.1 per cent; Burleigh Heads, 20.1 per cent; Southport, 30.6 per cent; Maroochydore, 15.1 per cent; and Townsville, 14.8 per cent compared to the total decrease in Queensland over that period of 10.2 per cent.

I suggest that those figures indicate very strongly why over a period this State has been recording what would appear to be unusually high unemployment statistics when it is known very well that many businesses in this State have been looking for competent and capable staff. It is also of note that on a comparison of State Budget papers Queensland continues to consolidate its position as Australia's low-tax State. For the tax year 1986-87, Queenslanders paid \$519.07 tax per head of population compared with \$869.70 in Victoria, \$871.23 in New South Wales, \$740.39 in South Australia and \$628.99 in Western Australia. It is also of note that there are some indications from the people who made such analyses that the Western Australian figure may be artificially low and that for various reasons certain matters that should have been incorporated in that particular figure have not been.

This House needs to remember that this significant achievement for the Queensland Government has come about despite the pickpockets of the Commonwealth Government—the pickpockets of the Labor Party—depriving the people of Queensland of some \$411m this financial year. It is all very well honourable members opposite and critics outside this place saying that the Government should provide more police and more teachers and that the same number of teacher aide hours should be maintained. I do not remember those people criticising the Federal Government when it took \$411m off the State of Queensland. At that time those political critics were amazingly silent, just as they are amazingly silent now in reminding the community of the treatment that has been meted out to the people of this State by the Labor Party and its colleagues and cronies in other places.

The subject of pay-roll tax is also worthy of comment, as our political opponents from both the Labor Party and the Liberal Party have suggested that in the present financial circumstances the State Government should be in a position to largely reform and even abolish that tax. On a per capita basis this financial year, Queensland will pay \$205.86 in pay-roll tax compared to \$317.94 in Victoria, \$324.81 in New South Wales,

\$213.58 in South Australia and \$250.23 in Western Australia. Indeed, calls from the Liberal Party to abolish pay-roll tax can best be replied to by indicating to the House the double standards it employed in Government compared to its being on the opposition benches.

The record shows that, when the present Leader of the Liberal Party, Sir William Knox, was State Treasurer in the coalition Government, he was a stout defender of pay-roll tax and its necessity for a balanced Budget and responsible economic management. In fact, when speaking to the State Budget on 30 September 1976, Sir William said—

“Pay-roll tax is one of the few major revenue producing forms of taxation open to the States, and must therefore be retained.”

In recent weeks honourable members on this side of the House have heard honourable members opposite—in particular, the member for Murrumbidgee—claim in this House to be champions at accountability. I think, therefore, that it is relevant to bring to the attention of the House some classic examples of Labor Party waste and indulgence.

It appears that the Labor Party has one rule for itself in Opposition and another rule for itself in Government. All the public accounts committees in the world have not been able to prevent considerable waste of tax-payers' funds by Labor in Government. In one instance, it has been revealed that the Federal Government has paid out \$4m for rent for office space that it cannot even use. The rent for 10 floors of prime office space in Sydney's William Street was paid on behalf of the Federal Arbitration Commission. Because of delays in construction, the commission had been unable to move into the new premises for 18 months, even though the Government had to come up with the rent money. A senior Government official has told a Senate Estimates committee meeting that the Government did not know—I emphasise “did not know”—when the commission would move into its William Street premises.

Then there are the indulgences of the Prime Minister and his Cabinet. This year the Federal Government will spend more than \$300,000 on improvements and renovations to the Prime Minister's official residences in Canberra and Sydney, despite spending more than \$600,000 on them last year.

Mr Vaughan: How much are the improvements to the Executive Building going to cost?

Mr BORBIDGE: I will come to that.

Most of the money will be spent on the Prime Minister's occasional Sydney residence, Kirribilli House. Prime Ministerial and Cabinet departmental officers have admitted that \$250,000 has been allocated for wall-papering, painting, polishing, light fittings and carpets, and have claimed that the work was necessary after massive renovations to the building last year.

Mr Davis: Have you ever been there?

Mr BORBIDGE: I will accept the interjection from the Opposition Whip. The point that I am making is that these people opposite have one rule for themselves and one rule for the National Party in Government in Queensland. For Heaven's sake, be consistent! When members of the Labor Party are in Government, when it comes to looking after their own facilities and their own comforts, they cannot keep their fingers out of the till.

It may well be that that expenditure is justified but, for Heaven's sake, members of the Opposition should not be hypocritical, as they consistently are whenever this Government decides to allocate money for such works as doing up one floor of the Executive Building, which overlooks the Expo site and which no doubt will be used to host visiting dignitaries and other people who may ultimately invest many millions of dollars in this State.

I will return to expenditure on Kirribilli House. Prime Minister Hawke will reside at a Sydney hotel until the renovations are completed, but the hotel bill will be met by

the Department of Administrative Services. The cost of running Kirribilli House and the Prime Minister's Canberra residence, the Lodge, will total \$1,991,000 this financial year.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: For the benefit of the honourable member opposite who is getting so excited, I will repeat some comments from a person whom he would consider to be impartial in this matter. I will tell him what a former Minister in the Whitlam Government had to say about the current Prime Minister's excesses when travelling abroad. I will refer to comments made by Mr Fred Daly on ABC *Newsday* on 16 October 1987. Mr Henshaw raised the cost of overseas delegations such as the Australian presence at CHOGM. Henshaw said, "That's changed dramatically since the days when John Gray Gorton, for instance, went abroad." Daly replied, "Well, that's right. It's changed since Chifley and Menzies went abroad and they took two or three people with them—secretaries or advisers. Bob Hawke on this occasion has a staff of 19 and it shows that the quantity of the staff, no matter what the quality might be, doesn't stop you from missing out occasionally. And on this particular trip I think there are 45 people involved on the plane and all in all there's over 60 involved in the whole trip at a cost of about \$600,000." Those are the words of Fred Daly, one of the former Ministers in the Whitlam Government.

I will deal with overseas travel, seeing the honourable member who has interjected has raised it. In Labor's first 21 months of office, 27 Ministers made 91 trips overseas at a cost of \$4.52m.

Mr Vaughan: Unlike State Governments.

Mr BORBIDGE: The honourable member should be patient. I have not started yet.

By the end of 1985, when the release of the detailed break-down was complete, the total sum expended on foreign travel exceeded \$7.7m. It keeps going up. It reached \$12.4m by the end of last June. Another \$3.2m allocated in the current Budget means that some \$15.6m will have been consumed by the Hawke Ministry travelling abroad in little more than five years. In addition, these costs are disguised and include only the actual expenses incurred by Ministers and personal staff. Departmental advisers accompanying the Ministers have their expenses met from their respective departmental budgets.

These simple facts of life serve to highlight the blatant political hypocrisy of our opponents. It is all very well for the tax-payers of this nation to pick up a bill of some \$15m for Federal Labor Ministers travelling abroad, but when the Premier of Queensland travels overseas to finalise a coal deal that may result directly in hundreds of jobs for Queenslanders, he is subject to blatant vilification. That is the point that I am attempting to make——

Mr Vaughan: He hasn't finalised a coal deal in his life.

Mr BORBIDGE: I can well understand the sensitivity of honourable members opposite, but they are the ones who carry on about public accountability. I will tell them a little bit more about the performance of their colleagues in Government.

I will examine the performance of the Labor Government in Victoria. The *Australian Financial Review* of 11 November states that, according to the Auditor-General in that State, the Victorian Government faces unrealised losses of more than \$500m following failed foreign exchange dealings. The report is highly critical of foreign exchange dealings carried out in recent years by Government departments and some of Victoria's largest authorities, and calls risk management inadequate and unsatisfactory.

Mr Vaughan: What's Queensland's total to date?

Mr BORBIDGE: For the benefit of honourable members opposite, I point out that the Queensland Government's performance in that regard is unmatched by any Government in Australia. The Queensland Auditor-General has not tabled a report in this State saying that the Queensland Government's risk management has been inadequate and unsatisfactory. That is what is happening and has happened in Victoria.

The article goes on to say that the report is unwelcome news to a State Government that is already facing an estimated \$80m in losses by the Accident Compensation Commission, which had invested—wait for this—51 per cent of its total assets in the share-market.

Mr Menzel: What!

Mr BORBIDGE: As my friend the member for Mulgrave acknowledges, that is great management!

On 11 November the *Australian* indicated that the losses may be higher. It stated—

“Four Victorian Government authorities have lost about \$713 million because of fluctuations in foreign exchange rates and inadequate risk policies, the Victorian Auditor-General has found.

In a critical study of foreign exchange transactions of the authorities the Auditor-General, Mr Richard Humphry found only limited evidence that the authorities took into account predicted”—

and I emphasise the word “predicted”—

“exchange rate movements before borrowing overseas.

The report does not even include losses the authorities are expected to have made since the end of last financial year and the upheaval in the world's financial markets.

Nor does it include a report on the overseas borrowings of the Government's central borrowing agency, VicFin, estimated at \$262 million last financial year and expected to be about \$250 million this financial year.

The Auditor-General says risk management strategies were developed only after borrowings were made and insufficient consideration had been given to insuring against a fall in the value of the Australian dollar.

Although the Auditor-General noted the Government was now dealing with many of the problems, he called on it to improve risk management strategy and control overseas borrowings.

The Opposition spokesman on Treasury matters, Mr Alan Stockdale, described the Treasurer, Mr Jolly, as a ‘mug punter’...

In recent weeks the Opposition, as part of an ongoing campaign to discredit and denigrate this Government, has been keen to assert that the crime rate in Queensland is out of control when compared with the rest of Australia.

Mr Davis: They have to hire their own police.

Mr BORBIDGE: I will lean towards someone who has more experience in this field than the gentleman opposite who is interjecting. I understand that he is in the wrong faction and that he is likely to lose his endorsement next year and will be out of a job. I have to say to him that he will be missed in this House.

Mr Menzel: His wife is very effective.

Mr BORBIDGE: The honourable member for Mulgrave says that the honourable member's wife is very effective.

Mr Davis: What about hiring police in Surfers Paradise?

Mr BORBIDGE: For the benefit of the honourable member who is interjecting, I point out that he is obviously unaware that additional police have been allocated to Surfers Paradise out of the resources of the budget of the Police Department. Four extra police have been provided for permanent beat patrol work in the central business district of Surfers Paradise. I ask the honourable member: how many extra police has he managed to secure to walk the beat anywhere in his electorate in the last two or three years? That would be a very telling admission of the standard of his representations on behalf of his constituents.

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. I find offensive the remark that I do not give representation to my constituents. In Surfers Paradise they have to have a rent-a-cop. They do not have it down in the Valley because——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr BORBIDGE: I can well understand the sensitivity of the honourable member opposite in the sunset of his political career.

The fact that crime is out of control in Queensland has recently been disputed by the Australian Institute of Criminology. In a report dated 9 July in the *Courier-Mail*, the institute's assistant director, Mr Paul Wilson, stated that there was no evidence that crime was out of control in Queensland. He went on to say—

“It is true that the rate of drug offences has increased substantially. It rose from 81 to 523 offences per 100 000 people between 1974 and 1984, but the point that is often neglected is that the Queensland Drug Squad strength rose significantly during that time as well, so that we would expect a very high rate of detected offences.

Other categories of crime generally in Queensland have not risen more than would be expected in Australia generally.

Statistics showed that in the first six months of 1986, arson in Queensland stood at 14.1 cases for every 100 000 people, while the National average was 21.29 per cent.

Figures for armed robbery were 10.5 cases per 100 000 people in Queensland, with the Australian average at 9.78 and the New South Wales average at 14.97.”

A great many Australians must have viewed with disbelief the Prime Minister telling the nation the other week that he had written to President Reagan offering advice on economic matters. On or about 11 November—at about the same time as the Prime Minister made those comments—Salomon Brothers, the prominent New York brokers, rated the Aussie Bond as the worst performing of any of the world's Government-backed investments. The return on Aussie Bonds in the month was far and away the worst with a return of minus 4 per cent in Australian dollar terms and minus 9.4 per cent in American dollars. Salomon Brothers noted that, with the exception of Australia, all other Government bond markets rallied as the stock-market slumped.

Mr Davis: You want to knock our currency.

Mr BORBIDGE: If the honourable member opposite does not think that this is important or relevant, I feel sorry for him. It easily explains why the Federal Government is in such a mess. While Aussie Bonds slumped, the return on British bonds was 11.7 per cent, and in Japan the return was more than 10 per cent.

It is also of major concern that sections of the Labor Party are continuing to peddle the option of a wealth tax. In Dublin last month, the Prime Minister promised to consider a wealth inquiry. Meanwhile, the ACTU secretary, Bill Kelty, reaffirmed the union movement's support for a wealth tax but stated that he was not enthusiastic about the growing call for a wealth inquiry. He said, “I would rather have the tax than an inquiry.”

Foreign Affairs Minister Hayden has also supported an inquiry into the distribution of Australian wealth.

Mr McElligott: What about a fuel tax?

Mr BORBIDGE: I will take the honourable member's interjection. I believe that there is an obligation on those who sit opposite, and who on a good day consider themselves to be the alternative Government of Queensland, to tell the people of this State where they stand in respect of a wealth tax. Opposition members are very good at telling us that they are quite happy to go along with a fringe benefits tax and that they are quite happy to go along with a capital gains tax. Presumably, unless we hear otherwise, we can expect that the alternative Government of Queensland is more than happy to go along with a wealth tax.

While honourable members opposite are interjecting, it is worthy to note the comments of the ALP State president, Mr McLean, in a submission to the Federal parliamentary standing committee on electoral matters. He said—

“The feeling that we can't win”—

that is Government—

“pervades the State. We don't get the quality of candidates we need.”

What an indictment of a political party—that the president of a political party would pass such a comment about candidates and presumably about members of Parliament representing that party in this House.

Mr Vaughan: What about you mob of blobs over there?

Mr BORBIDGE: I can well understand that the honourable member who interjects may agree with me. I understand that he is not one of the fondest admirers of Mr McLean or certain other people at this time. I have been waiting for the member for Port Curtis to interject, but he has been very well behaved today. I guess that I will have to save him up for another day.

I believe that the Queensland Government has clearly demonstrated to the people of Australia what State Governments should be doing in terms of responsible economic management. That fact has been acknowledged by those people in the community who are expert in such areas. The State Budget, which this legislation will largely activate, has been given recognition as the best such document handed down in any Parliament in Australia this year. It certainly gives me great pleasure to support the Appropriation Bill.

Mr GOSS (Logan) (2.58 p.m.): In the debate on the Appropriation Bill I wish to refer to certain aspects of the administration of the Justice Department, that department's Estimates not having been debated in the series of Estimates that have been debated. It is important that I raise the subject of the administration, or, more correctly, the maladministration of the art union industry. During tough economic times, more and more people rely on the goodwill and assistance of charities. More and more people in the community who are involved in sporting bodies have to rely upon those bodies raising their own funds to provide activities and facilities for the community. In tough economic times, people must rely less and less on the patronage of their supporters and donors and must also rely less and less on assistance from Governments. Therefore, it is very important that they have available to them the option of running an art union, which has proved to be a very important and successful part of fund-raising for many charities and sporting bodies.

However, because of maladministration by this Government, the situation facing some Queensland charities and sporting bodies is one of ruin or very poor returns from that very vital source of income. In effect, the gross negligence on the part of the Justice Minister and the Justice Department in supervising and regulating art unions is costing Queensland charities and sporting bodies hundreds of thousands of dollars every year. In the case of some charities, each of them is paying hundreds of thousands of dollars each financial year. That very same slipshod administration is allowing some very dubious companies and characters to exploit that situation and to make huge profits for

themselves. Those companies and individuals are, effectively, parasites. They attach themselves to the good name or the good cause of a charity or sporting association and they use that name or that cause for their own benefit in order to manage an art union, not for benefit of the charitable association or sporting association but for their own personal benefit. It is a disgrace that that situation is widely known within the art union industry. The Justice Department is aware of it, but it keeps its head steadfastly in the sand and refuses, for no obvious reason, to do anything about the situation.

The main culprits in that particular activity are Pam Olson and Peter O'Brien, who run a scam through a group of companies that includes Mailrite Pty Ltd, Comprite Pty Ltd and Art Union Constructions Pty Ltd. The Blue Ribbon Art Union is one of the worst examples of the great art union rip-off. As all honourable members would be aware from publicity earlier this year, Brothers Leagues Club in Brisbane was the prime victim of those particular unscrupulous individuals. A quick examination of any of the financial statements of that club and its art union readily shows a typical example of the problems that charities and sporting bodies are facing with some of those managing companies that are operating art unions.

In relation to the club's financial statement for the financial year ended 30 June 1985 for art unions Nos 31 to 39 inclusive—the chartered accountant who audited the club's books revealed in that statement a loss during that particular year of \$477,000. How many charities or sporting bodies can sustain a loss of almost half a million dollars per year and continue on a reasonable or viable basis? That statement reveals where most of the profit—the cream—is going, namely, to that group of companies and the individuals that I have named. For example, a management commission fee of \$50,000 is included in that statement. It is fair enough that those managing companies receive a commission. However, they also charged \$180,000 for management and computer services together with \$121,352 for their listing service. In addition, \$87,566 was charged for an inserting service. The computer operation known as Comprite provides lists of people's names, for which they charge. Another company, Mailrite, posts out literature, so an additional charge is levied for that. Because all of those activities are being managed, a management charge is included as well. On top of that, a charge of more than \$90,000 is included for interest.

In his report, the auditor points out an item that he refers to as an "extraordinary item". That involves a total of \$351,800, which he says includes management and computer service fees and management commission to be refunded by the art union manager. My information is that that \$350,000, which is supposed to be refunded by those managers, is nothing more or less than blatant overcharging. However, that money has not been refunded. The notes to the financial statements state—

"There is doubt as to whether the amount of \$351,800.00, being the balance owing by the art union manager on his current account is recoverable.

This amount is made up of management and computer service fees and management commission to be refunded by the art union manager."

I table that document.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr GOSS: I gather that pressure was put on the liquidator by the receiver to take some action. However, to date, according to the latest information available, those moneys have not been recovered. Leaving aside the money that has to be recovered, in that one financial year for that one body, Brothers Leagues Club, \$477,000 was charged by those managers. That is where the real cream is going and that is what has brought Brothers Leagues Club undone.

As I said, there is money owing which, I am informed, has not been paid. However, Brothers Leagues Club—the Blue Ribbon Art Union—is not the only charitable body or sporting association that is having its art union run by that particular group of people. They are ripping off other people. I am not going to name other art unions or bodies at this stage, because I do not want to embarrass them. However, unless the Justice

Minister and his department are prepared to get moving, I will have to name in this House other organisations and other instances of rip-offs by that organisation.

My information is that the Justice Department is well aware of this, and in the middle of this year was promising people in the industry that it would get Olson and O'Brien completely out of the industry. However, after some fairly tough talking, the Justice Department and the Minister have done nothing.

In June, the Minister put out a very attractive press statement, with his full-length profile down the side, in which he states—

“All other major art unions are functioning in accordance with the conditions laid down by my Department and are not experiencing any problems.”

Unfortunately, that statement by Mr Clauson on 29 June this year is simply untrue.

I have given the Minister five months to show that he is serious and genuine, but he has done nothing. He refers in his press release to adverse publicity about the Blue Ribbon Art Union appearing to have led many people to boycott art unions altogether and stated that that has affected ticket sales. The situation that he is allowing to continue is one in which the art union industry and the bodies that it benefits are sliding further and further down the path to financial ruin purely and simply because his department will not regulate that industry properly to make sure that the shonky operators are thrown out and that the art unions and the associated bodies become the true beneficiaries.

The Minister and his department are aware not only of those general activities but also of specific breaches of art union legislation. But what action has been taken? Those breaches include furnishing false returns on art unions that do not properly account for funds. Genuine people in the industry are disgusted at the activities of those managers and the failure of the Justice Department to move against them.

I do not make any adverse comment about people more recently involved, particularly this year, in relation to the Brothers Leagues Club art union. However, the people who were involved up till the beginning of this year certainly have much to answer for and have been allowed by the Government to go scot-free up to the present time. It seems as though the Justice Department does not want to rock the boat while it is taking hundreds of thousands of dollars in Government fees out of the art unions. As long as the Government gets its whack, it does not care about the charities or the sporting bodies that are suffering. The end result of that maladministration is that the charities receive nothing. In some cases, they receive five to 10 per cent of the net return; however, in the case of other art unions, they actually lose. It is a very technical area requiring much expertise in terms of managing the funds. What has happened, effectively, is that the bodies are dependent upon those operators in the hope that they will obtain something out of it. That is how the operators—the managers—are able to take advantage of them. The charities and sporting bodies are not in a position to argue. That is where the relevance and the role of the Government come in, because it needs to play a role in terms of serious regulation to protect the charities and the sporting bodies from those shonky operators.

As I said previously, there are many honest and efficient managers and art unions. At this stage I make it clear that I am referring only to one group of operators. Some of the genuine operators tell me that they have never seen a Justice Department official come to check the books or the operation in any way. All they do is turn up at the draw of the art union. As to what goes on leading up to that, there is no regulation, no administration and no supervision.

Informed sources also tell me that the activities of an associated Olson company called Art Union Constructions Pty Ltd alone warrants an inquiry. I understand that that particular company is engaged in serious examples of overcharging and kick-backs. Of course, it is a very neat arrangement, because if, on top of providing all the mailing, computer and inserting services that deliver the raffle tickets or the art union tickets to people, it can actually build the house that is the prize the subject of the art union and

overcharge for the prize, it can rip off the charity at both ends—both in relation to the prize and in relation to administering the art union itself.

While the Department of Justice leaves the managers alone, there will always be a loophole for shonky operators to come in and take advantage of that situation in the way that the Olsons and O'Briens have done, although honest operators will also be involved in art unions.

Another example of the way in which Olson rips off the charities is to pay excessive commissions to ensure market domination. By paying excessive commissions, she is able to ensure that sellers—particularly key sellers—sell a specific art union's tickets as opposed to the art union tickets of another charity.

The advantage is that maximum control of the list of names of people who buy art union tickets is retained by people such as the Olsons. They can then compile those lists by feeding the names into a computer. The list of names and computer facilities can be used to mail out further art union tickets to anybody who has ever bought a ticket. The overall advantage is that these people obtain very comprehensive lists of names and they send out raffle tickets or art union tickets to all of those people on the list.

That does not necessarily do the art union any good, purely and simply because many of the people on the list will not buy another art union ticket again. It is the case that many of those people on the list have actually changed their address and that the art union tickets are returned. In the case of all those people who do not buy an art union ticket again and in the case of all those people who change their address, and therefore never receive their tickets, do these companies, Comprite and Mailrite, cull from the list those names of people who are no longer effective buyers, but are "dead ones", as they are called? No, they do not. Their names and addresses are left in the computer list. The reason is that the charity or sporting association can be charged at a fixed rate per thousand names or per thousand mail-outs. It costs the charity money for absolutely no return. Despite the fact that many of those people on the list never buy tickets, the list works to the advantage of the managers because they can charge for a service which is absolutely useless and which they know is absolutely useless. The end result is that charities which are genuine operators are prejudiced because they do not pay the excessive commission and they do not get the sales that they would otherwise get.

The instances that I have mentioned are examples of a range of problems in the art union industry which require urgent attention. It is high time that the Minister for Justice got his department moving before any more money is lost by the associations involved. If the Minister does not act promptly, he will leave me no choice other than to outline further information that is in my possession. I have waited five months for evidence indicating that the Minister is genuine and serious, but I have not seen any. I have been forced to raise this matter during this debate—firstly because of the Minister's inaction and, secondly, because people in the industry who have tried to protest have received defamation writs from Pam Olson, who is very quick to issue defamation writs which have silenced and frightened many genuine people.

The Olsons, the O'Briens and their associated groups of companies are the ones who brought down Brothers Leagues Club. They are still in the market-place, ripping off other organisations. The Minister has a duty to charities and sporting associations and a general duty to the whole community to put these people out of business and to restore art unions to a healthy and viable position. Charitable and sporting associations play an important role in the community. All honourable members would be aware of the good work that these charities perform and that they need every cent they can get. These bodies certainly do not need a blind eye being turned by the Minister and his department when it comes to the shonky operators who are ripping them off.

Sporting bodies are a vital part of the way of life in this country and in this State. They, too, do not need the obstruction and the negligence of the Department of Justice, which operates to prevent them from raising the funds that they need for the provision

of facilities and entertainment for the community. More importantly, sporting organisations provide basic and healthy facilities for young people. They are being denied and restricted in their activities, purely and simply because shonky operators have an open go in this State and because the Department of Justice of this Government will not step in and regulate those operators in an efficient and responsible way.

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Condamine) (3.14 p.m.): In rising to speak in this debate, I make some comments in rebuttal of the comments made by both the previous speaker, the member for Logan, and also the Leader of the Opposition.

I listened with interest to the comments made by the previous speaker. I am very much aware of the role played by art unions in assisting sporting bodies and other charitable organisations, but I could not but think that the major responsibilities for these charities and organisations, in their decisions whether or not to use management firms or consultancy firms, rest with the directors and managers of the charities.

The honourable member for Logan mentioned in particular the Brothers Leagues Club. I suggest that surely the first responsibility rests with the people running the clubs. They have the option either to run those sorts of art unions themselves or to take in hired help. Obviously if hired help is brought in, it will charge pretty well. Those people have a habit, not only in art unions but also in any other sort of consultancy, of charging at a pretty expensive rate. Perhaps the honourable member was amiss when he made so much criticism of the Justice Department because, after all, personal freedom is involved. I am aware of many organisations in my own electorate that opt to run their own art unions, certainly not to the same extent and expanse as the one run by the Brothers Leagues Club. However, they have enough expertise in their own ranks to run their own art unions and to make sure that they get the top dollar for them.

I turn now to the address of the Leader of the Opposition. I was interested to note that he attacked the Premier for not making any mention whatsoever of the disbandment of the Public Service Board. Having just sat through the Premier's speech before that, I could not but remember that the Premier made specific note of what is happening to the Public Service Board. He said—

“... drafting of a Crown Management and Employment Bill to replace the Public Service Act is being completed which will place the onus clearly on departmental managers to ensure optimum performance.”

To me that indicates that the Leader of the Opposition, who obviously had a prepared brief, had not bothered to listen to what the Premier had to say and/or he does not have the ability to depart from that prepared brief. Quite clearly, the Premier did say what is being done with the Public Service Board.

The Leader of the Opposition also commented on the economic direction that is needed in Queensland. We would all agree whole-heartedly that the economic base of Queensland must be broadened. In fact, he seemed to overlook very easily some of the things that have been done. I can readily recall the very recent debate on the Tourism Estimates, in which it was pointed out quite clearly by various speakers, especially by the Minister, that the growth in tourism in this State has in fact introduced, at an alarming rate, a new perspective to the service industries. It was the biggest expansion of that industry anywhere in Australia.

I would also remind the Leader of the Opposition of the setting-up of the department of technology under the Honourable Mike Ahern, which was then carried on by the Honourable Peter McKechnie. That is the way to go in the future. Queensland does not have any chance whatsoever of competing on the old traditional manufacturing base. The way for the future is high technology and modern industry. The department of technology is aimed at promoting that.

The Government has an obligation also to do those things that it does well and to try to improve on them. I would remind the Leader of the Opposition of the growth in the beef industry, which has occurred because of its markets, and also of the growth in

the cotton industry, which is multiplying by a factor of two or three this year because proven markets are available.

On another slant—the Leader of the Opposition should be reminded of what the Government has done in relation to shopping hours. It has freed up what has been a very inflexible working place with inflexible working practices. By freeing up shopping hours, the Government has answered a call from the retailing sector of the State to give it a better chance to service the public and create a bigger turn-over.

The Leader of the Opposition would also overlook very conveniently the call by many of those people in Queensland who are tied up with export industries for a drop in tariffs from the Federal Government. In effect, tariffs are very much a burden on those people who sell on the world market. They place a real impost on the internal costs of those people. A drop in tariffs has been indicated, but if the process was accelerated, Australia would export much more and more wealth would be created within Australia. That wealth would then be shared throughout by the people of Queensland and Australia.

The Leader of the Opposition also said that, in restructuring Queensland, the Government needed to relate to the work-force. He alleged that this Government was completely ignoring the work-force. I would put it to him that that in fact is not the case. Research shows that the number of people in Queensland who are members of unions is diminishing. The work-force in Queensland has made a call to be freed from compulsory unionism and from all the restrictions that unionism has placed on them. In that regard, the voluntary employment agreements legislation was passed in this House recently. That legislation answers the call of those people who want to be free of the centralised domination by unions and to be able to deal directly with their employers in the work-force.

Mr Yewdale: You have got a tiger by the tail.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: The Government is answering the call of the work-force.

It is understandable that the ALP and the Trades and Labor Council, which is very closely affiliated with it, are making loud noises about this, but I do not think it is a noise that is really made for the good of Queensland and a restructuring of the workplace of Queensland, but more one of self-preservation and to try to get back the support that they had.

Mr Borbidge: All the growth economies of the Western World have voluntary employment contracts.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I am interested to hear the honourable member say that.

Recently I was reading a magazine on world economies that pointed out that one of the things holding back Australia's recovery is the inflexible nature of the country's work practices in its workplaces. The Queensland Government is turning that around, but the Leader of the Opposition has failed to recognise that. He also mentioned that there has been a destruction of employment within the rural sector of Queensland. That brought to mind immediately a comment made by the Chairman of the Isisford Shire, who said that in fact there was a very real danger that the entire town of Isisford would disappear. Isisford is a very small town. All those who work in it are employees of the Isisford Shire Council. Honourable members will remember that not too long ago the Federal Government intervened in the Local Government Grants Commission and set up its own body, which made its own recommendations. In fact, the Federal Government has slashed very severely the amount of money to go to the Isisford Shire Council. The result could well be that, in fact, the council will have to retrench severely its work-force. Obviously the Leader of the Opposition conveniently forgot to state that. Of course, that is an action of the Federal Government.

I should also remind the Leader of the Opposition of other actions of the Federal Government that are in much the same vein. The rural freight subsidy for fuel has been reduced. That has a carry-on effect in that it increases the cost of production. When

there are no profits, there is no employment—it is as simple as that. A well-known fact is that Governments step in and offer incentives and subsidies to various sectors of the economy within Australia in the hope that they will better gear up the economy. However, the subsidies to the manufacturing sector can be equated to something like \$15,000 per year per farm in Australia. The subsidies to the primary industry sector are calculated at about \$6,000 per farm. So Australia's farmers are \$9,000 net per year worse off than they need be. If they have \$9,000 less in their pockets, they will either employ fewer people or spend less on the goods and services that are produced by people off the farm. It is that flow-on effect that is causing much of the destruction of employment in the bush. I say that without mentioning the seasonal troubles presently being experienced. Most of Queensland has suffered 12 months of severe drought and, of course, there has also been the down-turn in world markets. However, those things are out of the Government's control. The things that I have mentioned in reference to the Leader of the Opposition are certainly within the control of the Federal Government.

I wish to speak about the dilemma that faces democracies, that is, the sorts of Governments that they get. This Government has a choice, to act responsibly in a statesmanlike way and govern the State on a good, sound economic basis or to budget to buy votes. In his Budget Speech the Premier outlined that the 1987-88 Queensland Budget was a very responsible one. The Government realised that its receipts will be reduced and, therefore, that it had to cut its cloth accordingly. The Government realised that it had to live within its means. The Government promised that it would introduce no new taxes. The Government also decided that, in an effort to maintain essential services in the public sector, it would in some cases defer capital works. The idea of that is to keep the pressure off the individual who is out there paying State charges and to keep the pressure off the private sector—the productive sector—of the State.

I will give an example of that from my own electorate, which, because of seasonal conditions and the fact that it is mainly a rural area, at present is probably one of the most depressed areas in Queensland or even Australia. It is well known that shopkeepers, manufacturers and service industries and all the employees in that area are suffering very badly. Many employees have lost their jobs and are in receipt of social security payments. Those people in the private sector are hurting extremely badly. The general attitude in my electorate is that, if things are as bad as that, the public sector should also have to make some sort of sacrifice.

I am quick to acknowledge that the people in the public sector, the people on wages, have in fact forgone full indexation of their salary according to the CPI. The Hawke Government has gone in to bat saying that that should be the case, that the real value of wages must be lowered. I acknowledge that people on salaries in the public sector are carrying some sort of a burden. However, it is a matter of degree as to what sort of burden they should carry.

Like other honourable members, I am very much aware that in the public sector there are people, especially teacher aides, who are at present having serious difficulties and who face possible retrenchment or a reduction in their working hours. Unfortunately, in the sort of society in which we live, we do things as a group. Some of the decisions that are taken are very responsible and are also very hard decisions. Unfortunately, certain numbers of people will be hurt. However, I believe that the decisions taken by this Government have been very responsible and for the overall good of the whole economy.

When one is talking about the Budget brought down by this Government, it is interesting to reflect on the Fraser era. Fraser, of course, took over from Whitlam, at a time when the public sector had run riot and Australia was very obviously getting into a lot of trouble. The people of Australia gave a very clear mandate that they wanted a change of direction. It is all part of a cyclical approach whereby if one overspends, one obviously has to go through a time of reining in and getting back to a balanced position. Mr Fraser was doing that. I will not mention some of the other things that he did. However, he was trying to do that. Then along came the 1983 election, and Mr Hawke

was able to appeal to the people by saying, "Things are tough. I can offer you better times." Of course, he offered people more money in their pockets and more services, and the people took it without really understanding the ramifications.

It is possible for a Government to buy votes in the short term, but as it gets down the track a bit further, the real damage becomes very apparent. It would be true to say that most individuals are pre-occupied with the problems of running their own affairs, raising a family, paying off the house mortgage or whatever it might be. We are all very, very worried about our day-to-day existence and looking for future security for ourselves and our children. Because of that we are prone to not cast our vote for the good of the nation but to cast it for our own individual needs at the time. I suggest that that is what happened in 1983.

What people have to realise is that when Governments spend money, they are spending the public's money. If more money is to be put into the pockets of the individual, it has to be done in one of two ways. It can be done under the guise of what is called redistribution of wealth, which, of course, is a platform of the socialists. To a certain extent, there should be social justice. However, there has to be a balance between need and what has to be done. Governments have to ensure that they do not destroy incentive. They must ensure that they do not destroy the productive sector, because I suggest that our chance of getting ahead in the future is dependent on the production of more wealth, not redistribution of the wealth that we have already got. Once someone stands still, he in fact goes backwards. That is exactly what is happening at present.

Of course, the redistribution option means that in reality the Government is putting us further into debt. The Government can put money into people's pockets either by increasing taxes—and the Federal Government has certainly done that—or it can borrow overseas, and the Federal Government is certainly doing that.

Mr Davis: They have reduced income tax. What are you talking about?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: It has reduced direct income tax. I am talking about taxation in general.

While I am on the subject of borrowing money—I can remember the Leader of the Liberal Party talking one day about the parlous state of the national economy and leaving debts for our children. The thought came to mind, "What a legacy to hand on to our children—an increased national debt." That is what is facing us now because when many people cast their vote, they were pre-occupied with their own survival and their own economic viability and did not think of their responsibility further down the track.

Mr Smith: Do you think you should start with some of the farmers?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I have been through that. The member for Townsville East was late coming into the Chamber. I am sorry that he had to have such a long lunch.

I have mentioned the cyclical approach whereby there is overspending and then reining in, overspending and reining in again. The problem must be overcome. A solution may be to amend the Constitution. A review of the Constitution is under way at present. Perhaps the Constitutional Commission could examine the possibility of inserting a clause whereby if a Government brings down two successive deficit Budgets, it has got to go before the people by way of a referendum. That will give the people themselves an opportunity to judge the nature of the deficit.

It is true that in private business and in Government one can borrow money for development. That is all right as long as one can cover oneself by investing and borrowing against bricks and mortar. If the stage is reached at which money is borrowed for expendables, as the Federal Government is doing at the present time, this country will get itself into a situation from which it cannot extricate itself and it will find itself in a deeper and deeper hole.

Returning to the Queensland Budget—this Government is aiming for the future. The Leader of the Opposition completely overlooked the comments made by the Premier

regarding the Public Service Board and its replacement through the Crown management employment legislation. The general thrust of this legislation is to rationalise the public service, to try and cut down the number of people tied up in administrative roles and to give greater emphasis to those people playing a productive role in the public sector. This has been happening for years in the private sector, and it has probably gone on for many years in the public sector too; but because Australia is in such straitened times, it is essential that once again there be a rationalisation of the number of people employed in the public sector and an assessment of their efficiency be made.

The Savage report comes to mind immediately. In the Premier's Budget documents many of the recommendations that were made in the report were adopted. Decisions have been taken by this Government to implement those recommendations or to study how they can be implemented. One of those recommendations involves the breaking-down of the Public Service Board and giving greater autonomy to departmental heads in regard to the employment of their staff and their own expenditure. That puts the responsibility closer to the area where the money is spent, and better decisions will be made.

There is a general need to transfer employment from the public to the private sector. Various yardsticks have been given and it is said that once 55 per cent of people are dependent on the public purse, the State will find itself in a situation like the one in which the Roman Empire found itself, and the State will go downhill. However, if 45 per cent or less of the total work-force is tied up in the public sector, the economy can go ahead. There has to be a restructuring of the economy for Queensland to return to that position. The rationalisation contained in the State Budget is aimed in that direction.

Work practices in Australia are too restrictive, and one would have to agree that many of the things done in private industry and referred to in Queensland's State Budget underline that fact. Central wage fixation has to be got rid of, and there have to be industry awards under which employers in a particular industry and affected by its award can negotiate with their employees.

I turn now to education. Every time there is a problem in society, someone comes up with the idea that a course should be implemented in the schools. The schools only have five hours a day and are cramming more and more into that time. It seems to be the general idea of parents and schools these days that children should make the most of their educational opportunities and then go out and get a good job. The key words are "go out and get a good job". Why can't a new attitude be created, one that will sow in the minds of children and parents the thought that children should get a good education, make the most of their chances, start their own business, become self-employed and be entrepreneurial? There is nothing wrong with having a good job and being a good employee; but there has to be more productivity, incentive and self-fulfilment so that individuals can go to the Small Business Development Corporation.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I thank the honourable member for his interjection.

If that is done in the home and through schools, in colleges and through this House, the kind of entrepreneurial skill will be created that is so evident in places such as south-east Asia, where in the streets of the cities there are thousands upon thousands of small businesses all turning out the same kind of products and competing against one another on a small scale. Those countries are going ahead in leaps and bounds, and surely there has to be some sense in my proposal. I hope that that suggestion can be taken on board by the Government. It is only a matter of creating a thought, not of introducing a course, but it is something worth thinking about.

In conclusion—I was rather disappointed that the Leader of the Opposition overlooked a direct reference to the Public Service Board in the Premier's speech. He overlooked completely many things that are being done within the State to restructure the economy.

We recognise that things must change. The Government is taking many initiatives. The Leader of the Opposition gave no credit to the Government whatsoever.

I support the Bill and once again reaffirm my very strong support for the direction provided in the last Budget.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah—Leader of the Liberal Party) (3.35 p.m.): In speaking to the Appropriation Bill (No. 2), we are talking about completing Supply for this financial year and providing it for part of the next year.

Mr Davis: Will pay-roll tax be part of your speech?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: That is a very good suggestion by the honourable member for Brisbane Central. I will give it some consideration. He can make his representation along with all the other representations. At the moment I happen to be talking about some other matter.

I would have thought that members of the Opposition, having made such a fuss about their having no confidence in the Premier, would be today trying to amend the Appropriation Bill; but they are so preoccupied with their own problems that they are not even prepared to challenge the Government on its Supply. The honourable member for Brisbane Central is no doubt very concerned about the future of his spouse in the political arena, because the outcome of the current discussion that is being conducted behind closed doors may have a considerable bearing on her political fortunes.

Mr Davis: How about your political fortunes?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I know where I am going and it is all under control. However, the honourable member's future is not. Opposition members are like a lot of madmen careering around the countryside accusing one another of destroying one another.

Mr Davis: What about Terry White on the car phone?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: The honourable member should not let it worry him. I am sure that his good lady is very worried about her future, because she will be thrown to the wolves. She will be disposed of by the powers that be in the Labor Party.

The Appropriation Bill (No. 2) covers a considerable period. It is normal for the Appropriation Bill that is presented following the Budget and Estimates debates to cover all the functions of the Budget for that period. It is also significant that the Budget debate has taken place without some of the vital changes that have been made and relief that has been given in previous years in areas such as stamp duty, land tax and pay-roll tax. It is regrettable that those matters have not been attended to, at least to take account of the inflationary effect in the community. The result is, of course, that those taxes will be levied more heavily this year in real terms than they have been in the last 30 years. That is a considerable increase in State taxes in areas that should at least, while not being given relief, keep pace with the inflationary effects in the community.

I want to deal particularly with public accounts, because the Premier in his speech today indicated very clearly that there was to be a rewrite of the Financial Administration and Audit Act. I find that somewhat surprising, in view of the fact that the Financial Administration and Audit Act is still a comparatively young piece of legislation in this State. It is about only 10 years old. It is hailed right throughout the nation as one of the most effective controls on public accounts in the nation, yet today we heard the Premier refer to a rewrite of the Act.

Mr Davis: Who was the Treasurer who brought it in?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I was the Treasurer at the time. I am sure that the honourable member would have known that. I am pleased to have the honourable member's admiration.

Mr Comben: And it has to be rewritten after 10 years? A good bit of legislation!

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: It is good legislation. The National Party Government has also claimed it as one of the bulwarks of substantial control and monitoring of public accounts. And it is. It has been acknowledged as such by Treasurers and other officials in other States and the Commonwealth. We do not want to be frightened to admit that. There is nothing to be ashamed of. While there is room for amendment—and there have been amendments to that legislation in the last 10 years—I am a little apprehensive about a rewrite of the Act when, in fact, it is still comparatively young.

Nevertheless, the public accounts of this State require more than just the supervision of the Financial Administration and Audit Act and, indeed, of the Auditor-General. I am sure that all honourable members have a very high regard for the office of the Auditor-General, as I do. He is an officer of this Parliament and he reports to it regularly. I have a very high personal regard for the present incumbent of that office. He is a most competent and professional officer with technical credentials, who is highly regarded in professional circles. Anything that I have to say about the functioning of the Auditor-General should not be regarded as a personal reflection on the occupant of that office or, indeed, on the office itself. However, the Auditor-General has certain duties to perform in terms of the Act.

This Parliament also has certain duties to perform, not in accordance with the Act but in accordance with its obligation, its oath of office, its reporting to the public and its constituents, and its responsibility for the supervision of public moneys. In a few minutes, by an Act of Parliament, this House will approve substantial sums of public moneys that will be appropriated for the special purposes that have been outlined in the resolutions. By doing so, this Parliament has a responsibility to monitor and supervise the spending of those moneys.

Unfortunately, this is the only Parliament in Australia that does not have a function, a committee, a group or a procedure for the supervision of those accounts. It has been said by the Premier and the Deputy Premier that the Auditor-General performs that duty. The Auditor-General does not perform that duty; this Parliament has to perform it. The Auditor-General's duties are quite clearly outlined in the legislation. The Auditor-General has taken the trouble to explain his philosophy and his responsibilities in the latest report of his department, which was tabled in the House this morning. In fact, it is one of the most informative documents that the Auditor-General has ever presented to this Parliament. It indicates some of the changes that have taken place and how they will be handled.

The role of the Auditor-General is distinctly different from the role of this Parliament in the supervision of the spending and raising of public moneys. The Auditor-General carried out his duties not only according to the spirit of the law but also with a sense of professional competence, which is the envy of people in other parts of Australia. The Act gives the Auditor-General the power and authority to demand information and to supervise what is occurring within the various departments. He has far more power than Auditors-General in other States, and that power is far more effectively exercised than it is in other States. Because of the special authority that is vested in the Auditor-General, the problems that have been experienced in Victoria would certainly not have occurred in this State.

The fact that there is an absence of a machinery provision in this Parliament to carry out the Parliament's function in regard to the supervision of accounts represents a very serious defect in the supervision of public accounts. I do not intend to spell out the role of the Auditor-General. It is stated in the Act for all to see. However, the responsibilities of a public accounts committee are different from those of the Auditor-General. A public accounts committee supervises the raising of receipts and the methods by which expenditure is carried out. The reports of the Auditor-General would be subject to review by a public accounts committee.

The Auditor-General produces to this Parliament reports that are similar to the one that I now have in my possession. I wonder how many honourable members have even looked inside the cover of the Auditor-General's report. No doubt a few of them would

have perused the report. Those honourable members with special interests would have looked at special parts of the report. Because it would be a monumental task in itself, no honourable member would feel obliged to read such a report from cover to cover, or even to ask questions about it. After all, it took many man-hours for the Auditor-General to produce that report. It is extraordinarily difficult for a particular member of Parliament to be able to appropriate that number of man-hours to examine it.

The report of the Auditor-General goes to a public accounts committee for examination on behalf of the Parliament. The public accounts committee draws attention of the Parliament to matters that should be brought to its attention. The Parliament delegates authority to that committee in a similar way in which the Subordinate Legislation Committee and the other committees work. The public accounts committee can suggest alterations to the method of keeping accounts, and reports to the Treasurer matters that should be brought to his attention. It examines matters concerning the accounts prepared and the method by which they are prepared. It also conducts and supervises efficiency audits.

People appear to be confused about what a public accounts committee does. From time to time, in the media I see all sorts of things that are said should come under the control of the public accounts committee. The public accounts are the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the Trust and Special Funds and the Loan Fund.

It is rather interesting to note that in the Savage committee report there was a recommendation that the concept of efficiency auditing be adopted and be the responsibility of the Auditor-General. The Liberal Party says that efficiency audits should be the responsibility of not only the Auditor-General but also this Parliament. Although the Auditor-General, if he had that responsibility, would report to the Parliament, there is no machinery for this Parliament to examine those reports properly and thoroughly.

What has happened to the recommendation of the Savage committee in regard to establishing efficiency auditing? It has been rejected by the Government. People are making great boasts of things that have been accepted. I heard the previous speaker talking about the acceptance of the Savage committee report. In fact, the critical matters in the Savage committee report have not been accepted by the Government. One of those that has not been accepted—I will not go through them all—is the concept of efficiency auditing. We discover that Ministers, permanent heads and quite a number of officials in the Government are opposed to an efficiency audit being established. I do not blame public servants for having reservations about efficiency audits, because they feel that they are doing their jobs properly and they do not require another Big Brother to look into their affairs and to check them out. It is true that the Auditor-General has special powers and that internal audits and similar functions are being carried out and can be summoned to assist permanent heads.

Other States have efficiency audits and the Commonwealth Government has efficiency audits, but the Queensland Government will not even entertain it. If it were to entertain the recommendation of the Savage committee to have efficiency audits, those audits should be available to this Parliament. Here we are today, as a result of many days of debate, approving thousands of millions of dollars to be expended and to be raised, yet we take no further positive and intimate interest in what happens to those funds and how they are administered. It is not satisfactory.

I am sure that all members of this House, regardless of political affiliation, in their quieter moments would have to reflect that they are not carrying out their duties according to their oath of office in regard to the control and supervision of expenditure and the raising of public moneys in this State—the only State that does not. It is regrettable that, even as long ago as 1913, those procedures were in operation in the Commonwealth Parliament. They are long overdue in this State.

The Liberal Party understands that there is considerable opposition in the Cabinet to efficiency audits. That is regrettable. It is not an intrusion on a Government to have efficiency audits and checks and balances. They protect the Government from some of the things that have caused this Government embarrassment during the last year or

so—such as a very small matter associated with the Queensland Film Corporation. That matter could have been discovered long before it was—in fact, even discouraged from occurring—by having proper controls and monitoring. Proper control, efficiency audits and monitoring are the major role of a public accounts committee. The mere existence of public accounts committees discourages those who want to commit improper or illegal acts, because of the certainty of discovery. The effect protects the Government from embarrassment and from becoming involved in difficulties that are hard to explain.

Recently the honourable member for Murrumba thought he had discovered a great problem in the financial management of the State in regard to a development fund, if I remember correctly. The honourable member made a great fuss about it in the media, but he was quite wrong. The reason for his being wrong was not because he is uninformed, lacks intelligence or is uneducated; it is simply because the information was not available in a form that could be understood.

Mr Wells: Then how do you know he was wrong?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I know perfectly well that the honourable member was wrong because I know what the fund is all about and how it is managed.

The honourable member went to the media with the great discovery he had made based on incomplete information. I do not entirely blame the honourable member because he is a fairly new representative in this Chamber. Nevertheless, the honourable member's difficulty is one that all honourable members experience in understanding the public accounts of this State because they are not completely explained. It takes a little while to find information, particularly if one has to refer to the Budget papers, bearing in mind the way in which they are presented and the short time that is available.

If a public accounts committee operated in Queensland, however, the honourable member for Murrumba would have had the answer long before he started to look for it. The honourable member would have known all about the development fund without any trouble at all, because the public accounts committee's report to the Parliament would have explained it very clearly to all honourable members.

When the Deputy Premier tried to explain management of the fund to the honourable member, honourable members were confused even more—so much so that today the Premier had to re-explain it to the House. If Queensland had a public accounts committee, those matters would have automatically been examined by that committee. The operation of the fund would have been explained to all honourable members. The question raised by the honourable member for Murrumba would never have arisen.

Mr Wells: Then you agree with me, don't you?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: That is the point I am trying to make. The absence of proper machinery enabling this Parliament to supervise the public accounts inevitably leads to confusion and misunderstanding about what the accounts relate to and what the figures mean. Within a year or two, no honourable member of this Parliament could be expected to clearly understand all the ramifications of the Treasury accounts. I venture to suggest that even the Deputy Premier would have difficulty on occasions in following all those accounts at first glance.

Mr Gunn: One thing is certain: the Labor Party does not know anything about it at all.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: That may be so; nevertheless, the documentation that is presented to this Parliament is complicated, it is not easy to follow and it is cloaked in the jargon of officialese. Therefore, it takes a while for a member to be able to absorb the information and understand the figures. That difficulty is not a reflection on any honourable member in this House, because all honourable members have that problem.

A public accounts committee could provide a very vital service to this Parliament by presenting reports to the House, explaining problems that have arisen and answering questions that have been asked in relation to matters that have been referred to it, so

that members generally could be better informed. By virtue of being better informed, honourable members could then ask intelligent and sensitive questions, which the honourable member for Murrumba would like to ask.

Mr Innes: To which he would get a zero response, or a poor response.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: By referring questions to the public accounts committee, honourable members would not get a zero response because it, as a select committee, would have power to obtain information so that answers could be provided in a form that is acceptable to this Parliament.

Mr Lee: To which Parliament is entitled.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: As the honourable member for Yeronga says, answers in a form which this Parliament is entitled to have.

Mr Innes: Are you suggesting that in the absence of a public accounts committee, with the future reporting processes, we will have even less information?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: That is the difficulty that arises. I am indebted to the honourable member for raising it.

The Government has rejected the recommendation for an efficiency audit, and a Government management consultancy bureau will be established in its place. Whatever that means, I am not too sure. It will be established by combining the Internal Operational Audit Service, which is attached to Treasury, and the consultancy services of the Public Service Board, which does not exist any more. As the Premier announced today, for administrative purposes the bureau will be attached to the Premier's Department. It will function as a commercial operation for other departments. It will charge a fee for service to cover costs, including overheads. It will be a service department to other departments, with a fee being charged for that service. While that has some attraction, no doubt because of its novelty, it does not replace, and certainly is no substitute for, a public accounts committee. It certainly is not an efficiency audit, because an efficiency audit is obligatory.

Mr Hayward: The fact that it charges a fee could also be a disincentive for departments to use it.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: The honourable member is very astute. I thought that I had made that point. I thank him for clearing it up. That is the accountant in him coming out. That is very good.

That demonstrates the difficulty of solving the problem that the Parliament has in supervising public accounts. Individually, each one of us is hampered by his lack of knowledge, understanding, education or experience, or whatever the particular lack is, to handle those problems on the run. It is certainly extremely difficult to do it in a debate on an Appropriation Bill of a limited number of hours.

What does the Auditor-General say about all this? I bring this document to the attention of honourable members. I think it is one of the most significant documents that the Auditor-General has laid before this House. The document to which I refer was tabled today. It outlines a number of philosophical views of the Auditor-General. I am sure that he would welcome a discussion of them, because he has them set out in a way which suggests that there has been discussion in other places. There is no reason why they should not be discussed here.

On page 20 of that report of 16 November, the Auditor-General says—

“Both the Savage Committee and the Government have emphasised that greater autonomy and responsibility should be placed at the departmental level and that constricting centralised controls should be lifted as far as possible to give Ministers and departmental heads greater freedom in managing their departments affairs. I fully support this concept.

. . .

To avoid any general lowering of standards it is important that the devolution of authority and responsibility through such measures as the transfer from Treasurer's Instructions to broad financial guidelines be a planned process. I consider there could be very real risks if current prescriptions are discarded by departments before they have replaced them with adequate instructions and systems of financial control and accountability which achieve the requisite objectives in a manner suited to their own particular environments."

He states further that he will be seeking consultation with various people in order to implement that policy.

That is the Auditor-General's policy. In the absence of any direction that he gets from the Government or from this Parliament, he is entitled to have a policy. Obviously he has received some advice from the Government as to its philosophy, but he has not received any advice from this Parliament. If Queensland had a parliamentary public accounts committee, the Auditor-General would receive the sort of guide-lines this Parliament would want to have in regard to public accounts.

The public accounts are not the private preserve of the Cabinet or of the Executive Government; nor are they the private preserve of the Treasury or the Auditor-General. They are public accounts, examinable publicly in this place, yet we as members of Parliament do not have adequate machinery to carry out the responsibility that is placed on our shoulders by virtue of the office that we hold. These are called "reforms" by the Auditor-General and I counsel members to read this document very carefully from cover to cover.

Mr Yewdale: You did not advocate a public accounts committee when you were in Government.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Oh yes, we certainly did.

Mr Yewdale: No, you didn't.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I will not go into the details of that.

Mr Lee: He knows darned well we did.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Yes.

These are the sorts of things that are happening. Major changes are occurring without consultation with this Parliament, without its participation; yet it is responsible for them.

Quite sincerely, I compliment the Auditor-General's work. As I said earlier, he is very professionally competent, thoroughly reliable and highly regarded. To complement the work of the Auditor-General, there should be a parliamentary public accounts committee in this State to carry out one of the tasks that members are elected to do.

I wish to deal quickly with pay-roll tax. I regret that the honourable member for Brisbane Central has left the Chamber. I wish to make the observation that about \$500m is expected to be collected in pay-roll tax this year. Of the pay-roll tax collected in this State last financial year, \$125m came from Government departments.

Mr Lee: Stupid!

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Yes. It is like recycling washing.

The major contributions in pay-roll tax from Government departments came from the Education Department, the Railway Department and the Police Department. Local government contributed \$5.2m and some Government and statutory boards provided \$15.2m. So about \$145m was collected from Government departments and statutory boards. It is a bit stupid. I have not the faintest idea of the administrative costs of that, but I imagine that it is a million dollars or two. The Deputy Premier pointed out that

the cost of collection of all pay-roll tax in this State was about \$5m or \$6m per year. A substantial part of that cost is incurred in the collection of pay-roll tax from Government departments.

This year, for the first time ever in my living memory, there has been no relief in pay-roll tax to keep pace with inflation in the community; so this year thousands of small businesses will face pay-roll tax for the first time. In fact, for many of them it will be quite crippling. It is a discouragement to employment. It is a head tax on employment. It is extraordinarily unbelievable that at a time of high unemployment—Queensland has the highest in the nation and will continue to do so right through this year and next year—that the Government maintains this anti-social tax on small businesses, which could do without it. The State would not even miss the revenue.

Mr COOPER (Roma) (4.04 p.m.): I have pleasure in taking part in the debate on the Appropriation Bill (No. 2), which provides members with their third opportunity to discuss the Budget. There has been the debate on the Financial Statement, the debates on the Estimates and now the debate on the Bill currently before the House. The Estimates debates covered the portfolios of Primary Industries; Mines and Energy and the Arts; Tourism, National Parks and Sport; Local Government, Main Roads and Racing; and Health and Environment. Those debates gave honourable members on both sides of the House an opportunity to air their views and to criticise, hopefully constructively, to promote, to acknowledge and certainly to comment where they saw fit.

Financial restraint has been exercised in the Budget, and it has been exercised for various reasons. One reason, as honourable members are aware, is the massive cut-backs in Federal funding to the States of more than \$400m. That has forced State Governments either to introduce new taxes or to engage in a cost-cutting exercise. Of course, this Government has opted for the cost-cutting exercise for this year. However, I think all honourable members are aware that those stringency measures are starting to bite deep. I cite as an example the education field and the employment of teacher graduates and married teachers. They will feel it; they are feeling it already. Honourable members know that.

Perhaps as a result of changes to the Public Service Act there might be some early retirements that will allow some of these teacher graduates a chance to teach next year, which is what they have their hopes and hearts set on. I remind honourable members of the New South Wales experience. It was only a few years ago that there was about a six-year wait for a graduate to become a teacher in New South Wales. Today that has turned around. I sincerely hope and trust that if the States have a very tough and tight year next year, the Queensland Government will be able to ensure that those who graduated this year can be reasonably hopeful of jobs in the following year. I have not yet given up hope on next year. However, I do believe that it has been necessary to cut any fat in these departments and to implement efficiency measures.

I believe that in many instances departments have been cut to the bone. I cite the example of the Police Department. It has certainly made efficiency cuts in many areas such as overtime. On the other hand, there have also been overtime rorts. I believe that some officers have been receiving a salary in the vicinity of \$30,000 or \$40,000 a year and also \$30,000 or \$40,000 in overtime payments. I think that that is most unfair, especially to officers in other ranks. It is necessary that that be evened out.

As I have said, if this State can survive this year, hopefully next year some improvements in funding can be made. I reiterate that I feel very deeply for the teacher graduates. The States are required to fund and provide essential services, and when they receive very severe funding cut-backs from the Federal Government, it makes it very, very unfair and difficult for many of the young people of this State.

Since the Hawke Government came to power, the percentage of total Budget outlays to Queensland has been reduced from 21.7 per cent——

Mr Yewdale: You would have nothing to talk about if it wasn't for the Hawke Government.

Mr COOPER: I have a hell of a lot more to say yet, so I suggest that the honourable member stick around. Why does the honourable member not have a say? Does he approve of the fact that Queensland has been cut back from 21.7 per cent to 18.8 per cent this year? Does he think that that is good?

Mr Yewdale: Yes. I am happy with it.

Mr COOPER: The honourable member would be. What a top Queenslander! The honourable member is totally and completely disloyal.

If the Federal Government continues along that road—which it does not have a hope of doing—the total percentage of budgetary outlays might be reduced to 9 per cent by the Federation's centenary in 2001. It is absolutely ludicrous. There have not been any cuts by the Federal Government to its own expenditure. It carries on with its grandiose schemes.

It is this vindictive treatment that has forced Queensland into the position of having to undertake a cost-cutting exercise or introduce new taxes and increase taxes, as the other States have had to do. If the Queensland Government introduced new taxes, it would certainly have a lot more money to spend. Members of the Opposition would love to do it. That is exactly what they would do if they were in Government. Up would go taxes, up would go charges, and there would be a fuel tax, a tobacco tax and a financial institutions duty. If the Queensland Government introduced such taxes on a similar basis to the other States, on average it would raise about \$250m, and I do not deny that that money would be very handy. It is certainly needed for the services that the Government is still trying to provide. However, the Government has decided not to introduce new taxes this year. That has been in the interests of the people of Queensland. It has also helped the honourable member for Rockhampton North, Mr Yewdale, and it has helped the economy of this State. Stringent budgetary cuts have been made. Honourable members are aware of the hurts that are emanating from them. However, the Government will be making every effort to ensure that things improve in the years ahead.

There are some bright spots. The Government does not have all of its eggs in one basket. I will examine the productive sectors that are so vital to the economy of this State and of this nation. Even though they go through good and bad times, the primary industries of this State, including the beef, wool, grain and cotton industries, which are worth \$3 billion in exports this year; the mining and coal industries, which are going through tough times but are productive; and Australia's minerals, natural gas and so on, all hold very exciting prospects. In addition, tourism is making a major impact on the economy.

As everyone knows, in the last few years Australians have lived beyond their means. One only has to look at the national debt to see that. There has to be an income from the productive sectors, just as Australians have to have an income. At the moment people live beyond their incomes and get into trouble.

Australia is still suffering from the excesses of the Whitlam era, and that has been confirmed by Hawke and Keating. They gave him a barb just recently. The nation has never recovered, and Hawke and Keating know that. None of the efforts made by the Fraser Government towards righting those wrongs did any good, because that Government was inept also and perpetuated the Whitlam era. Australia's current foreign debt speaks for itself as far as the performance of the Hawke Government is concerned. It is becoming more and more evident that the Federal economy is in a very fragile position and Australia is witnessing the explosion of the myth of the Keating infallibility and Hawke as the Messiah. The nickname "Messiah" is one of the sickest jokes in Australia's history, but unfortunately it has taken the people a long time to realise it.

Mr Randell: Don't forget to tell them about the damage Hawke did when he was ACTU president.

Mr COOPER: The honourable member for Mirani is perfectly correct. Mr Hawke does not have a tremendous record to stand on.

I move now to the State and will talk more about the alternatives that have been put forward by the other side.

Mr Booth: Hawke appears to be very cranky these days.

Mr COOPER: He will get more and more cranky, because everyone knows that he will crack under pressure.

Mr Yewdale: Methinks you protest too much.

Mr COOPER: The honourable member for Rockhampton North is toey. He has gone fairly ashen, but I will see if I can stir him up a little more.

The Opposition has had plenty of opportunities to present its case and to provide this House with alternatives. No alternatives or Budget strategy have come forward and there has been a classic example of missed opportunities. Is it any wonder? I will follow on from the speech I made this morning during the Matters of Public Interest debate. Since the Federal election the State ALP has continually used the argument for the abolition of this so-called gerrymander—which is balanced representation—as an excuse and a panacea for all the ills that plagues it still. Those ills have not gone away and there is no sign at all of their going away.

The Opposition has not addressed itself to its poor performance. Performance has meant nothing to the Opposition. The ALP's Federal executive recognises the existence of this problem of performance and knows that factionalism is the major reason for the problem. I do not have to tell the ALP that, because it already knows. The Federal executive saw a need to move in on the Old Guard and the Federal executive's strategy was to move Peter Beattie from the administrative side and to remove Mr Warburton, the Old Guard leader. The Feds want a similar line-up to the one that they have in Canberra, that is, the factions of power, the Right Wing, Socialist Left and Centre Unity.

In July Mr Hawke visited Brisbane for the purpose of welding the Right Wing groups, that is, the AWU and the Old Guard, together. They were supposed to be together, but Mr Hawke failed in that attempt and they kept on fighting. This was a Canberra strategy, although credit was claimed by Mr Warburton and Mr Beattie. They were fighting each other to see who would take the credit for that strategy. Now that the strategy has failed, neither gentleman wishes to take the credit for that failure.

In reality, Hawke's strategy was to provide a parliamentary seat in this House for Mr Beattie and a diplomatic post for Mr Burns. Mr Terry Hansen from the Socialist Left was to be moved to the position of secretary in the place of Mr Beattie, and Mr Wayne Swan of the AWU was to become an assistant secretary. The whole strategy was designed to get rid of poor old Nev Warburton.

That deal also included a wiping-out of the so-called gerrymander—the zonal system—the balanced representation system. But I think that we know more and more and I think that Opposition members know more and more that that is not on. They really need to realise that for them to win Government they need about 51-plus per cent to do it. Their proportion of the votes in the last State election was 41.4 per cent. It does not matter what they do with the zones; they do not have the numbers. They do not have the percentage that is required. And the way they are going, they will never have the required percentage.

Poor old Mr Hawke came to Queensland to wave the magic wand and to weld everyone together. The members of the Socialist Left tried to pull the rug from under him. They were dragging red herrings all over the place. They had people lined up for overseas diplomatic posts. We heard about Tom Burns, Manfred Cross and the like. That was the way the Labor Party was going to solve all its problems.

Mr Austin: We've had the Old Guard, the New Guard, and now the "mud guard".

Mr COOPER: I have heard that one before. There is another one—the “abstention wing”.

Opposition members know as well as I do that when Wayne Goss takes over, the president of the party, Mr McLean, who is also a member of the Socialist Left, will be in a great position, having organised the numbers to control the scene. Everyone knows what happens when the Socialist Left take over—it is back to the old Dark Ages; there is no risk about that. Queensland, of course, would be down the tube. However, Government members will guard the Treasury benches for quite some time, so there is no real need to worry yet, although we need to be aware of it, for sure.

It is unfortunate that the Opposition has placed total reliance on the abolition of the zonal system. Unfortunately, performance has simply not been a criterion; it has been a case of promises and promises from Mr Hawke; excuses and excuses from Opposition members. Their blueprint and their strategy for Government has been fight, fight, fight. I believe that the Strategy for Government Committee that was set up by Mr Warburton not long ago comprises himself, Mr McElligott, Mr Wells and his friend who sits beside him in this Chamber, Mr Hayward.

Mr Wells: Which committee?

Mr COOPER: It is a Strategy for Government Committee, I believe.

Mr Wells: The Transition to Government Committee.

Mr COOPER: The honourable member is right. I am sorry for laughing, but that is it. We have Mr Magoo of the Socialist Left. He is one of the——

Mr Hayward interjected.

Mr COOPER: I have a bit more to say yet. Two members in the Chamber belong to the Committee for the Future. As I said, please excuse me for laughing.

At the same time as they have that committee in place, Mr Hodder of the AWU and Mr McLean of the Socialist Left are constantly pulling the rug from under Opposition members. They know that as well as I do. Before they get too upset, I will leave that alone because I have had my fun.

I turn now to some other budgetary matters that I was not able to cover in the debate on the Estimates of the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing. For a moment I would like to concentrate on the Racing Branch and its contribution. The branch has certainly made a contribution to the economy. It has certainly enhanced racing facilities in the community. The racing facilities in my electorate alone, at Springsure, Roma, Surat and Injune, have been really well enhanced. It is tremendous for those small districts to have something that will hold the communities together. The racing facilities create community involvement. The provision of those facilities has been a top move by the Queensland Government. In control of that Racing Branch under the Minister are three very dedicated people, namely, Ian Wade, Bob Masson and Terry Gibson. They are certainly very expert in their field. They have been ensuring that the Racing Development Fund is meeting its current commitments. I am informed that those persons are hopeful that the fund may be opened to new applications by August 1988. Over the years, the significance of the expenditure from that fund has been evident throughout Queensland.

The TAB has been a major contributor to the Racing Development Fund and to the State's revenue. Last year, the turn-over of the TAB amounted to a sum in excess of \$600m, which represents an increase of 9.62 per cent on the previous year's figure. It is certainly a very big business. Profits have increased by 10½ per cent to \$28.5m. The distribution to racing clubs has increased by 12.9 per cent to a total of 65 per cent, with an added bonus of \$3m. That represents a total of almost 75 per cent distribution, and that figure is increasing. During the last 25 years the TAB has made a distribution of \$162m to racing clubs. In addition to that, its contribution to the Racing Development Fund this year includes an additional \$2m, which is the fifth special grant that has been

made to that fund, which now totals \$16m. Last year, its percentage of turn-over was \$5.4m. During the last 25 years the Government has been a beneficiary to the tune of \$38m to Treasury, which represents a total of \$304m from the racing industry. That money is used for all sports through the allocations that are made by the Department of Sport.

I do not believe that the controversy that surrounds the racing industry and the concern that is expressed by people that too much money seems to be spent within that industry is justified. That \$38m goes through the Department of Sport, and all 81 sports are well catered for.

I mentioned previously decentralisation. I speak of it in an economic sense. Under this Government, rural communities have certainly received due recognition through this Government's policy of balanced decentralisation and distribution of the economic cake. It is obvious to all concerned that Queensland is the most decentralised of all States, and it needs to stay that way. All States have unique factors that cannot support the idealistic and glib phrase of one vote, one value. All of the decentralised industries and commerce that have occurred could not have been achieved without a balanced form of decentralised representation and a decentralised form of distribution of that economic and productive cake. Developments could not take place under any other system. That is the very system that is required to provide an even and balanced distribution right across the State.

Mr Littleproud: It is interesting to note that the people of northern New South Wales feel closer to Brisbane than they do to Sydney because of our decentralisation.

Mr COOPER: That is true. It does extend across the border.

I am sure that many honourable members opposite would agree that this decentralised representation policy is the only policy for Queensland. In fact, it was a Labor Government that first introduced that policy. No doubt some honourable members opposite still have a warm inner glow—a feeling that is not practical under any circumstances. That policy has been tried in the United Kingdom, the United States and in Canada. Those countries now have ratios between the smallest electorate and the largest that are greater than any ratios in Queensland.

The effect of the decentralised distribution can well be epitomised in the Roma electorate alone. In relation to Government services—the Roma electorate contains 944 public servants. I say that guardedly and advisedly, because public servants make a tremendous contribution and they are certainly necessary. Some people worry that perhaps there are too many public servants. I say that we do not have too many public servants in that region. During the three years from 1983 to 1986, Government expenditure in that electorate was in excess of \$100m. The sum has gone into wages and salaries as well as roads, schools, DPI offices and services, lands, mapping and surveying, the development of industrial estates, and most definitely into health and medical facilities. All of that goes towards overcoming the tyranny of distance that most of us know so well. Because it ensures an even distribution of services, especially when budgetary considerations are taken into account, I am a supporter of the four-zonal system.

It is blind of people to believe that everything should be concentrated in the south-east corner and along the coastal strip of this State. Political representation is not affected by that zonal system. The western and far-northern zone contains eight representatives who cover 76.5 per cent of the State. In the south-east corner, within a 150 kilometre radius of the GPO, 1.5 per cent of the State is covered by 51 representatives. There is no way in the world that the west can control things; it just seeks balanced representation so that the economic cake can be distributed more evenly.

I hear stories that the Hawke Government is canvassing the possibility of a referendum based on one vote, one value in 1988. That might be falling on rocky ground.

Mr Hayward: It's a worry to you, isn't it?

Mr COOPER: No, not at all.

Mr Hayward: You don't believe in one vote, one value?

Mr COOPER: Only an idealistic, socialistic Mr Magoo of the Socialist Left would believe in something like that.

Mr Hayward: What, one vote, one value?

Mr COOPER: I just explained it to the honourable member and he simply does not——

Mr Borbidge: We are the only country in the world that has it.

Mr COOPER: I told them that. They have been there, done that and found that it does not work. That has been proven.

If we had that idealistic type of representation, the inland of northern Queensland would dry up, the rural and mining industries would become a wasteland and it would be an absolute travesty of justice. As far as I am concerned, the State needs to be considered as a whole. It is not only for the benefit of the people who reside there, but it is necessary to consider the productive value and worth of the State as a whole. As I said previously, rural exports alone are \$3 billion. It is important to all Queenslanders, particularly the people in the city, that that be taken into account, because their prosperity relies very much on a strong economy and on the productive sector.

The Budget has been very sound and responsible, particularly under the circumstances. It certainly exercises restraint, but essential services will be ongoing and will be maintained to a high standard. The importance that must be placed on the fact that the Budget is balanced is often missed by the Opposition. Despite the vindictive nature of the approach from the south, I support the Appropriation Bill and the thrust and direction that it takes.

Mr WELLS (Murrumba) (4.27 p.m.): I listened with some attention to the speech of the Leader of the Liberal Party. At the time, I was looking forward to congratulating him on his advocacy of public accountability. However, just as he was going so well, he started attacking me instead. I know that that will horrify members on both sides of this House. I go to great lengths to avoid attacking the Leader of the Liberal Party, even when he presumes to posture as an elder statesman in the most pompous and implausible way possible.

Mr Littleproud: You are not attacking him now at all, are you?

Mr WELLS: Absolutely not.

When he is so patronising as to say in one breath that, because we do not have public accountability, nobody could be sure of what was happening and, in the next breath, that I was wrong in what I said was happening about the \$1.3 billion, honourable members will really begin to wonder about his logical faculty. Is the Leader of the Liberal Party a psychic who knows things that he says nobody else can know because there is not sufficient information around for them to know? The fact is that, physically, the Leader of the Liberal Party is sitting on the cross benches but in his mind he is still a senior Minister and he seeks to balance his deficit of power in this place with a surfeit of pomposity.

I applaud what the Leader of the Liberal Party was saying about public accountability to the extent that he was calling for the establishment of a public accounts committee. I also applaud his remarks about the role of the Auditor-General. The Leader of the Liberal Party said that he had not had a chance to read it in the sort of depth that he had hoped to, but he may be interested in a couple of paragraphs from the Auditor-General's report, because that bears out significantly the need for a public accounts committee. The Auditor-General says—

"I am at times disturbed by an apparent absence of understanding of the audit functions. On the one hand public comments have been made which imply that

the Auditor-General does little more than check vouchers and his Department has a quite limited role in the accountability processes. On the other hand,”—
and on his other hand, presumably, is the Premier of this State—

“the existence of an Auditor-General and his officers has on occasions been cited as, *ipso facto*, evidence of the complete integrity, probity and legal conformity of all financial activities within the public sector.”

I think that the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, who is so enamoured of Latin, would have been able to translate that for the Leader of the Liberal Party. In other words, what the Auditor-General was saying is that it is not the case that the Auditor-General's role is to do everything that a public accounts committee can do. What he was saying is that a public accounts committee goes behind the audit function and it determines, beyond what can be done by the Auditor-General, matters of efficiency and matters that will ensure that the public gets value for money from the expenditure of funds that is undertaken on behalf of the public by the Government of Queensland.

Mr Speaker, you will be aware that the Auditor-General is an officer of this Parliament and may at times be available to members of this House to advise them about his function. At an earlier stage this year, you indicated that, if it were the wish of the House, you would enable that to occur. I did write to you, Mr Speaker, requesting that you should put that into operation. I hope you do not mind my mentioning that I told that to a few close friends last Friday. If you choose to ensure that that occur, it would be entirely appropriate because the Auditor-General is an officer of this Parliament rather than an officer of the Government. If that were to occur, the Leader of the Liberal Party would be very pleased because he uttered very high praise of the Auditor-General. If the Auditor-General were to come to the Parliament to speak to honourable members about his role and function, it would be a very happy reunion.

I refer now to another aspect of public accountability. Earlier this year, a delegation of Queensland members of Parliament—from more than one political party—attended the Biennial Conference of Public Accounts Committees which was held in Sydney. The members attending that conference, besides myself, were Mr Palaszczuk, Mr Hayward, Mr Campbell, Mr Underwood, Mr Sherlock, Mr Beanland, Mr Beard and Mr Schuntner. Today, I received a *Report of the Biennial Conference of the Public Accounts Committees* and I would like to draw part of its contents to the attention of the House.

Many public accounts committees from around Australia presented reports and a number of interesting papers were read to the conference. The Auditor-General of New South Wales, Mr K. Robson, read a paper on “Accountability—Past, Present and Future”. The Victorian Auditor-General, Mr R. G. Humphrey, read a paper entitled “Emerging Issues in Public Sector Administration”. Mr D. Hill, Managing Director of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, read a paper entitled, “Government As Big Business: the Last Ten Years”. The secretary of the New South Wales Treasury, Mr P. Allen, read a paper entitled, “Improving the Financial Decision Making and Accountability of Government”. Mr John Klunder MP, Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of South Australia, read a paper on “Asset Replacement”. This is something that a number of Government members would be interested in, in a number of respects.

It is the paper on asset replacement that I would like to draw to the attention of the House today. Asset replacement is an entirely new concept in public administration. The South Australian Public Accounts Committee is the first governmental organisation in Australia to pioneer the concept of planning in this field. The State of Queensland, in common with many other States, has many assets. Queensland has schools and TAFE colleges; Queensland has hospitals, public housing, highways and a transport system; Queensland also has an electricity supply system, a water supply system and a sewerage system. These assets make the Queensland Government the biggest property-owner in the State. Each of these immensely valuable assets has its own particular life-span. Each of them suffers wear and tear and each is diminishing in value as a result of that wear and tear; yet Queensland does not have a register of the rate at which assets generally or specifically are declining in value and utility.

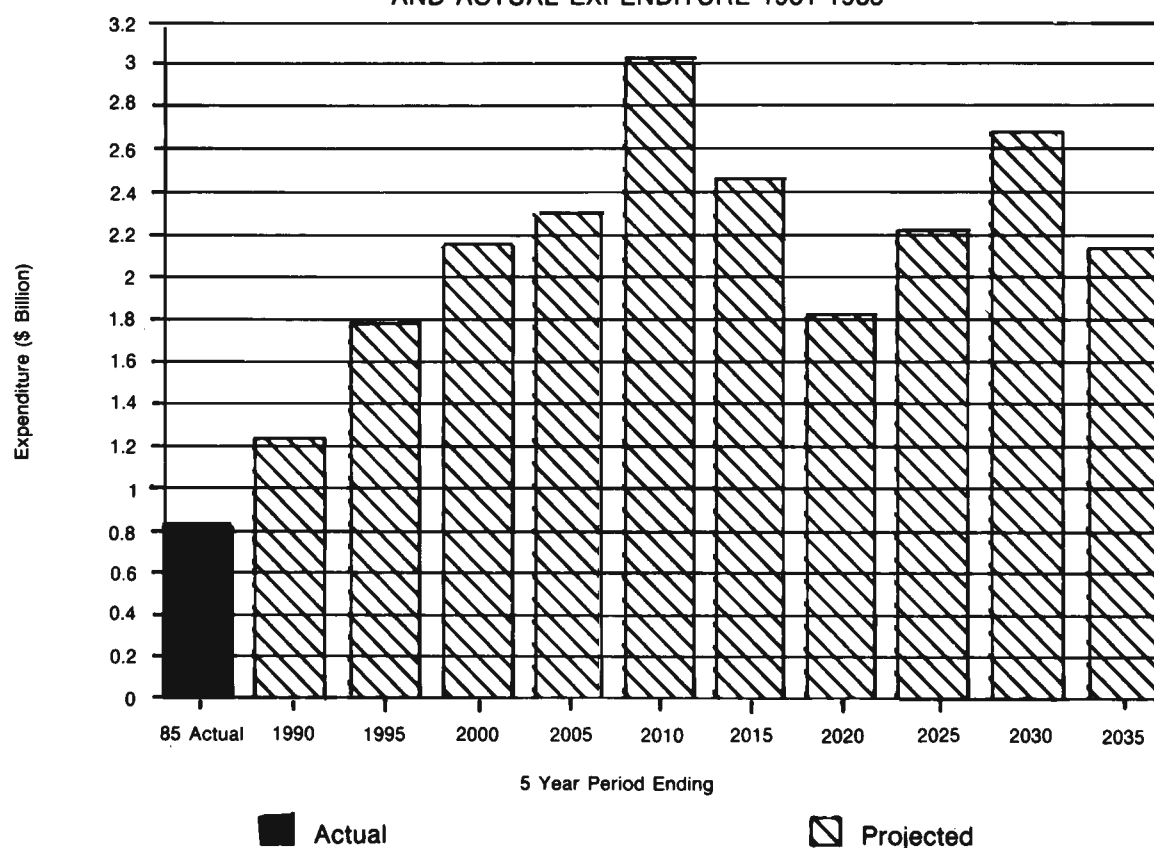
As a result of the work carried out by the South Australian Public Accounts Committee, South Australia—alone among the States—now has such a register. The value of such a register will become clear to honourable members as I continue with my speech.

I seek leave to have incorporated in *Hansard* page 91 of the *Report of the Biennial Conference of Public Accounts Committees*, Sydney, May 1987. This page, which I have asked the attendants to distribute to honourable members in the House, features a graph of the total projected replacement expenditure in South Australia, indicating the anticipated cost to that State of replacement of deteriorating assets between 1985 and 2035.

Leave granted.

FIGURE 1

TOTAL PROJECTED REPLACEMENT EXPENDITURE AND ACTUAL EXPENDITURE 1981-1985



Mr WELLS: I thank the House. If honourable members glance at that graph they will observe that the South Australians now know that the cost of asset replacement to the State's Treasury will go up by a steady increase until the year 2010, after which it will decline again. This information will be invaluable to the South Australian Government. It will enable it to determine the years in which it can expect to have the largest sum of free money available and in which years it will be required to keep funds aside for asset replacement.

I draw the attention of the House to the fact that the South Australian committee was using the term "replacement" to mean not replacement of the exact item—be it a building, a road, a bridge or a hospital—but replacement of its function. To put it another way—what the graph shows is how much it will cost the Government of that State to simply maintain the standard of services provided by the present capital assets in that State. The point that I wish to draw to the attention of the House is that it would be possible to gather that sort of information in Queensland.

As a result of the biennial conference of public accounts committees throughout Australia, it is very likely that the other States will immediately follow suit and undertake public accounts committee inquiries along the lines of that undertaken in South Australia. It would be a shame if Queensland, by virtue of a lack of a public accounts committee, was the last cab off the rank yet again.

Mr Borbidge: It doesn't have to be done by a public accounts committee, it can be done by other officers.

Mr WELLS: I thank the honourable member for Surfers Paradise for his contribution. It could be done by other officers, but it would be done most efficiently by a public accounts committee, because only a public accounts committee has the mandate to go behind the audit function of a particular department to determine the efficiency of a particular function. In other words, a public accounts committee is the only body in any administration that has the capacity to subpoena documents, to call witnesses before it, to analyse the efficiency of the workings of a particular program and to determine that the tax-payers are getting value for money from that program.

Mr Littleproud: Did they look over those investments in Victoria that are in so much trouble now?

Mr WELLS: Those investments in Victoria would not have been examined by the public accounts committee; they would have been examined first by the Auditor-General. That is why they were drawn to the attention of the public by the Auditor-General. The way in which things work is that the Auditor-General makes the preliminary examination and then, as my good friend the Leader of the Liberal Party explained to the House only a little while ago, he draws the attention of the public accounts committee to the need for a particular examination, and then the examination is continued.

As I was saying, it would be a shame if Queensland did not have a public accounts committee to do that.

I would like to offer the House an example that will illustrate the size of the stakes that I am talking about. The National Association of Australian State Road Authorities has recently distributed a document called *The Australian Roads Outlook Report*. Page 6 of that report states—

“Australian roads are major public assets worth an estimated \$100,000 million in 1986-87 dollar values. About 83,000 people are directly employed in the planning, design, construction and maintenance of roads.

Maintenance and pavement reconstruction works are necessary to retain the value of the existing road network. Together, they constitute the ‘upkeep’ requirement of the existing road networks. Upkeep therefore preserves and restores the physical condition of existing road networks to current engineering standards.”

As I say, that is the size of the stakes that I am dealing with. However, the crunch is that 60 per cent of roadwork costs goes in maintenance. The article states further—

“The present 60 per cent of total road works expenditure directed to maintenance and reconstruction activities is unlikely to be sufficient as road pavements age and the road freight task doubles.”

We are dealing with very big bickies. Asset replacement could save this State a tremendous amount of money and provide for it—

Mr Newton: The State must be developing with all that extra traffic on the roads.

Mr WELLS: I ask the honourable member for Glass House to repeat his remark.

Mr Newton: The State must be developing with all that extra traffic on the roads.

Mr WELLS: Unfortunately for the honourable member for Glass House, I was quoting Australiawide statistics. The State is not in fact developing. If the honourable member cares to look at any of the statistics on unemployment, bankruptcy, inflation

or any of the other important indices, he will see that the State is going backwards very seriously.

Mr Hayward: We are having some bankruptcies selectively confined to business people.

Mr WELLS: The honourable member for Caboolture, who is an accountant, would know these things very much better than honourable members opposite.

As well as the value of an asset replacement schedule in terms of enabling long-term Government planning, it could save this State from a number of nasty crises. Our South Australian colleague John Klunder gave the conference a number of overseas examples of disasters that could be attributed to inadequate asset replacement preparation. These are examples of crises owing to decaying infrastructure. As they know all about decaying infrastructure, I would ask honourable members opposite to pay particular attention to this.

Mr Austin: Does this mean you support the Tully/Millstream project?

Mr WELLS: I thank the Minister for his interjection. I was rather disappointed that the Minister for Mines and Energy was sitting in the Chamber apparently taking no notice of what I was saying. I do so enjoy the very few conversations that I do manage to have with him, and indeed about him. As I have told the House previously, when I was a Federal member and he was a State Liberal member, we used to share common territory. I have been reminded of what one constituent said to another on the very day the Minister left the Liberal Party and joined the National Party. With a heavy heart and sad voice one constituent said, "I don't know how he can do such a thing. By doing that he must lose a tremendous amount of face." The other said, "Yes, he does lose a tremendous amount of face but he still has one left."

I was giving the House some examples of crises owing to decaying infrastructure. One was the deferral of maintenance of New York's water supply system in the mid-1970s that caused an increased rate of deterioration. Now New York suffers a 10 per cent loss of water through its water supply system. However, worse than that, water supply system leaks caused a flood in New York's garment district in August 1983 and the city is being sued for \$2,000m.

Mr Austin: Would a public accounts committee predict those leaks?

Mr WELLS: Yes, a public accounts committee could provide this State with an asset replacement register, which would enable the Government to do the sort of planning that would determine a way to avoid such an occurrence.

In the northern hemisphere winter of 1986-87, four reservoirs in the north of London ran dry as burst mains and pipes drained as much as half the water put into the supply before it reached the taps. If something like that was to happen in Queensland, the loss of water would be traumatic. Because it rains all the time in England, it was not so disastrous. In a dry place like Queensland, it could be a major disaster.

Several East River bridges in New York have had their traffic flow restricted owing to structural decay. One of them, the Manhattan Bridge, can now carry only two subway trains at a time instead of four. An elevated section of the Miller Highway in mid-town Manhattan collapsed. In the United States the percentage of miles of interstate highway in poor condition more than doubled in the period from 1978 to 1980. The Comptroller-General of the United States reported to the Congress that billions of dollars will be needed to preserve those roads. If timely action is not taken, deterioration will accelerate and even more money will be needed for reconstruction. In 1980, 25 per cent of the bridges in the north east of the United States of America were reported to be structurally deficient.

Neither the Minister for Mines and Energy nor any other honourable member in this House knows that that will not happen in Queensland. I think that it is very unlikely. I am not citing these examples and saying that this sort of thing will happen tomorrow,

but the sort of information that would enable prediction of this sort of asset decay is not available in this State. It is not available in the State because the Government infrastructure is not there to enable it to occur.

I take the point made by the honourable member for Surfers Paradise that this could be done without a public accounts committee. However, it could not be done as efficiently without a public accounts committee. In this context, that is the important point that needs to be noted. The next advantage that would be provided by a program of asset replacement is that it would make possible improved asset management. The honourable member opposite who——

Mr Austin: How do you reckon that would work?

Mr WELLS: I ask the honourable Minister to repeat his foolish remark.

Mr Austin: Do you reckon that would work? Would you explain again how a public accounts committee will predict leaks in dams?

Mr Gygar: He is a bit thick; he got kicked in the head a couple of times too often.

Mr WELLS: I thank the honourable member for Stafford for that interjection. I think that the Minister is about as thick in terms of understanding these things as is his hide.

Mr Littleproud: You are going to be nasty; I can see that sticking out a mile.

Mr WELLS: No, I will not be nasty. However, I will explain how a public accounts committee would predict these things.

If Queensland had a public accounts committee that sought a report on asset replacement, as the South Australian public accounts committee did, then this Government would know when its assets would deteriorate and, of course, it would be able to predict those things. I know that that comes as a new idea to the Minister, as would almost anything that any honourable member suggested. However, I urge the honourable Minister to take it on board. I ask the Minister to think of the possibilities for saving money; the possibilities for avoiding crises; and the possibilities for running this State a little more efficiently. If the honourable Minister wants to become Premier, he could take some of these good ideas on board and use them to the advantage of the people of Queensland and receive great garlands of honour for doing so. But, no, all he does is refuse to grasp what is going on.

Mr Littleproud: With all this obvious ability in economic terms, how come you lost your Federal seat?

Mr WELLS: There is not much one can do about geometry. Honourable members opposite know all about geometry and drawing up boundaries. However, they do not know very much about arithmetic and they do not know very much about economics.

The next advantage that would be provided by a program of asset replacement is that it would make possible improved asset management. A systematised program of asset management would mean that attention could be given to the long-run costs of refurbishment of assets at the time that construction of new assets was being considered. Honourable members opposite might not have understood it but what I meant when I said that was that if the Government, when it determines that a new public work is going to be established, builds into that a projection of how long the thing will last before it decays and deteriorates, that would be a very useful statistic for anybody to have.

Mr Hayward: The members opposite who have farms no doubt do just that.

Mr WELLS: I thank the honourable member for Caboolture for making that point. This is a principle that honourable members opposite probably do use in the management of their farms.

Given that there are limits to the asset stock that can be sustained by any economy, projections of the cost of obviating deterioration and maintaining assets at their same functional level regarding service provision—ultimately, of course, what all these assets are about is providing a service to the public—will obviously be crucial information that could be included, and indeed should be included, in Cabinet submissions recommending the construction of new public works. This, however, does not happen.

Mr Austin: If the Government that you previously represented included all that in their programs for the new Parliament House, it will have a fair life, won't it?

Mr WELLS: I think that the new Parliament House in Canberra will stand as permanent testimony to Australia and permanent testimony to the "commitment" of the honourable Minister to nationhood.

Mr McPhie: You were on the public accounts committee that approved all that; no wonder they kicked you out.

Mr WELLS: It is very interesting that the honourable member should say that because in fact it was not the public accounts committee in Canberra that approved that at all; it was the public works committee.

I advise all honourable members that as well as a public accounts committee, what is needed in this place is a public works committee. This would prevent the Government from doing so many shonky dealings. It would prevent them from building white elephants all over the place. If Queensland had a bipartisan public works committee, it would ensure that every i was dotted and every t was crossed in terms of public expenditure and that those sums of money that were invested on behalf of the people of Queensland were in fact invested to their benefit.

The cost of maintaining assets is not built into submissions, but it would be if there was a systematic schedule of replacement.

The last aspect of Mr Klunder's remarks at the conference to which I referred earlier is his recommendations relating to accrual accounting.

Mr Stoneman interjected.

Mr WELLS: The honourable member behind me said that I cannot answer the Minister's interjections. If the Minister cannot understand the premise upon which remarks are made and makes some totally irrelevant remark I do not intend to delay the House by referring to his folly.

The last aspect relates to accrual accounting, which has been referred to by the honourable member for Caboolture on many occasions both in this Chamber and elsewhere. As the public accounts are currently drawn, they represent cash only—the income and expenditure of the Government. They do not make reference to the value of the capital assets owned by the people of Queensland. Consequently they cannot easily make reference to the depreciation of assets held. Queenslanders are entitled to know the value of the assets administered in their name by their stewards in this Parliament. They are also entitled to know the value of Queensland's assets in their own locality, whether it be a school, dam, bridge, highway, hospital or whatever it might be as against the value of the same assets in other areas of the State.

I am of the view that it is the correct role of Government to ensure that all of its citizens have access to the services that the community can provide in the proportion that they are needed. The kind of accrual accounting that I am referring to would make this possible and at the same time provide an invaluable source of information on the basis of which rational long-term governmental priorities can be planned.

I wish to spell that out for the benefit of honourable members on the Government side of the House. I advocate that not only the moneys spent and the revenues obtained, but also the value of the capital assets purchased and the capital assets held by the Queensland Government on behalf of the people of Queensland be written into the

accounts. If that were done, then Queenslanders would know what they own and they would be able to see the rate at which those things are depreciating.

Mr Klunder, the chairman of the South Australian Public Accounts Committee concluded his paper by suggesting to other State public accounts committees that they should——

Mr McPhie: Weren't you on the public works committee a moment ago? Now you are back on the public accounts committee.

Mr WELLS: Not only is the honourable member a slow learner, but also I doubt that he is learner at all.

Mr Klunder concluded his paper by suggesting to other State public accounts committees that they should undertake a survey by questionnaire to determine the state of management information available on assets in their respective States. He suggested that it would be useful for interstate public accounts committees to ask questions of those Government departments which hold major assets. These are the questions which he suggested and which could be usefully asked in Queensland——

- “(1) Is the replacement value of your stock of replaceable assets known? If so, what is its value in current dollars?
- (2) Is the annual rate of depreciation (calculated on the basis of replacement value) of your assets stock known? If so, what is its current dollar value?
- (3) Do you have a schedule of the cost and timing of assets replacement falling due across an extended period, for example, 30 years? If so, please supply a copy with costs stated in current dollar values.”

I suggest that this questionnaire could be usefully applied around Queensland Government departments. The acquisition and collation of all this information would provide this Government with an incomparable planning resource. However, this Government does not plan for or look to the future. This Government does not know what it has in the way of assets.

Mr Littleproud: Didn't you read the Budget Speech and listen to our speeches?

Mr WELLS: If the honourable member had been listening he would have understood that a moment ago I was explaining that that very Budget Speech which he reveres contains information about income and expenditure. It does not contain information about assets. It does not contain any form of accrual accounting. If the honourable member was bona fide in what he has just said, he would go to his front-benchers and say to them, “Why don't we have some accrual accounting?”

Queenslanders do not know the rate at which their assets are depreciating. There is no central register. They do not know when major expenditures will be needed in this State of the kind indicated in the graph I distributed earlier. We have a blind-man's buff Government in this State which lurches from one crisis to another crisis in terms of its public expenditure.

Mr Newton: It has developed well over the last few years, hasn't it?

Mr WELLS: It has developed so well that Queensland now has the highest levels of unemployment in Australia, the worst levels of bankruptcy in Australia and one of the worst inflation rates in Australia. In terms of asset management——

Mr Austin: On the table you have incorporated, it would be helpful if you explained to the House what the variables were on the expenditure side of that graph.

Mr WELLS: I thank the Honourable the Minister for his interjection. With the leave of the House, I table the document, which is the *Report of the Biennial Conference of Public Accounts Committees*, Sydney, May 1987.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (4.55 p.m.): In making my contribution to the debate, I believed that I would have had to rebut some of the comments made by the member for Murrumba.

Mr McPhie: But he didn't say anything.

Mr STONEMAN: I agree with the honourable member for Toowoomba North; he said absolutely nothing. His speech was a wandering diatribe on an old line. Unfortunately, it shows the depth of the Opposition's preoccupation with factionalism and with the little fights that are going on and becoming major brawls.

I am very pleased to support the basic structure and the tenet of the Appropriation Bill. I congratulate the Premier and Treasurer and his department on the formulation of a Budget during particularly difficult times. It is overlooked that the provider of many services—in other words, the State Government—that are the first line of support for the community is the recipient of a community backlash. Many people tend to overlook that a large proportion of expenditure by the State Government is dependent on payments from the Federal Government as a result of the initial taxation that is paid by the wide community. People tend to overlook that and say, "Taxation is the Federal Government's right and preserve." Maybe it is, but it is also the right of the people who pay the taxes to receive a just and equitable reward for their taxes and to be equally rewarded. It is sad that over \$400m, or perhaps nearly half a billion dollars, has not come back to this State. Therefore, in one way or another the Queensland Government has had to make up for that deficit and has had to continue to provide services without imposing additional taxes. To that end, I congratulate the Premier and Treasurer on being able to bring before the House a document that recognises all of those factors.

Mr McPhie: And well planned, too.

Mr STONEMAN: There is no doubt about that.

It is interesting that the people who condemn the State Government do not make any mention of the nation's falling credit-rating during the term of the Hawke Government and of the "world's greatest Treasurer". No mention has been made about that. The Federal Treasurer has taken us from amongst the clouds with the top operators to down amongst the Brazils, the Argentines, the Third-World countries, and even lower. No mention is made of record interest rates as contributing in a major way to the problems that face the community, the problems that face Government and the problems that face those who must provide the services. There is no indication of that at all. The people who condemn the State Government are not complaining—having meetings or street marches—about Australia's credit-rating or its record interest rates; nor do they mention the capital gains tax. They do not worry about things like that. No mention is made of those matters. They are geared up by members of the Opposition, who say, "You must come along and march about teacher aide hours." I concede that that is a very major concern of the community. However, it is a flow-on of the difficulties faced by the Minister for Education. Initially it was faced by the Premier, who had to formulate a Budget taking into consideration the reduced allocation of funds.

There is no mention whatsoever of reduced Federal support for primary industries. Right across this nation, primary producers have been the backbone of this country for generations, and they will continue to be. There is no mention of the reduction in primary industries support that has been carried on by successive Governments, particularly the Hawke/Keating Government. There is no mention of the selective and malicious reduction in State funding, particularly in relation to Queensland's share of taxation revenue.

All of those factors need to be balanced and adjusted in the minds of the community when the very necessary cut-backs and trimming-off of fat, which the Premier and Treasurer has had to undertake in arriving at the Budget for this very difficult year, are assessed.

I thank the Premier for arranging and making available in the continuing planning process the provision of funds in my electorate for facilities such as the modernisation and upgrading of the Ayr Hospital, which was very definitely overdue. Of course, I recognise that all of these things cannot happen at once.

Last year, other major expenditure occurred. My colleague the honourable member for Roma spoke about the Racing Development Fund. The Burdekin electorate was fortunate enough to be the recipient of a half-million dollar grant towards the structuring of greyhound facilities and improvements to the racecourse facilities in Ayr. The benefits that flow through the community are very obvious. It is wonderful to see families who are able to go out and enjoy an afternoon of greyhound-racing. Children seem to relate very much more to greyhound-racing than they do to horse-racing. That is very commendable.

The honourable member for Roma spoke about the four-zonal system, which always seems to be regarded as such a terrible thing. I was fortunate enough to give evidence to a recent Commonwealth committee. It is interesting to note that the Liberal Party saw fit not to put forward any proposal to that committee. In fact, it abstained.

It was interesting to hear the evidence and rationale that was presented by Senator Macklin. Not only were his statements lacking in credibility in a general sense, but they are becoming specifically lacking in credibility and are being recognised as such by all sections of the community. Even members of the Labor Party are starting to disown Senator Macklin.

Quite frankly, the distribution of votes on an equal basis is impossible. It may be possible one day, but the next day that possibility will disappear. It is impossible for a situation to exist in which all electorates maintain an equal size. I notice that the spokesmen for the Labor Party have disappeared. They claimed that, in some parts of the western and far-northern zone, the sheep vote. The Labor Party seeks to treat the people who live in those areas like sheep. It says, "Muster them up. Carve them up into exactly the same mobs and put them in paddocks that will carry the very same amount of stock." It must be recognised that distance creates problems. Some areas cannot be carved up into zones.

Mr Campbell: In the last century you could have had that argument.

Mr STONEMAN: The honourable member for Bundaberg would not have a clue.

The services in many areas of western and northern Queensland have declined because of the declining numbers of people in those areas. Airline services and many other services in those areas are no longer viable in their own right because education costs, the demands of education and many other facets of living in isolation have meant that there has been a drift of people, particularly young people, away from those areas. However, Labor members still say, "Reduce their representation. Make the electorates of Cook and Flinders one electorate. Make Mount Isa and Gregory into one electorate. Make Roma, Warrego and Balonne into one electorate, so that there are just a mere three seats in the whole of that western and far-northern area." That would be no problem at all to members of the Labor Party. They would disfranchise those people with one stroke of the pen and achieve nothing. They say, "Treat the people out there like sheep. Put them all in the one paddock." They assume that they all grow lucerne and that farms do not have varying carrying capacities and varying capacities to access services.

Mr Campbell: We are not like sheep.

Mr STONEMAN: Members of the ALP say, "Carve them up. We've all got the same problem. We all eat the same grass. We all do the same things. Let's be treated like sheep." What a lot of rot!

Mr Littleproud: That is a very good analogy.

Mr STONEMAN: Exactly. They have no basic understanding of some of the facts of life.

Mr Littleproud: They are very safe on the concrete footpath.

Mr STONEMAN: Exactly, and where they can view the ocean and walk down to the local hospital, or poke down another hundred yards to the Social Security office.

Mr Simpson: Or pedal the bike around the electorate.

Mr STONEMAN: Or pedal the bike around the electorate; exactly. They would not know. What is even worse, they do not want to know. That is the sad fact.

The Macklin suggestion and, by default, the Labor Party suggestion overlooked the fact that the Queensland zone system is mirrored by the Senate. It is exactly the same. For Senate representation Australia is effectively zoned. Each State has its own community of interest and is not considered in any way within normal Federal boundaries. The Senate system applies exactly the same principle as the Queensland zone system. It recognises that the smaller areas must be looked after. The States that do not have the capacity to stand up to the big fellows and get their fair share must be looked after. The community throughout Australia and, particularly, in Queensland recognise the fairness of that system.

Mr Littleproud: Would it be true to say that only the very best get to the top?

Mr STONEMAN: There is no doubt about that.

I return to the Senate. If the Senate system had one vote, one value, Senator Macklin and all those others who espouse one vote, one value——

Mr Simpson: He would not get in in New South Wales.

Mr STONEMAN: He would not be there. There would be four senators for Queensland, 12 for New South Wales, 10 for Victoria; Tasmania would be flat out having one; and the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory would have none at all. The people in those areas would not have a voice. They would not be represented. Honourable members can imagine what would happen.

I move on to some of the broader areas of the economy in north Queensland. In particular, I emphasise the value of tourism and primary industry. In the area surrounding Townsville, there is a need to broaden the base for tourism. The area needs entrepreneurs and people who are prepared to put their money up and go forward. It has been said often—and it is quite possibly true—that the entrepreneurial attitude does not exist in Townsville. Townsville has been dogged by a series of local government, State Government and now Federal Government ALP representatives who do not recognise nor support the need to broaden that base to stimulate activity and to put Townsville and the region on the map.

Certainly, Townsville has the Great Barrier Reef Wonderworld and other facilities, and the mall in Townsville is second to none. Townsville, by an act of God, I suppose, could be said to have the best esplanade and strand area. However, much more could be done. What needs to be done is to broaden the base of the tourist attractions in that area.

Some time ago in this House, I used the term “the 100-mile wonderland”. That is the area within a radius of 100 or 160 kilometres of Townsville. It extends as far north as Cardwell, as far west as Charters Towers and as far south as Bowen. A tremendous range of potential tourist sites are encompassed within that area. The Government, Government members and supporters of free enterprise are actively looking at that type of development. The area needs that broad range of tourist development.

In fact, Keith Melville, of Melville Mansions, has a project in a part of my electorate bordering the Townsville city area. Having represented that area, the member for Thuringowa would be aware of the project. Keith Melville is an entrepreneur who is

battling to do a top job in assisting tourism generally. I commend him, his son, Craig, and Pat, his wife, and various other people who are involved in trying to put a new face on tourism in that area. In close proximity lies the Billabong Sanctuary, which is one of a number of attractions in the area.

These areas need a large entrepreneurial presence—a drawcard that has the capacity to bring in international and interstate tourists and to make the area such that it is not just an area passed through on the way to another tourist destination, but a place where tourists spend their holidays. I make the following remarks with the best will in the world. Some of the places I will mention are great places; however, island holidays are expensive. Cairns is a great place, but once a person has seen the Barrier Reef, there is not much to do when it rains. People do not go on holidays to enjoy the rain. Unfortunately, Townsville does not have a very high annual rainfall; but as far as tourism is concerned, that is its No. 1 attraction. However, with the advent of an improved water supply from the Burdekin Dam, one hopes that Townsville will become a little greener.

I turn now to discuss a topic that cuts across tourism and primary industries. I refer to an initiative undertaken by the Minister for Primary Industries, Mr Harper, and his department in supplying funding for a fish restocking program. The Burdekin Area Fish Restocking and Fish Management Committee, of which I am a member, has received approximately \$30,000 to undertake a restocking program for the Burdekin River, in particular, and also the Haughton River, which is one of the major barramundi fishing areas in the nation. The money provided by the Minister is in a shire council bank account. Members of the local community plan to double the amount so that they can get between \$50,000 and \$60,000 to purchase fingerlings that will act as a springboard for the expansion of not only of a primary industry but also of a tourism industry. In that area, tourism has huge potential that can be realised, provided an international drawcard can be obtained.

Development of these industries has been made possible by the security provided by construction of the Burdekin Dam and the water storage capacity of Lake Dalrymple. I have spoken about that on a number of occasions, and I do not hesitate to continue to speak in support of the water storage capacity of the facility. People have suggested that it is a white elephant, but I suggest that they should go and ask people, who will benefit when the pipeline to Townsville is completed, whether it is a white elephant. Many people who live at Giru who have benefited from this facility—although, unfortunately, not all were able to benefit from it—should be asked whether it is worth while. The financial impact of providing an improved water supply in the area amounts to \$10m for 1987 and 1988 and will probably amount to a saving of \$40m or more for the Ayr/Home Hill/Brandon areas. The combined benefit of the pipeline, the dam and the lake to Townsville means I have no hesitation in saying that the cost associated with construction of the Burdekin Dam would be more than 50 per cent paid for by now. I do not think any of my Opposition colleagues from Townsville would disagree with me. The project has given the region hope and heart. If people do not have hope and heart, they do not progress with any confidence at all.

Mr McElligott: Water is at Giru.

Mr STONEMAN: The honourable member for Thuringowa will be delighted to know that water is at Giru. I thank the Minister for Water Resources, Mr Tenni, for the support he has given to that area. State Cabinet provided \$400,000 through the Queensland Water Resources Commission to provide the Giru area with diversions and temporary pumps.

Mr McElligott: It was too late.

Mr STONEMAN: The honourable member for Thuringowa would not have a clue. As I mentioned earlier, it is very sad that the provision of water resources was too late for some. However, even those people have been given the security and knowledge that in the future—provided that they can survive—an acute shortage of water will never happen again. Of itself, that is very worth while.

As I said, it is sad that not everyone has been able to be assisted. Probably six or eight farmers were not able to be assisted, but if the honourable member for Thuringowa cares to examine a front-page release that was published approximately two months ago, he will see a photograph of me with a couple of farmers when we were talking about people who would miss out, irrespective of the fact that water had been added to that river system. The water is down to Giru. From there it will be extended to other places.

The Land Administration Commission is constructing a pipeline worth almost \$1m to go down to the Cunggulla or lower Haughton area. Without the security of water from the Burdekin Dam, that would not have been possible. That means the capacity exists to enlarge a fishing village and holiday complex there to 600 homesites. Again, that is a part of the development that is made possible by the initiatives of the Government through this Appropriation Bill.

Mr McElligott: The people must be very grateful to the Hawke Labor Government.

Mr STONEMAN: That had nothing to do with the Hawke Labor Government.

Mr McElligott: The Burdekin Dam?

Mr STONEMAN: The Burdekin Dam was built by the people of Australia, not by the Hawke Labor Government. It was agreed to after the Premier of this State put the finger on Malcolm Fraser. Honourable members opposite want to get their facts straight. Hawke could not then back out of it. Maybe both Fraser and Hawke would have liked to have backed out of it, but the Premier of this State secured that dam for Australia, not just for north Queensland. It was paid for with tax-payers' funds, and there are plenty of tax-payers around the Burdekin, around Townsville and north Queensland. My God, it is unbelievable to suggest that the Hawke Government built that dam.

Mr Eaton interjected.

Mr STONEMAN: If the honourable member were to ask any member of the Townsville Chamber of Commerce to recount the most ludicrous statement that was ever made he would be told about the occasion on which Ted Lindsay, after taking the Treasurer up there, stood up in front of the chamber and said, "Paul, I want the dam here." Paul said, "Yes, Ted." They were basically the words that were used. He was the laughing-stock of the whole of north Queensland. The members of the Townsville Chamber of Commerce were in stitches. I think it will be found that Mr McElligott was very embarrassed about some of the statements that were made because they were unbelievably ludicrous. The honourable member should talk about people such as Ian Chisholm, Joe Bugeja and Ross Chapman, who was the secretary of the committee that pulled those things together. Over a long period many useful committees worked together. On many, many occasions the Premier himself has mentioned that every time he set foot in north Queensland the late Ernie Ford would be tugging at his sleeve and asking, "Mr Premier, when are you going to build the Burdekin Dam?" That is how it happened. The Premier of this State provided the catalyst for the construction of that dam. There can be no backing away from that fact.

I will now refer to some of the facets of the work that is being done by various Government departments. The Department of Primary Industries is working in a particularly difficult area of soil types. It is trying to put together a list of the various soil structures on farms throughout the new irrigation area. Although it is probably true that a range of profitable crops cannot be presently grown, it has to be remembered that developments such as the Burdekin Dam and the irrigation area are not for any one particular year or any one particular era, they are for the history and the continuing future of this great State. They are just not for the here and now. It has a time-scale of 100 or 200 years, not just one or two seasons.

In carrying out that work, those DPI people are coming together with experts from the Water Resources Commission and others and they are looking at the very difficult soil types and the problems that those farmers will encounter in trying to make a living

when ultimately the farms in the difficult areas are opened up. I refer particularly to the problems of water penetration in some types of soil. On a disappointing note I say that the Treasury people have been unable, because of Commonwealth guide-lines, to agree to a support process that allows some assistance on the freighting of gypsum. Many members opposite would not know what gypsum is. It is a by-product—

Mr Davis: I told you about it earlier.

Mr STONEMAN: I am grateful that the honourable member understands. There is a plentiful supply of gypsum at the mouth of the Brisbane River. The problem is that, in freight terms, it is about \$68 a tonne away from the farmers of the Burdekin. Because gypsum is also very expensive to apply, I was seeking support to get some carted up north. The most important aspect of using gypsum is that, when it is applied to farmlands that have not received natural rainfall over a long period it facilitates the entry of pure water into the soil.

The tragedy that faces most farmers is that they have available irrigation water from the Burdekin Dam which, at great expense, they can pump from the river and the underground system to irrigate the rows of their cane-fields, but the water runs across the top of the ground. It will not penetrate the soil. The problem is that the water is too pure to penetrate the soil. If the farmers could get a mix of one part salt water or sea water and three parts of pure water, the problem would possibly be overcome. The fact of the matter is that those crops are dying from a lack of water. Although the water is running across the top of the soil, it will not penetrate sufficiently to get to the roots. It was sad that the guide-lines did not allow for the provision of a fairly minimal subsidy to help those farmers with this problem..

A theory that seems to have a great deal of validity is that rainfall on the coast has a greater salt concentration than people might think. So when rainfall occurs in coastal regions it provides salt naturally and helps the water penetrate the soil.

The irrigation of land carries with it huge electricity pumping costs. The Burdekin water boards have to pump the water out of the river to recharge the underground basin. The farmers have to lift it at least once and sometimes twice. I would not like anyone to think that, because the Burdekin Dam is there, all problems are solved. The problems of soil types, water penetration, farm sizes and a whole range of other problems have to be overcome. The development of the Burdekin is a pioneering feat, but the State Government, through its budgetary processes, has recognised that and is facilitating the research work that is being undertaken.

I wish to touch on a subject that makes a mockery of the Federal Labor Government in respect of States' rights. I am interested in the resounding silence of Senator Margaret Reynolds, who is supposed to represent the State, on the theft of the Cape Bowling Green Lighthouse.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr STONEMAN: Members opposite do not like to hear that.

Senator Reynolds, who is supposed to represent Queensland, has allowed her colleague the Federal Minister for Transport to use the navy to take part of the history of north Queensland and, with the aid of helicopters from the armed services, place it on a navy ship and take it to Darling Harbour in New South Wales without reference to one single person in that region or in this State. The shire council, the Department of Harbours and Marine, the Federal member and I, as the State member for the area, received no notification. At that point it was assumed that even Senator Reynolds had no idea of its removal. But has there been any support for the heritage of the people of north Queensland from the infamous senator? No way! Not a single, solitary word of support for the history and heritage of that part of the State has been heard from Senator Reynolds, yet she stood up and said what a marvellous job Senator Richardson is doing in going up to the north, taking away the rights of north Queenslanders and the rights

of the State to manage its resources and handing over a vast tract of the wet, tropical areas of north Queensland to the control of a foreign body. That is quite ludicrous.

This House does not hear people such as the member for Murrumbidgee, who spoke previously in this debate, saying that a public accounts committee would not stop things such as the foreign currency losses in Victoria or the former Minister for Corrective Services in New South Wales, Mr Jackson, doing all those dreadful things and releasing prisoners by the thousands. He did not mention the fact that public accounts committees did nothing to stop those things.

Not a single word is heard about the problems of the Darling Harbour development and the fact that it is becoming a national scandal——

Mr Elliott: It is getting on the nose a bit, isn't it?

Mr STONEMAN: It is totally on the nose. In fact, the people of New South Wales are at long last waking up. There is no doubt that there will be a change of Government in that State.

Not a single word is heard about the stealing of the heritage of north Queensland or Queensland and about that heritage being moved into the cesspit of Darling Harbour. Even worse, the Federal Government has taken our heritage down to Darling Harbour on a pretext that does not exist. It is supposed to be going to the National Maritime Museum.

All honourable members have heard the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General of this State advise this House that the legislation setting up the National Maritime Museum does not exist. Yet Senator "Biggles"—Senator Evans—goes up there in the dead of night with the navy of the nation and skulks away with the lighthouse. It is an unbelievable act and Senator Reynolds should be totally ashamed of her inactivity.

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier, Minister Assisting the Treasurer and Minister for Police) (5.26 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members who have spoken in the debate. I do not propose to speak at any length on the matters raised. However, some comments cannot be allowed to go unchallenged. In particular, the Leader of the Opposition has tried to make out that the Queensland Government's record on industrial matters is not as good as that of Labor Governments in other States. Obviously, the Leader of the Opposition did not read this morning's *Courier-Mail*. An article in that newspaper stated—

"Queensland's industrial strike rate has fallen to its lowest annual level since the current industrial dispute statistical series began in 1980.

The Statistics Bureau reported yesterday that 110 days were lost for every 1,000 employees in the year to July."

The same article quotes the record of the Labor-governed States of New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia as follows—

New South Wales	..	243 days lost per 1,000 employees
Victoria		226 days
Western Australia	..	232 days."

As the newspaper article stated, the Queensland figure was 110 days lost per 1 000 employees—less than half the number in those other States. Clearly the Government's policy on industrial dispute laws is working.

The Leader of the Opposition also trotted out his same old well-worn economy-bashing. He conveniently quotes any statistic, no matter how irrelevant or insignificant, simply to be negative. He conveniently ignores such key economic indicators as building approvals for new residential buildings, where the increase for Queensland in the September quarter of 1987 was 41 per cent higher than the increase in the same quarter of the previous year. The figure for Australia as a whole was 14.3 per cent. Queensland has a similar advantage in the non-residential area.

In keeping with this negative attitude, the Leader of the Opposition tried to make the claim that the Queensland Government is driving industry away. What nonsense! This Government has been right to the fore in attracting industry to Queensland through some of the most generous pay-roll tax concessions in Australia. It is the high-taxing policy of the Labor Governments in other areas that will be their eventual undoing.

I was amazed that the Leader of the Opposition would talk about the "unregulated development" that is supposed to be taking place in the community. I ask him: is he criticising development? Is he criticising entrepreneurial effort? Is he seriously suggesting that this State should have a regulated economy in the socialist model? Surely not. If he does believe in heavy controls and regulations on business, it is no wonder that his colleagues in Canberra are so worried about him.

The Queensland Government has been a leader in the reform of business regulations. The Government took a very courageous decision to legislate to take every regulation off the statute-book and, after exhaustive examination, reinstate only those deemed necessary.

I point out also for the benefit of the Opposition that the Commonwealth Government does have a primary responsibility to assist industries such as the sugar industry. It cannot take from the industry in good times by way of income tax without giving a little back when times are hard.

The honourable member for Nundah has raised the matter of the proposed rewrite of the Financial Administration and Audit Act. Let me assure him that it is the intention of this Government not to lose any of those very desirable aspects of the legislation, but rather to build on them to cater for changing circumstances and to ensure that this State retains its pre-eminent position in financial administration law in this country.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 5 and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

ACACIA RIDGE SHOPPING-CENTRE FREEHOLDING BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 10 November (see p. 3958).

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable member for Wolston.

Mr R. J. GIBBS (Wolston) (5.32 p.m.): I was distracted by the marvellous conversation that I was having with my colleague the honourable member for Windsor.

Mr McPhie: You were talking to yourself.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I know that the honourable member for Toowoomba North has mental problems and that he has visions. One of the most horrible experiences in his life must be getting up and looking at himself in the mirror every morning.

The Opposition does not oppose the legislation that is before the House this evening, which refers to the freeholding of the land at the shopping centre in Acacia Ridge. This is indeed a welcome piece of legislation for the people who have lived in the Housing Commission area of Acacia Ridge for many years and certainly for those people who from time to time are granted Housing Commission homes in that area.

From talking to my colleague the honourable member for Archerfield, and as somebody who some years ago spent six years in the Housing Commission area at Inala,

I hope that this concept of Housing Commission estates will never be seen again. I hope that these kinds of estates will never be developed by any Governments in the future, because they have been proven to be social and economic disasters. Apart from the inadequate public transport, one of the major problems of these areas has been the lack of suitable shopping facilities for people domiciled in those areas. Recently, the Inala shopping centre was updated, and I understand that is next on the list for the Minister in terms of providing a suitable Bill to cover that centre.

The freeholding of land at the Acacia Ridge shopping centre is a most welcome move for both the residents and the established businesses in the area. Any honourable members who, over the years, have had the opportunity to visit the shopping centre at Acacia Ridge could only say that it is an absolute disgrace. Whilst access to the area has been reasonable, it has left a lot to be desired. Many past and present tenants, knowing that they have had a captive audience, have taken some advantage of the area. As a consequence of that, they have not provided the services, the goods or suitable facilities in which people can enjoy shopping in an environment that is required in today's modern times.

I concur with some of the comments in one section of the Minister's speech, and that is one of the reasons, apart from those that I have outlined already, why I lean heavily in support of the legislation. I have always been baffled by the Housing Commission's having to pick up the bill for maintenance and upgrading of roadways and footpaths covered by the shopping centre areas. I have always believed that that should be the responsibility of those people who are in charge of leaseholds for those areas of the estate. As a consequence, it would allow more money to be put back into that sector of housing that the Opposition supports so earnestly.

I take particular note of that facet of the legislation that will establish in shopping centres bodies corporate similar to home-unit bodies corporate. Whilst I believe that the establishment of a body corporate is the correct action, I hope that the body corporate that will be established in the Acacia Ridge area will not only be representative of those businesses that are already established, which I believe are looked after in an exceedingly generous way by this legislation, but also accept its responsibility and give an undertaking to begin upgrading the facilities at the shopping centre almost immediately. I reiterate that the shopping centre is in a disgraceful condition. It is a dirty, untidy shopping centre. Maintenance on it has been very poor. Aesthetically, it does nothing to improve the area in which it is located. I hope that my challenge will be met by the new body corporate in its very early days.

I am fascinated, as is my colleague the honourable member for Bundaberg, who will expand on this point later, about clause 8, which deals with the purchase price of estate in fee simple. As to the way that any of the business-owners may wish to pay for the properties—that is, whether they wish to pay them off on a yearly instalment basis or a monthly basis for the 10-year period—the Bill states in proposed section 8 (1)—

“Payment of that sum shall be . . .

(b) by annual instalments extending over a period not exceeding 10 years commencing on the date appointed for the purposes of section 6 . . .”

Clause 9 states—

“Interest on purchase price ordinarily not payable. (1) Interest shall not be chargeable in respect of a purchase price that is payable by annual instalments except in respect of an annual instalment or any part of an annual instalment that is due and payable in accordance with section 8 and is unpaid.”

I would like the Minister to tell me in his reply why that special arrangement has been arrived at. People who purchase these properties in fee simple will be part of the body corporate structure. I acknowledge that the price they will pay will be determined by the Valuer-General's Department and that it is based on 1987 valuations. All honourable members would be well aware that, if the body corporate and the group of people in the shopping centre respond to the comments that I have just made—that is,

that they immediately improve upon those sites—valuation on those properties should be an immediate business boon.

I know that the Minister is very much aware of the boom that is presently taking place in property prices throughout the nation. That boom is just beginning in Queensland. The Minister would be aware also that those people in the shopping centre will have a handsome windfall placed in their laps.

I am intrigued as to how this seemingly one-off situation has occurred. Over a period of 10 years, if a selective repayment method of making one repayment per year is adopted, those people will be able to repay their loans on a totally interest-free basis. That is an extraordinary business deal that I doubt very much would apply to people in other small businesses anywhere else in this State. I assume that this Government is laying the groundwork for similar legislation that will be introduced in relation to Housing Commission land and the shopping centre that is already located at the Inala Civic Centre. Perhaps the Minister can clarify that aspect in his reply.

I reiterate that the Opposition is happy to support this legislation. To say the least, it is a very novel approach—a generous approach—for those people who are currently in business at that shopping centre. As I said at the outset, my major reason for welcoming the legislation is that it will go a long way towards improving the facilities for the people of Acacia Ridge, which is long overdue. Since the inception of that area as a Housing Commission estate, and because of the absolutely diabolical facilities that have been provided at that shopping centre, the people of Acacia Ridge have been treated almost as third-class citizens.

The Opposition welcomes the legislation.

Mr HYND (Nerang) (5.42 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I rise to speak in the debate on this legislation. The Minister should be applauded for the introduction of these measures. What is being proposed is a commonsense step. It is also a reflection of the changing situations that the Queensland Housing Commission faces and the steps that it takes to meet requirements that do alter from period to period.

This is a move to discontinue an association that the Queensland Housing Commission established more than 20 years ago. In doing so, it showed a characteristic that it continues to display today—one of innovation in meeting the needs of its rental tenants. Today we see a lot of that innovation in the approach the commission makes to housing design and land use. The Minister should be congratulated for the commission's readiness to adopt measures that will benefit both its tenants and enhance its own efficiency.

The subject of our attention today is a development that took place back in the early 1960s. It was a time when commission rental accommodation development was taking place at Acacia Ridge. To help that development, the commission wanted to facilitate the development of shops for the service and convenience of the families who were establishing new homes there. It opted for a drive-in shopping centre—one of the earliest such centres to be developed in Brisbane. The commission owned land that it made available to a total of 11 lessees for development as a shopping centre. It was indeed an innovative move, for it was taken before the days of the system of group titles. It produced a variety of shops in the one complex. The shops were surrounded by areas providing off-street parking. Those shops have been operating on perpetual leases that were issued under the State Housing Act.

The changes that will take place with the introduction of this legislation have been foreshadowed in previous legislation. Seven years ago the move was made to convert to freehold business leases that were operated by the commission. Because of particular circumstances, two areas were excluded from the provisions of that legislation. The two areas were Acacia Ridge and the larger shopping centre at Inala.

The difficulties involved with Acacia Ridge go back to the concept of the development as a drive-in shopping centre. Because it was such a centre, it had parking areas around the shops. The Minister has already, in the second-reading speech, explained why it was

not possible to include Acacia Ridge in the provisions of earlier legislation. Briefly, it would have left the commission without the revenue of the Crown land rent but, at the same time, carrying the responsibility for maintenance of things such as the car parking and lighting of the area. I am sure that the members of this House would agree with that, knowing, as we do, the pressures that have developed upon public housing authorities around the nation.

The commission is addressing this situation by introducing legislation which will enable freeholding to be achieved by registering a group titles plan over the whole area. The parking area, which has been referred to, then becomes common property under the control of the body corporate. That body corporate will consist of all the present holders of perpetual town leases. Under the new legislation, these become lots in the group titles plan.

I am pleased to see also that a concessional figure is being provided for lessees who wish to convert. I think, under the circumstances, that this is a fair measure and will help offset the additional responsibilities such as the body corporate charges that the former lessees will now adopt.

Once more, I congratulate the Minister on yet another positive step being undertaken by the Queensland Housing Commission.

Hon. N. E. LEE (Yeronga) (5.46 p.m.): The Liberal Party supports the legislation. In fact, anything to do with freeholding is very high indeed on the Liberal Party's platform.

Mr Comben: You make a quid out of that, don't you?

Mr LEE: No. We do not worry about that. We like to see people have the right to own their own land, not the Crown owning it all.

I congratulate the Minister and the department on their attitude over the last few years. When I was the Minister, the home-ownership scheme was first introduced. That scheme allowed a person to purchase his own home with a deposit of \$200. In fact, that person could pay off the deposit by paying an extra \$5 a week rent. Over 40 weeks, that person would accumulate the \$200 deposit. That was achieving something similar to that which this legislation is achieving. It held the price of the home to the value at the date of the application. Therefore, if people did not have the \$200 deposit, the inflationary costs were not added to the price of the house; it was held at the price at the date of the original application.

Over the last few years, the Queensland Housing Commission has encouraged freeholding and home-ownership. At present it is encouraging freeholding leases, which is very welcome news to the Liberal Party and me.

Freeholding of the shopping centre at Acacia Ridge was actually under consideration when I was Minister. It was one of the first projects that I examined.

Mr Booth: Tell us why you didn't fix it up.

Mr LEE: I will do that. It is easy to explain.

As the member for Wolston has just said——

Mr Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr LEE: No, he will never be—never in a fit.

The member for Wolston said that Inala would also be looked at. As honourable members can imagine, the lessees and landlords of the property live all round Australia and are very hard to contact. In this case, 11 owners with addresses all round Australia had to be contacted and a road closure was involved. Have honourable members ever tried to have a road closed and dedicated back to the Crown so that the land could be freeholded? Just to close a road and have it dedicated back to anybody is a major task.

Mr Simpson: I had one done the other day, as a matter of fact.

Mr LEE: I have no doubt the honourable member did. Nevertheless, that would not have been accomplished in five minutes. By the time all the procedures are followed for a road closure—including advertising and so forth—it takes a long while. The honourable member for Warwick might be interested to know that one of the reasons that things were not able to be carried out immediately was that so many preliminary things had to be done. The amalgamation of a roadway with existing freehold is not a five-minute job either. It takes years of preparation to get those things done. The Government has also provided for a group title plan to operate in respect of the land, which is also not accomplished overnight.

I am pleased to note that a project that was started many years ago has been carried on by other Ministers and that the present Minister for Works and Housing, Mr I. J. Gibbs, has ensured that it has come to fruition. I congratulate the Minister on the part that he has played.

Mr Palaszcuk: When was it started?

Mr LEE: When I was a Minister in the 1970s.

I note that the purchase price can be paid over a period of 10 years, or as a lump sum, and that repayments will be interest free. It is not bad if people can obtain interest-free finance. It is pretty good, but it is not quite as good as the terms graziers receive. Graziers are given interest-free finance over 40 years.

Mr Randell: No, they aren't.

Mr LEE: Oh, yes they are. Grazing homestead leases may be freeholded over a period of 40 years, interest free. The honourable member cannot argue with me because any finance that is interest free is a pretty good deal. The legislation presently before the House is a good deal for business people. However, it is not as good as the deal provided for graziers. Perhaps graziers are more deserving; I do not know.

When payment is made over a term, the annual amount payable will be increased in accordance with the CPI. It is fair and reasonable that the CPI should be built into repayments. One would expect that to be so. Again, however, I point out that a CPI increment has not been built into repayments made by graziers. Graziers are in fact better off than the business people affected by this legislation.

Setting the valuation at a 1985 figure is also a very generous gesture. Conversion has been back-dated to the time at which applications to freehold were made. This part of the scheme will operate in much the same way as home-ownership proposals operate in the Queensland Housing Commission.

Honourable members will note that the lessee pays to the commission land rent at 12 per cent per annum. When I was a Minister, the rate was 3 per cent of the valuation. It is crazy to believe that people would want to freehold when they can obtain a lease for 3 per cent of the valuation. Under recommendations given by Housing Commissioners Norm Hitchins and Stewart Hall, the rate was increased to 12 per cent. State Cabinet agreed to the increase, which is realistic in terms of payment for the leases.

Mr Randell: Did you do that?

Mr LEE: When I was Minister, yes.

This is good legislation. I am surprised that members of the Australian Labor Party like it, because the word "freehold" is part of it. It amazes me that members of the ALP agree with anything to do with freeholding.

Mr Randell: Some of the factions do not agree with it.

Mr LEE: That might be so. There must be some explanation that I have not figured out yet. I made notes on my speech to remind me to object to the fact that the Opposition does not agree with the legislation——

Mr Eaton: We are not against freeholding small areas. It is the big acreages that we do not want to be made freehold.

Mr LEE: Basically, members of the Opposition are against the freeholding of any land. As far as they are concerned, that is the end of the road.

Before I conclude, I wish to tell the House a story about a former Housing Commissioner, Mr George Campbell. He was a very good officer. I meant to refer to him when the Works and Housing Estimates were presented, but I did not have time.

Honourable members will recall that Queensland Housing Commission houses were erected on stumps with a concrete lintel around them. In other words, the foundations should have been in the ground but the house was built up on stumps. The houses stuck out like a country lighthouse. I think that that was the word I used to describe them at the time—although I am not sure—but I said that, wherever I went, I could see these Housing Commission houses sticking out everywhere.

I suggested to Mr Campbell that the Housing Commission should take up modern-day housing construction. He asked me what I meant and I told him that the Housing Commission should adopt the slab-on-ground technique. I told him that the Housing Commission should adopt a modern approach and should design houses to be erected on concrete slabs. He said to me, "Mr Minister, that is a very big decision and a very big step for the Housing Commission to take." I said, "Mr Campbell, go home, think about it, sleep on it and come back and see me at 8 o'clock in the morning." Next morning he returned and said, "Mr Minister, I have had a terrible night. I did not sleep all night worrying about this." I said, "Mr Campbell, let's get this straight. You slip up town, go and see a doctor and get yourself a script for some sleeping-pills because we are going to start slab-on-ground construction." That is why the ugly looking Housing Commission homes on stilts ceased to be built and instead new brick houses were built on concrete slabs.

Mr Stephan: You are a man of vision.

Mr LEE: I thank the honourable member very much. It is good to see that he recognises talent.

Before I conclude, I would like to speak about Stewart Hall, who is retiring very soon. He has been a very good friend of mine for many years. I think the date of his retirement is the 18th of next month. I wish him good luck and good health. As far as I am concerned, he has been an excellent officer. He will be missed. I would like to say to him that he should not make a pest of himself at home to his wife because she is a very nice woman. Instead, he should be like Mr Hitchins and become a golfing burglar. I wish Mr and Mrs Hall a merry Christmas.

Sitting suspended from 5.56 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr PALASZCZUK (Archerfield) (7.30 p.m.): The Bill deals with land occupied by a shopping centre at Acacia Ridge. In the final presentation, I wish to take the opportunity to congratulate the Minister on his initiative and also to congratulate the former Ministers for Works and Housing, the member for Yeronga, Mr Lee, and the former member for Burnett, Mr Wharton. My electorate has suffered problems from inadequate shopping centres, especially those sited on Crown land. The Acacia Ridge shopping centre became the Cinderella of shopping centres throughout the Brisbane area and because the land was under the control of the Queensland Housing Commission, very few improvements were effected. The lack of toilet facilities at that shopping centre was scandalous. Because of a lack of consultation between the QHC and the Brisbane City Council, that problem obtained over a long period.

Another problem that was evident at the Acacia Ridge shopping centre was the fact that a dedicated road ran through the car park of the shopping centre. That traffic hazard jeopardised the safety of shoppers. Age pensioners of the area were unable to walk down the steep slope to get to the shops. For the past 10 years, to no avail, both my predecessor and I attempted to have steps built—although I must admit that in the last month a set of stairs has finally been constructed by the Queensland Housing Commission.

With the passage of this legislation the shopping centre will now come good. I have spoken to the majority of the shop-keepers there and, as the Minister said in his second-reading speech, most of them agree with the legislation now before the House.

Turning to the Inala shopping centre, which is much larger than the Acacia Ridge shopping centre—that was a model for all shopping complexes in Brisbane when it was first built in the early 1960s. Because of the problems caused by the absence of group title, the complex has deteriorated. However, about three years ago that problem was addressed to a certain extent when Bob Tucker's company, Maembe Constructions, erected the Inala Plaza, which is the show-piece of shopping centres in my electorate. I have always been saddened by the fact that the old section of the Inala shopping centre was left to its own resources. For a number of years there was an inability to effect any repairs or improvements. When it was compared with the shopping centre at the other end of the Civic Centre, namely the Inala Plaza, it left a lot to be desired. I must admit that the CEP grant from the Federal Government enabled considerable improvements such as paving and so on to be effected; so the CEP scheme served its purpose within the Inala Civic Centre.

I wish to highlight to the House that the rate-payers of my electorate, as tax-payers of Queensland, can be held liable for millions of dollars in compensation that would have to be paid to developers. I tie this in to the fact that the Acacia Ridge shopping centre is to be freeholded. The matter has come to a head with the scheme to construct the world's tallest building. Under the town plan, which was put up by the Liberal Lord Mayor and endorsed by the National Party in this House, it is possible for any developer to build in this city a building of any height provided it covers no more than 35 per cent of the area of the site. When one considers the Acacia Ridge shopping centre and its surrounding car park, one can see that the area covered by the building meets the criterion of no more than 35 per cent of the total land area. It is theoretically possible, then, for a developer to build a 1 000-storey building, provided that the developer has enough acquired land. That could occur in the Acacia Ridge shopping centre. The Lord Mayor knew this and she changed the rules. Alderman Atkinson is misleading the people of Acacia Ridge and the people of Brisbane.

Sir William Knox: It has been like that for ages.

Mr PALASZCZUK: Yes.

The Lord Mayor is fabricating any outrage that she may express about this project. Does any honourable member seriously believe that the council was not approached about this project? Even to get it to the model stage, consultations at very high levels would have had to take place. No developer would go to this amount of trouble without expectation that the project would proceed.

The only person on the Government side to come out of this with any degree of credit is the honourable member for Barambah, the Premier. Along with the Lord Mayor, the Premier was invited to the model launch by Mr Minuzzo. The Lord Mayor could not make it, leaving the poor Premier to carry the can himself. I am very concerned that that sort of development could occur in the Acacia Ridge shopping centre when the shopping centre is freeholded.

The Premier is on the nose with the National Party, which is using anything it can to get rid of him. However, unlike Mrs Atkinson, at least the Premier has been consistent. The National Party supported the town plan, and even the vocal member for Mount Gravatt supported it. It had no hesitation in doing so. However, when the plan that conforms to the town plan comes up, the Liberals go to water. This has caused a great deal of uncertainty in the development of Brisbane, and I am very concerned that when the legislation is transferred to the Inala shopping centre, the same sort of uncertainty will arise at Inala. Developers have possibly already made investment purchases with the town plan in mind. The Liberal council has abandoned its own town plan. The legal action alone will cost millions.

I noticed that recently the Lord Mayor said that she feared that a huge hole that would never be filled would be created in the city. The reason that it may never be

filled is the incompetence of her administration. She is structurally incapable of sticking to her own plan. There is a way out, and this is the way out. If the Brisbane City Council is fair dinkum and does not want that building to proceed, it can simply restrict the number of cars that are permitted to park on the site. The Brisbane City Council has the power to do that. At least that would be a more honest approach than the present path of infamy along which the current Lord Mayor is asking us to travel.

Mrs Atkinson and the National Party deserve to be censured over the issue. Unfortunately, it will be my constituents, who are Brisbane rate-payers and also Queensland tax-payers, who will foot the bill.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (7.38 p.m.): I join with other honourable members in supporting the Acacia Ridge Shopping-centre Freeholding Bill. It is a dynamic piece of legislation in that it meets the changing needs of the community and especially the Acacia Ridge community.

However, I want to deal with the purchase option, that is, the annual instalment repayment alternative that is provided for in this Bill. The position is that although the Bill provides for no interest to be charged under the annual instalment alternative, the repayments are based on the Consumer Price Index. In a way it is a very messy and sneaky means of introducing a charge and avoiding calling it interest. The Government might as well have called it interest rather than saying that the repayments are based on the Consumer Price Index.

It is very important to consider the aspect of freeholding under the Housing Commission and the Lands Department. I seek leave to have incorporated in *Hansard* a table showing the comparative freeholding costs under these departments.

Leave granted.

TABLE
of
COMPARATIVE FREEHOLDING COSTS OF HOUSING COMMISSION, LANDS
DEPARTMENT AND THE ACACIA RIDGE SHOPPING CENTRE FOR PROPERTY
VALUED AT \$50,000

	HOUSING COMMISSION		LANDS DEPARTMENT	
	Acacia Ridge Shopping Centre	Family Home	Urban	Rural
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Cash	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Normal Repayments (C.P.I. 8.0%)	72,400* over 10 years	84,000 over 10 years	50,000 over 30 years	50,000 over 60 years
Pay-out after 4 years (C.P.I. 8.0%)	60,300**	56,400	31,000	19,000

Notes: At current C.P.I. of 9.3% * \$76,600

 ** \$62,100

Mr CAMPBELL: The table shows that a property valued at \$50,000, with normal repayments under freeholding, under "Lands Department", under "Urban", would be able to be repaid over 30 years and under "Rural", it would be able to be repaid over 60 years. In actual fact they are not paying any interest. This means that they are allowed to freehold the land at an amount that is the normal annual rental.

If homes built by the Housing Commission are on land that is perpetually leased, the repayments on land worth \$50,000—a couple of blocks of land—would total \$84,000, including an allowance of 12 per cent for interest. Under the Acacia Ridge Shopping-centre Freeholding Bill—using a CPI of 8 per cent—the repayments would amount to \$72,400. This illustrates that there is no fairness or justice in the valuing of that perpetually leased land owned by the Government. People are asked to pay more in

order to freehold land, depending on whether an area comes under the Lands Department or the Housing Commission. That is basically unfair. The position is even worse when one looks at the pay-out figure after four years. Because the Lands Department uses a very involved method to determine the future value of the annual rental payments, when the present value of that figure is calculated, a total of \$31,000 would be paid to the Lands Department for an urban block of land worth \$50,000. If a person decides, after renting rural land for four years, to pay it out all at once, the maximum pay-out to the Lands Department is only \$19,000. In other words, a block of land in a rural area valued by the Government at \$50,000, can be freeholded from the Lands Department for only \$19,000. Under the Housing Commission, the pay-out after four years would be \$56,400. Under the Acacia Ridge Shopping-centre Freeholding Bill being debated tonight, the pay-out after four years—after a person has made four annual payments and decides to pay out the rest—is calculated at approximately \$60,300.

Under this Bill there is blatant discrimination against the small business person. Under Housing Commission policy on perpetual leased land there is blatant discrimination against the families who are paying extremely large amounts compared to those paid for land under the control of the Lands Department.

I have raised this issue for quite a few years and I refer to a letter that I wrote to the Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying, Mr Glasson, on 20 March 1986, in which I stated—

“Thank you for your promised discussion with Mr. Wharton concerning the freeholding of Housing Commission perpetual lease land.

I have outlined on several occasions the excessively higher costs for homeowners freeholding Housing Commission perpetual land compared to other landholders freeholding land under the controls of the Lands Department.”

I ask the Minister tonight if, under this legislation—the Acacia Ridge Shopping-centre Freeholding Bill—he can continue those discussions with the Minister for Lands in an attempt to have this blatant discrimination against the battling farmers and small business people changed so that they are treated fairly compared to those who are freeholding land under the Land Act. I hope the Minister takes these comments on board and ensures that all Queenslanders are treated fairly.

Hon. I. J. GIBBS (Albert—Minister for Works and Housing) (7.44 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions and their support for this legislation. It is a practical Bill and one that deserves support. It gets a problem out of the way and is more satisfactory for the people in the area.

The Opposition spokesman, Mr Bob Gibbs, referred to the body corporate and its responsibility to upgrade the centre. This is the reason for the repayment period of 10 years and the interest rate that is based on inflation. The Government does not want to make a greater profit than the rate of inflation, which is necessary in order to keep money available in real terms to the commission.

The explanation is that the purchase price to be paid by each current lessee for the freehold is a concessional figure. The Valuer-General's valuation effective on 30 June 1987 is actually a 1985 valuation. This concession is intended to offset other expenses, including body corporate levies for which the freeholders will be responsible. Alternative modes of payment are prescribed—lump sum or over a period of up to 10 years. Recognition is given to the fact that they would have to spend a considerable amount of money in upgrading the centre over that period, as the honourable member mentioned. A great deal of work needs to be done.

The member for Nerang, Mr Tom Hynd, is a member of my committee. Because of that, he covered the subject very well. He was a member of the committee that laid the foundation for the introduction of the Bill.

The honourable member for Yeronga, Mr Norm Lee, based his remarks on his experience as a former Minister for Works and Housing, when we made a great deal of

progress in various areas. Problems were experienced with two shopping centres. With the introduction of the Bill, the problems with one of them will be removed. The problems with the Inala centre will be harder to sort out than the problems at Acacia Ridge. The honourable member referred to houses on stumps. Houses of the type to which he referred were being built in my area. The matter erupted when I complained about them. However, it was possible to sort out that problem.

The honourable member for Archerfield, Mr Palaszczuk, referred to the Inala centre as well the Acacia Ridge shopping centre. The Government will be concentrating on the Inala centre. Although the problem is more complex, the Government believes that it is a challenge that it will overcome. The main consideration is to keep faith with the people in the area—not only the tenants in the shopping centre but also the local residents—to make sure that the whole complex is established in the correct manner. That will be the challenge for next year.

Mr Clem Campbell made an unfair comparison of the valuation of the Housing Commission with those of the Lands Department. The Lands Department has its responsibility under the Land Act, and the Housing Commission has its responsibility for housing people and for making the dollar go round to house as many people as possible. So the honourable member's comparison was unfair. Even though the people in the Acacia Ridge shopping centre are very happy about the position in which they will be placed, nonetheless, it is a false one. The Government has made the solution attractive enough for them to be happy and it is getting its money out of it. It is also getting out of something in which it does not want to be involved.

I thank honourable members for their comments and for their support for the Bill. I am sure that it will work out very well for everyone.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 15 and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr I. J. Gibbs, by leave, read a third time.

JURISDICTION OF COURTS (CROSS-VESTING) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 28 October (see p. 3645).

Mr GOSS (Logan) (7.51 p.m.): The Opposition is pleased to support this very important legislation, which embodies what I regard as a fairly simple and commonsense concept in that it will enable both the Federal Court and the Supreme Court to deal with all aspects of particular cases before them without the necessity of certain parties having to or being able to avail themselves of another jurisdiction at the same time.

As the Minister has pointed out, a number of problems have been experienced in cases in which people have been in two jurisdictions at the same time. Sometimes that has been inevitable. Sometimes it has been nothing more or less than a tactical move on the part of one of the parties. Irrespective of that, it has caused confusion, delays and unnecessary expense for litigants.

This legislation is a good example of the co-operation that can and should occur more often between the States and the Commonwealth. In that regard it is a step in the right direction, not just in terms of what the legislation achieves but in terms of a general approach to problems that obviously cross State borders. It is yet another example of the general success of the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General, which seems to function very well.

Some years ago I spent some time on a subcommittee of the Constitutional Convention that debated at length these issues and the most appropriate way of resolving them. Sometimes I thought that these issues were debated *ad nauseam* and that the subcommittee did not seem to be getting anywhere. Inevitably, debates of this type, which involve different interests of different Governments, take quite some time to resolve. I am pleased that a commonsense resolution to this problem has been achieved.

As the Attorney-General has pointed out, a trial period of three years is involved in this legislation. After that period, relevant parties will have the right to withdraw from the scheme. I am reasonably confident that that measure will not prove necessary and that the scheme will have the success that it clearly deserves.

The number of cases that are involved should not be great. Nevertheless, the sort of ridiculous situation that has been occurring should not be allowed to continue. On that basis the Opposition supports the legislation. It is common sense and timely, and I congratulate the Minister on its introduction.

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (7.53 p.m.): The Liberal Party also supports this Bill. In doing so, I intend to canvass some of the issues that are of importance.

When this State was first formed—and indeed, in the days when New South Wales was our parent State—papers that were laid before this Chamber and the Upper House each year contained details of the cost of providing judges to service the requirements of the then new and far-flung colony. Those early Supreme Court judges travelled very extensively on horseback—for months at a time—to service places as remote as Normanton, Longreach and Barcaldine. All of the places west of the Divide—when they were much smaller—were serviced by judges who travelled to the places in which litigants were situated.

Since then, the world has changed a little bit. There is sometimes almost a feeling that the litigation must follow the court. Queensland still has a northern judge and we still have circuit courts—and quite properly. With the development of increased jurisdiction and matters involving the High Court, and certainly with the development of the new Federal Court, a problem has arisen. If one wishes to appear in the Full Court of Queensland, one travels to Brisbane. If one wishes to appear before the High Court of Australia, one travels to Canberra.

With the development of the new Federal Court, which at its inception was a very embryonic court covering a comparatively small jurisdiction, we have found yet another forum. One of the consequences of the legislation is that, in matters with a significant Commonwealth component, the only place of appeal will be the Federal Full Court. That court, like the High Court, makes a nominal visit to Queensland each year. With the increase in business that is likely to follow this cross-vesting legislation, not only will the States potentially get more business but the Federal Courts themselves are also likely to get more business. In fact, with the mushrooming jurisdiction that they have been given, the latest of which being very extensive powers under the taxation legislation, we are likely to find that they will become increasingly inclined to stay where they are, which is at home. In the case of the Federal Full Court, that will be in the southern States. Every time there is an appeal with a significant Commonwealth element in those wide matters of jurisdiction that are now embraced by the Federal Court—a jurisdiction that is bound to increase as more and more Commonwealth legislation is given to that court as a matter of special Commonwealth concern—we will find thousands of dollars daily added to the costs for Queensland-based litigants to go to the Federal Full Court.

I began by talking about the responsibilities of judges in the early days when travel in this State was by horse. In those days the Supreme Court judges were the top of the pile, shall I say. Before the High Court was invented, the State Supreme Courts had the fullest capacity to administer justice in this State, subject to appeal to the Privy Council in the United Kingdom. The judges went out at great personal inconvenience and cost to where people had their problems, and they did that with a surprising amount of

regularity. Certainly, nowadays there are easier forms of communication, but they are also expensive. Therefore there is an increasing tendency for litigants to have to travel, at very significant additional cost, to find the forums in which they can appear.

If there is one thing that bedevils the law and any legislator in this House, it is this question of the increasing cost of access to the courts. It is wrong for a legislator or a lawyer not to say, "For goodness sake, before you go any further, think of the potential cost. There is no point in winning if financially you will lose by spending \$3,000 to recoup \$1,000", or whatever the amount is. People of no great means who are pursuing a matter of principle, or even a matter of substance, can break themselves financially on the way. In this Legislature, we should be concerned constantly about the predicament of costs attendant upon going to court.

As I have already said, the tendency of the creation of the Federal Court is for an absolute mushrooming of jurisdiction. This tendency means that there is an additional court to go to. That means that its residual home—because it is a centrally based court—will be in a State other than Queensland. I point out that the residual home of the court—not for the individual judges, because Queensland has two resident Federal Court judges—for its Full Court function will be much the same as that of the Full Court of the Family Court of Australia. If an applicant wishes to have a matter dealt with expeditiously, his legal advisers will have to be sent to another capital in Australia. Unless the applicant decided to change his legal advisers—the solicitors and barristers—he would have to pay for legal representatives to go to another part of Australia. As much as \$3,000 a day could be incurred in additional costs to have the cause litigated.

It is correct to say that many lawyers would reflect on the decision to create a Federal Court with perhaps another view. At the time the decision was made, if the Commonwealth Government had continued the vesting of the capacity to judge Commonwealth laws totally in the Supreme Courts of the States—leaving the High Court of Australia to deal with appeals—the point that has been arrived at today would have been the position from the outset. The States would have been given the capacity to exercise full power to deal with Commonwealth legislative matters through their Supreme Courts. An appeal could then be lodged to the Full Court of the Supreme Court of this State and then in one jump, an applicant could take a matter to the High Court.

The situation is that a special Federal Court has been set up to look into matters in which the Commonwealth can be said to have a special interest. The Supreme Courts of the States have now been endowed with power to make judgments about Federal laws as well as State laws in cases in which a mixture of the two occurs. Similarly, the States have given power to the Federal Court to exercise jurisdiction over State laws.

The end result is that two courts can exercise identical functions. It is a mixture between State and Federal law and both courts can now apply the full range of legal remedies. As the honourable member for Logan and the Minister said, nobody would want people to be bedevilled by shopping for different courts. Clearly, the problem of jurisdiction shopping should be avoided.

What has been the effect of creating two separate jurisdictions? I suppose it could be said that the Federal Court now exercises a special role in regard to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal in respect of Commonwealth Government matters. Taxation matters used to be determined by the Supreme Courts of the States exercising Federal jurisdiction. All lawyers who are appointed as officers of the Supreme Courts of the States are usually well qualified and well used to practising in both State and Federal jurisdictions.

The greatest amount of work for the Federal Court would tend to be related to the Trade Practices Act. Frankly, the Trade Practices Act is nothing more than a reformed area of commercial law of a type that Supreme Courts were used to dealing with. One wonders whether any advance has been made at all, apart from creating a new rung of courts in Australia that are funded by the Commonwealth.

The work associated with those courts has grown enormously, as everybody expected it would, which to some extent has created a problem in shopping for talent to be appointed from the States to the Federal bench. Five eminent Queensland lawyers have been appointed to the Federal Court. Mr Fitzgerald was formerly Mr Justice Fitzgerald of the Federal Court. In common with Mr Fitzgerald, Mr Justice Jackson went to the Federal Court and then resigned. Mr Justice Spender and Mr Justice Pincus are resident Federal Court judges in Queensland.

Mr Ardill: And Mr Justice Brennan.

Mr INNES: Before his appointment to the High Court, Mr Justice Brennan was appointed to the Federal Court. They were all distinguished lawyers.

I am sure the Minister is aware of the problem that has been created. Some members of the Queensland bar are now hesitant as to whether they would accept appointment to the Supreme Court bench or the Federal Court bench. Members of the bar wonder whether the Federal Court, because of its explosive growth, is likely to become a more prestigious court. I am not concerned about vanity in analysing the separate jurisdictional roles of Commonwealth and State courts. I simply ask this question: by the time this legislation is passed, what progress will have been made that could not have been accomplished at the appropriate time in the past by maintaining the Supreme Courts as the supreme authorities in the States to exercise jurisdiction over all legal disputes that occurred within State boundaries?

History has taken us past that point. The Federal Court has been created. It has grown precisely as many cynics or critics said it would. It is manned by eminent lawyers who discharge, shall I say, good legal decisions. As there has been seen to be competition between the Federal Court and the State Supreme Courts, both sets of courts have now been armed with identical functions.

In terms of the history of the matter, perhaps it is an illustration of why more care should be taken in vetting proposals to set up new structures. Indeed, that takes place in the environment of a total debate in Australia about constitutional change, part of which is looking at the whole network or the structures of courts in Australia. It could be that the net result of the deliberations will be known in 1988. I do not think it will be discharged by referendum. I think the matter is too complex. Certainly, the sorts of debates that have taken place have related to the whole question of looking at an appropriate structure of courts to service the country of Australia and the diversity of Federal and State laws. One would hope that, in any structure and in any review of the functions of jurisdictions of courts, borne in mind are things which were perhaps more prevalent 100 years ago when it was realised and felt that the delivery system of the courts should go out to the people, and that people were not there to service the courts.

I understand that in Australia experiments have been conducted with instant video—that is, live video—appearances in applications to the courts. During the last couple of years, in this House I have mentioned the experiment in Canada's courts whereby a person can attend a court room in one of its provincial cities and appear before the Supreme Court of Canada, with the two legal representatives, both in front of cameras and both with television monitors, communicating instantly with a judge and arguing their cases before him. I understand that in Canada that has led to those who are more wealthy sending their counsel and legal advisers in person to argue the case in Ottawa or wherever the headquarters of the Supreme Court is at that time; whereas the less wealthy do it by video. Somehow it is seen in the system to give a little more urgency or potency to the argument if it is conducted live rather than by video.

Those electronic ways of reducing the tyranny of distance and of removing excessive costs involved in travel and accommodation should be explored. If that is one example of what has happened overseas, then perhaps in certain types of applications and proceedings which do not involve the assessment of witnesses, both parties should be compelled to argue their case in the same forum by the same means. It is a challenge to the legal system and to the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General to explore all

of those new possibilities for removing the add-on costs that are created whenever a new structure is set up with a permanent home that is thousands of kilometres further away than it would be if things had been left in the State.

We in the Liberal Party support this proposal, not with great reservations. What I have said is an historical view. We cannot go back and change that reality. We do want litigants to go to one court to get the full range of justice in that court, no matter how many different strands their argument has. Over the years, one of the most vexed examples has been the distinction between the Family Court, which can look after matrimonial matters, and the residual jurisdiction of the State, which deals with illegitimate children.

Clearly, one of the consequences of this legislation is that hereafter the Family Court will be able to exercise jurisdiction over illegitimate children in Queensland and, in an appropriate situation, the Supreme Court will be able to have jurisdiction over legitimate children. I think all members of the legal profession have been troubled by the nonsense that was previously created when perhaps two parts of one family, if there was an illegitimate child or at least a single parent, had to be examined in different forums.

The Liberal Party supports the Bill but, in view of the reality that one creates a structure that can be more costly to litigants, it urges the constant review of any proposals for national legislative action, the exploration to, in a sense, further the unification of the country by removing the number of jumps from legal forum to legal forum, and the embrace of new technology as a way of removing any additional cost in the litigation process.

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (8.11 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Logan and the honourable member for Sherwood for their contributions to the debate and their support of this legislation, which I consider to be a great advance in the legal world. The main thrust of the legislation is to assist in the avoidance of confusion. It will tend to prevent forum-shopping and, as the honourable member for Logan indicated, will tend to prevent tactical schemes for delay sometimes, regrettably, adopted by litigants.

As indicated in my second-reading speech, the legislation will have a trial period, but I have no doubt that its operation will be highly successful. It will be overviewed by the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General and also by the newly formed committee of Chief Justices of the major courts of Australia, which will be able to fine-tune the legislation where necessary. As indicated by the honourable member for Logan, the Bill is an indication of co-operative federalism and of how that should truly operate. I am pleased to see that the Labor Party and the Liberal Party endorse the legislation.

The honourable member for Sherwood is to be complimented on his views that this legislation is a step in the right direction towards cutting the costs of litigation in this nation, particularly in view of the fact that hopefully it should cut down travel and the inconvenience associated with that. The honourable member pointed that out in his comments about the early days of the administration of justice both in Queensland and in Australia. I think the Bill will enable courts to provide more convenient and accessible venues for litigants. I again thank the honourable members for their contribution to the debate.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 16, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

SURVEYORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL**Second Reading**

Debate resumed from 6 October (see p. 2827).

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (8.15 p.m.): The Opposition agrees with the sentiments expressed by the Minister in his second-reading speech. The Minister referred to the Survey Marks Act of 1852. This Bill could really be called a machinery Bill that is designed to upgrade the Act. Perhaps it could have been introduced some time ago. The Government has tried to overcome the inconsistencies that exist in the legislation. The Opposition supports the Government in trying to smooth out the legislation and make it more operative and fairer.

The Minister referred to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, which has only 89 members in Queensland. That is getting into the upper class. Many surveyors in Queensland have done a great job through the years. We should recognise the great work done in the early days by the many surveyors who helped to survey Queensland. Perhaps these days surveyors have slackened off a bit because of the modern technology that is at their disposal. In the old days surveyors had to get on a horse and go out and survey large areas of Queensland.

I am very pleased to see that the Government has retained the mining section. I have had experience of the problems in the mining industry that have been caused by surveys. Even in this modern day and age, many court cases arise as a result of disputes about surveys. In the early days more latitude was allowed in the description of mining claims. The datum was pegged and a surveyor would then go in a southerly or north-easterly direction, and that covered it. Now he has to give the latitudes and longitudes; he has to be exact. Therefore, the Government has to ensure that surveyors do know what they are doing and that they are very competent.

I mentioned before that the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors has only 89 members in Queensland. I believe that many of the surveyors who put in the time and effort are very thorough in their work. It is most important that they be exact. It is a very controversial matter, and it is very easy to run foul of the law.

This Bill ensures that there is an avenue for pursuing compensation claims or the right to have any faults rectified should one have engaged an incompetent surveyor. I am not very worried about that provision because I believe that the majority of surveyors in Queensland are not incompetent. The majority of surveyors are very competent men, who do not work on their own until such time as they are competent.

Under section 58, registered surveyors can be disciplined if they have strayed from the practice of conducting themselves professionally. The Queensland Surveyors Board is given the opportunity to redress a matter.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister stated that a licensed surveyor nominated by the Surveyor-General can be appointed President of the Surveyors Board. I hope that that is just another machinery provision. Now that changes are being made to the Act, I think it should provide that if someone wishes to nominate for the position of president he be able to do so. I take it that the Minister means that a person may nominate through the Surveyor-General. Is that correct?

Mr Glasson: He makes an appointment. He nominates someone to chair the board.

Mr EATON: If two or three surveyors wish to nominate for the position of president, they would not be able to?

Mr Glasson: No.

Mr EATON: That clarifies the matter. When I was reading through the legislation I saw a couple of grey areas. I thought that if people wanted to do the job, they would have to go through the Surveyor-General and, if they happened to be at loggerheads with the Surveyor-General, they would have no hope. I now understand what the Minister means in the legislation. I thought that this would be made an open position whereby any qualified surveyor could nominate for that position.

Mr Glasson: It is up to the Surveyor-General to nominate someone.

Mr EATON: Another surveyor cannot nominate a friend or a capable person. That clarifies that question.

In general, the Opposition supports the Bill. I go back 135 years to 1852. In those days the people catered for the needs of the future through this legislation, and it has taken all this time for the legislation to be altered. The Minister has stated that he will further amend the Surveyors Act and repeal the Survey Marks Act of 1852. Credit should be given to the early surveyors in Queensland, particularly those who had to carry out survey work in the rough mining areas. In the old days the mining warden went out with the surveyor and settled all the arguments and disputes then and there on the job. Today when people, including surveyors, get into trouble, they become involved in prolonged litigation in the courts. I believe that some of those old principles and practices should never have been thrown out. They would stand well today. Today people and Governments make changes for changes' sake and not because they are in the best interests of society.

Hon. W. D. LICKISS (Moggill) (8.22 p.m.): The Liberal Party supports the provisions of this Bill to amend the Surveyors Act 1977-1983.

Before 1976 surveyors in Queensland operated under a Surveyors Act that was drafted in 1908. This Act was based largely on techniques developed in the latter part of the last century and, although it served the profession and the public well, it did not recognise the increasingly large number of new methods and instruments that were being developed in the surveying profession. Provision was not made for the use of time-saving and extremely accurate electronic distance-measuring equipment and satellite geodesy. The successful implementation of the land information systems depends on the use of all modern techniques and equipment.

As the Minister who first established the Department of Mapping and Surveying, I requested the then Surveyor-General, Mr J. M. Serisier, to have a new Act prepared. The new Act was drafted and passed by Parliament in 1976. It made provision, amongst other things, for the private sector of the surveying profession to eventually finance the implementation of the Act. This was gradually phased in over a number of years until now when it is fully funded by all registered surveyors in Queensland. Under the circumstances it is reasonable that more control of the surveying profession under the Act be given to the registered surveyors of Queensland, and thus the Surveyor-General can delegate a person to be chairman of the board. Provision is also made in the new amendments for the board to adopt a code of ethics prepared by the Institution of Surveyors in the regulations under this Act. This is more flexible and allows the board to regularly update the code.

Queensland has a Survey Marks Act which was prepared by New South Wales before Separation in 1859. As was mentioned, the date of the Act was actually 1852. The present proposals in this Bill cater for all the pertinent aspects of this Act, and therefore its termination is desirable.

It is regretted that it was not possible to implement all the desirable qualities of the 1976 Act because of a vocal minority of the profession who were comfortable with the old Act and therefore opposed all change, in spite of the cost-saving benefits which would accrue by giving effect to the principles of this new Act.

For instance, the examination of all surveyors' plans by Government staff in the Titles Office, the Lands Department and the Mines Department was carried out by large

numbers of public servants at great cost to the Government. The 1976 Act made it possible to free these unnecessary checks from the responsibilities of the Government and place them where they belong—in the private surveying sector. That was never achieved, although to the great credit of the Department of Mapping and Surveying and the present Surveyor-General, cost-saving in that regard has been introduced into the Department of Mapping and Surveying. The Savage committee shared those views and recommended greater use of the private sector. Of course, I concur in that view.

At this stage I will not comment on the clause headed “Surveyor not to be interested in Crown land which he surveys” or the clause dealing with business names. As the Minister indicated, those clauses are fairly straightforward.

The disciplinary action provided in clause 12 is interesting, as the board, over the years, has been frustrated by surveyors not registering or asking for their names to be struck off and then practising in other States in which they were immune from the jurisdiction of the Queensland board. Under the provisions of the Bill, they are now subject to the jurisdiction of the Queensland board wherever they are. That action is necessary and desirable.

The Liberal Party supports the Bill, as it makes further progressive steps in the surveying and cartography professions in this State. Queensland leads the Commonwealth in this field. The Bill allows greater self-regulation by the surveying profession, and, of course, that accords with Liberal Party policy.

I take great pride from having initiated and established the Department of Mapping and Surveying in its present form in this State. I recognise the tremendous assistance of the then Surveyor-General, Mr J. M. Serisier, in lifting the status of the then Survey Office of the Department of Lands to that of a department in its own right, serving all Government departments, local authorities and other instrumentalities. It encourages the private sector of the profession to expand its role and to accept total professional responsibility. The present Surveyor-General, Mr Kevin Davies, has continued and expanded the department, and Queensland is again fortunate to have a person of his calibre to lead the Department of Mapping and Surveying and his profession in this State.

I feel sure that Queensland will continue to show the way to the other States and our near neighbours in the south-east Asian and Pacific regions.

I am proud to have been associated with the department. I look forward to its further growth. I compliment the Minister for bringing the Bill forward. I support the Bill.

Mr McPHIE (Toowoomba North) (8.27 p.m.): In rising to support the Bill, I point out that I was very pleased to note that the speakers from the ALP and the Liberal Party both supported the Bill. In his speech the Minister outlined three major areas in which corrections had to be made. In looking at them, I wondered why the amendments to the Act had not been brought in years ago. Having listened to the honourable member for Moggill, I wonder why, if he was such a good Minister when he had responsibility for the Mapping and Surveying portfolio, he did not introduce the amendments, because they seem so obvious to me.

I congratulate the present Minister on his foresight in moving to amend the Act. It is in line with the way in which he has been dealing with everything in his portfolio. He has updated it and made necessary alterations all along the line.

A licensed surveyor other than the Surveyor-General can be present at a meeting of the Surveyors Board. That is a sensible move and in line with the recommendations of the Savage committee. I do not know why such a provision was not introduced earlier. The measure in the Bill will certainly help the self-regulation intent of the Bill.

Self-regulation should have been introduced years ago. I again ask the member for Moggill why he did not introduce legislation of this type. If he had been on top of his job as a Minister, he surely would have seen the need for such provisions. Action should

have been taken then. Had that been done, there would not be the need for the present Minister to introduce the changes. Who better can self-regulate an industry or a profession than the people involved in it? Again, the measure contained in the Bill is in line with the recommendations of the Savage committee, the report of which this Government has endorsed.

As to the code of professional ethics—the control of professional conduct—they are all provisions that are in line with what is needed in the surveying profession. I congratulate the Minister on the introduction of the measure and on placing disciplinary action for the surveyors' profession right where it should be—within the surveying profession.

The other matter referred to by the Minister and on which I would like to comment is, as the Minister stated, the inconsistency in the present legislation. A registered surveyor must operate under a business name that is acceptable to the board. Surely that is a reasonable provision. Surveyors should not have any interest in Crown land that they themselves survey. That is a natural progression that Mr Goss would support from a legal point of view.

Disciplinary action can now be carried out against registered persons within the profession who have undertaken inaccurate work. Why was that provision not included long ago?

The amendment to section 68 in relation to survey marks is appropriate. Survey marks should not be interfered with.

Mr Lickiss: You don't know what you're talking about.

Mr McPHIE: I do know what I am talking about.

I ask you straight out: why did you not introduce provisions such as this? You spent 10 minutes telling this House what a good Minister you were when you handled this particular portfolio. However, because you were a failure, you did not introduce one of these provisions. This Minister is the man responsible for introducing this legislation. You people are failures.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! The honourable member for Too-woomba North will address the Chair.

Mr McPHIE: Mention has been made of another inconsistency by which surveyors who are snide operators can use expired registrations to dodge the consequences of their illegal or incompetent acts. People such as that should be brought to account. Under this legislation, legal proceedings can be continued against people such as that even though they have resigned or their registrations have expired. That is the way that things should be. If the honourable member for Moggill was such a good Minister, why did he not introduce a provision such as that?

I am intrigued by the present Minister's comments in relation to the limitations on the use of the word "surveyor". An honourable member spoke about the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. I recognise chartered surveyors—as I do ship surveyors and aircraft surveyors—as having a necessary occupation in this world. The royal charter gives those people the right to use the term "chartered surveyor". I am completely in support of the proposed amendments to the legislation. No restrictions should be placed on surveyors in that context.

What about the graziers in the west of this State who like to be known as the lords of all that they survey? Why can they not use that term? People such as that should not be restricted, nor should those people on the south coast who like to be known as beach surveyors. If necessary, I will go down there and assist them to help survey the people on the beach, because that would be a delightful job at this time of the year.

I support the legislation, which is well needed and is right on the button.

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (8.33 p.m.): The comments that I wish to make revolve around a particular subject case as well as a new principle that is incorporated in the Bill.

In common with the Opposition spokesman, I have no opposition to the proposed changes. They are quite sound and reasonable and will make the Act more administratively successful.

I wish to mention particularly the proposed amendments to the code of professional conduct of surveyors. Legislation is all about remedying the problems that occur within the community. Most of the problems that involve surveyors occur because of disputes not so much between individual surveyors as between surveyors and the Titles Office.

No doubt all honourable members have, at some time or another, received representations from constituents who have approached them because of requisitions that have been placed upon surveyors by the Titles Office or because additional work on plans is required by the Titles Office to be carried out by surveyors. Sometimes that procedure bogs down and a stalemate is reached. Of course, the person who suffers is the one who is paying the fees and trying to get the work done.

Quite recently, I have experienced one of the worst examples of that. Unfortunately, it revolves around a person who has become a member of the Surveyors Board. I do not wish to mention names, because it is not a heresy hunt for any individual person. I might add that the person concerned is a personal friend of mine. Nonetheless, these things do occur.

In this case, a female client had to reorganise a block of land. She purchased a double-size block with a house already built on one block. The original owner intended to have a big magnificent house on a double block. The new owner did not require that. She had to capitalise on some of her assets. She employed a surveyor to survey her boundaries and obtained approval from the local authority to do the subdivision in a particular way so that she could cut the block off. Because of the way that the house had been built, in accordance with the local government by-laws, there had to be a slight deviation on the boundary between the two properties. It was duly done by the surveyor concerned and forwarded to the Titles Office in Townsville. Then things occurred that made everything go a little bit haywire.

A requisition went backwards and forwards several times. In the meantime, the particular surveyor had ceased practice in Mackay. He closed down operations and moved to Brisbane. The whole thing was left completely up in the air. The woman paid the surveyor's account before he left town. The situation reached a stalemate. She was suffering. The surveyor was not prepared to return to Mackay to do anything, because he claimed professional competency in what he had done and that everything was correct; and the Titles Office claimed that it wanted it done in another way. There was a tiny variation in the property of 0.1 of a metre. They were arguing over whether the boundary would be shifted four inches one way or the other. It was the same owner, but the whole episode occurred because of the location of the house.

Unfortunately, the whole matter is still in limbo. It is a stalemate. The surveyor claims professional competency. I have no doubt as to the competency of the person concerned. As I said, I have known him for a long period. However, there is a conflict between this particular Act and the Real Property Act over what should be done to adjust the boundary.

For years an argument has been going on as to who should handle the matter so far as the Titles Office is concerned. However, within the Titles Office many of the people who are looking at the matter are qualified and competent surveyors themselves. In fact, they are registered under this very same Act. There must be some way in which the situation can be resolved.

Supposedly, the matter can be resolved through the Surveyors Board. As I understand it, the people on the board know about it, but they all want to run a mile away from it. The Titles Office says, "Well, in actual fact, it is up to her to take out a civil action

against the surveyor concerned to force him to get somebody else to do it again in accordance with the way that they want the title written and the measurements put on the title deed." Of course, the surveyor says, "Look, she has to take on the Titles Office under the Real Property Act."

There must be a simple way of sorting the problem out. It is a matter that I wanted to raise tonight specifically in this legislation, because it deals very much with it and it covers the situation that is covered by the new principle in the Bill. There must be a solution whereby we can look not at the surveyor's reputation or the right of the person at the Titles Office to do certain things, but at solving the problem for and on behalf of the person in the community, who, after all, is the big loser.

Hon. W. H. GLASSON (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying) (8.39 p.m.), in reply: I thank the members of the Opposition, the member of the Liberal Party and the member for Toowoomba North for their contributions to this debate. The amendments are fairly minimal, but are extremely important to the surveying profession. In many cases, the amendments are long overdue. They give people the right to be registered in cases in which, for some considerable time, they had been denied registration. It is a fact, as the honourable member for Moggill stated, that he was Minister at the time that the Department of Mapping and Surveying was established as part of the Queensland Government. It is inevitable that, because a department is rather new, a need will exist for streamlining and amendment of legislation as time passes.

Let me bring to the notice of the House comments made by the member for Mackay in relation to a survey carried out by a surveyor in Mackay for the purpose of Titles Office registration. I point out to the honourable member that what he has described is not unique or unusual. On several occasions, the same kind of thing has occurred. If the honourable member would care to give me or my departmental officers particulars of the case to which he refers, I would be only too happy to resolve the problem that evidently exists. I go further and state that officers of the department, officers of the Department of Justice, the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and I have had discussions with the Surveyor-General to establish a more acceptable and streamlined procedure to address problems of the kind referred to by the honourable member for Mackay. I repeat that those problems are not unusual. However, I give the honourable member an assurance that the matter will be investigated if the honourable member will bring the matter to my notice or to the attention of the Surveyor-General.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. W. H. Glasson (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—

Mr LICKISS (8.42 p.m.): I noted with some interest comments made by the honourable member for Toowoomba North in relation to my inadequacy as the Minister who initiated the establishment of the Department of Mapping and Surveying. Fools rush in where angels fear to tread. From 1957 until 1975, the Survey Office was under the control of National Party Ministers who did not do a damned thing.

Mr Casey: He has no wings, so he cannot be an angel.

Mr LICKISS: The honourable member has not much between his ears, either.

Before 1975 when I was appointed Minister and established the Department of Mapping and Surveying—

Mr McPhie: How long did you last?

Mr LICKISS: I will cover that, too.

Members of this Parliament and members of the surveying profession will know that prior to my appointment, I was a senior member of the surveying and mapping profession, having been a chief draftsman in the Department of the Territories and having been a former officer-in-charge of the RAAF cartographic section. I could see then that the role of the Survey Office in this State would amount to nothing unless it became a separate department in its own right.

Mr McPhie: How long did you last?

Mr LICKISS: The honourable member has had his say and was able to do so without interruption.

Up till 1975, the Survey Office had been a subdepartment of the Department of Lands and was subservient to the Department of Lands. It was mainly occupied with Lands Department mapping. The stage had been reached in the history of Queensland when that department had to be accorded its rightful responsibility in a developing State. It was essential that the section be made into a department in its own right. I was able, with the blessing of the Premier, to achieve that in 1975. During the 18 months that I was the responsible Minister I arranged for the reorganisation of the department and I reduced the then existing establishment by 64 positions. Today it is one of the most efficient departments in the State Government and we should all be proud of it.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! I have been very tolerant. The member for Moggill is speaking to clause 1, the short title and citation of the Bill. I would like him to speak to that. I have been very tolerant till now. I think he should come back to the clause.

Mr LICKISS: Mr Temporary Chairman, with due respect, I think I am referring to it because the short title of the Act and the way in which the Bill is made up is being debated. The Bill deals with an amendment to the principal Act. Leading up to that, I am trying to indicate what happened prior to the introduction of the principal Act and incorporating what is proposed in this Bill.

In 18 months the department was set up and, as I mentioned, the policy for it was developing. The principal Act of 1976 was drafted at my request and direction by the then Surveyor-General, Mr J. M. Serisier. Before the Bill could be introduced into this Chamber, at the request of the Premier I was appointed Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. So, with all due respect to my critic, who cannot see any good in anything that happens on this side of the Chamber or when the Liberal Party compliments the Government, let me say that from 1957 to 1975 his own party failed to do a thing about that very important administrative arrangement in terms of mapping and surveying in this State. In 18 months its direction was changed and since then, with the help of various Ministers, including the present Minister, it is now progressing very favourably. I make the point that fools rush in where angels fear to tread, and that refers to the member for Toowoomba North.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 15, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

DENTAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 6 October (see p. 2820).

Mr McELLIGOTT (Thuringowa) (8.49 p.m.): The Opposition opposes this Bill and argues instead that dental technicians ought to be registered under separate legislation

and controlled by their own board. In the event that the Opposition is not successful in that argument, it will be proposing that an autonomous dental technician registration board be constituted under the Dental Act.

It has been a long-standing policy of the Labor Party to recognise dental technicians in that way. Dental technicians are a tertiary-educated group. Such technicians have been making dentures for over 50 years. There can be no doubt that dental technicians need to be registered. At the present time anyone could call himself a dental technician and solicit work from a dentist.

The National Party has not been consistent in this matter in that it sided with the technicians—that is, the optometrists—in their dispute with the professionals—that is, the ophthalmologists—but in this Bill it is rejecting the rights of dental technicians and has opted instead to keep them subservient to dentists.

A growing number of qualified dental technicians have been supplying direct to the public full and partial dentures and mouthguards and doing repairs and relines. The fact that the community has sought out these technicians in increasing numbers indicates that the need exists for this service. Of course, the cost to the patient is far less than if the service is provided by a dentist. Incidentally, I might mention that the cost to the Government purse is substantially less as well. I refer to the regulations recently tabled by the Minister in regard to public hospital dental service charges. As an example, I quote the amount payable for full upper and lower dentures included in the regulations. The cost when provided by a dentist is \$349, which compares with \$220 if that work is done by a dental technician. Similarly, the regulations quote \$649 for full upper and lower dentures, which could be done by a technician for \$420.

As I said, the Government is grossly inconsistent in its approach. Under the Dental Act, a dental technician is considered an auxiliary to dentists, although he or she is not under the direct supervision of a dentist. Nurses, radiographers, pharmacists, optometrists, etc., could all be regarded as auxiliaries to the medical profession, yet each of those professions has its own autonomous board. Why are dental technicians treated differently?

I understand that dentists have complained that a dental prosthetist could place a denture over the top of some more serious problem in the mouth without recognising that problem. Similar arguments were used against optometrists using drugs, but those arguments were rejected by both sides of the House.

Dental technicians have been dealing directly with the public and quite a number have been prosecuted. Honourable members will be aware that this has generated a great deal of animosity in technicians and, quite frankly, there are fears of a conspiracy between dentists and the department. I have been told that a hit list has been compiled, which has on it the spokesperson for the technicians, who is to be hounded out of business by repeated prosecutions.

Dental technicians will not accept the proposed standing committee, which is obviously an attempt to cool down their opposition to the Government for its refusal to give them their autonomy. It will not work, and I am sure that the Minister for Health knows it will not work. The fact is that under current legislation technicians can be prosecuted for dealing directly with the public and, under this Bill, they will continue to be prosecuted.

I doubt that I have heard anything more pathetic than the Minister's final comment in his second-reading speech, in which he said—

“ . . . I can also assure dental technicians that I will be taking a personal interest in the operation of the standing committee and its relationship to the Dental Board to ensure that a spirit of fairness and equity will be exercised at all times.”

Mr Ahern: What is pathetic about that?

Mr McELLIGOTT: If anything was more pathetic, it was the Minister appearing on television without his spectacles in an endeavour to improve his image and then in this House, because he cannot read without them, fumbling to find them.

The assurance by the Minister for Health counts for nothing. Obviously, irrespective of the leadership dispute in the National Party that is going on at the present time, the Minister will not hold his current position indefinitely. I believe that any personal assurances that he may be offering at this time will not count for much with a future Minister.

In all of this, the Minister's integrity has been tried and found wanting. The technicians believe that the Minister for Health lied to them and let them down badly in the final test. Let me outline to the House the chain of events that led the technicians to this conclusion. On 28 February 1987, Mr Ahern told the National Party central council meeting that technicians would have their own Act and board but not chairside status. On 24 March 1987, the Minister met representatives of the Joint Dental Technicians Council and again said that they would have their own Act and their own board. On 3 June 1987, he told the Joint Dental Technicians Council that he had been rolled by his National Party health committee; there would be no separate Act or separate board. On 8 July 1987, the Joint Dental Technicians Council met the Minister and presented him with a revised submission. He advised the deputation to meet the National Party health committee. On 22 September 1987, they did that and were told by the National Party health committee that the committee members did not know why they were there.

Then, of course, this Bill was introduced, with the chairman of the standing committee not even a full member of the Dental Board. Mr Ahern said that he would be. Mr Ahern gave an undertaking in writing to the Joint Dental Technicians Council that he would not introduce legislation until they had held further discussions. That commitment was not kept either.

A newspaper report quotes the Minister as saying that the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union supported the legislation. A letter dated 12 October 1987, addressed to me from the union's State secretary, states—

“Whilst this Union and its members formally support the concept of registration for Dental Technicians, it is the clearly expressed view of our members, who are engaged as dental technicians, that the body which administers and controls the registration of Dental Technicians in Queensland should not be subsidiary to the Dental Board of Queensland.

This union recently conducted a poll of its members engaged as Dental Technicians to ascertain their views on the above subject. The results of that poll were that—

- (1) 94% supported the registration of Dental Technicians.
- (2) 78% believed that the body which administered the trade of Dental Technicians in Queensland should not be under the control of the Dental Board of Queensland.
- (3) 84% felt that the facility should exist for Dental Technicians to deal directly with the public.”

It is clear that the union does not support this Bill. It is also very clear that the Minister has dealt carelessly with the truth in this whole matter.

There is some strong support among National Party back-benchers for the dental technicians. It will be interesting to see how they vote tonight. The technicians are aware of the support expressed privately by these members. They will be less than impressed by those who lack the courage to express that support in the House tonight.

The Opposition believes that dental technicians should be registered by their own board. There is a point of basic policy at issue here, and that was covered by the Savage committee in its review of occupational licensing. In its second report, the Committee of Review of Business Regulations stated—

“These functions may be performed more appropriately and more effectively by professional associations for these occupations. Accordingly, examination of

occupational licensing bodies may assist the eventual transfer of this role from government to the relevant industries.”

Obviously if the Government is considering a move in that direction, the dental technicians must be autonomous and self-regulated.

The proposed Dental Technicians Standing Committee is a joke. It will not be acceptable to dental technicians and it is not acceptable to the Opposition. It can only make recommendations to the Dental Board, and then only in respect of matters affecting technicians.

The proposed procedure for handling inquiries is totally unsatisfactory. The standing committee will hear all of the evidence, including the technician's defence, but can then only make a recommendation to the Dental Board which, of course, is dominated—and I do mean “dominated”—by dentists. What is the position, for example, if the complaint against a technician were from a dentist? Do honourable members believe that the technician could expect a totally unbiased hearing?

It gets worse. If a technician is found to be guilty, the board may impose a penalty, but only with the consent of the standing committee “first had and obtained”. What if the standing committee refuses that consent? I am not talking about major issues, where presumably there would be general agreement.

I cite the example of a technician who is charged with a relatively minor misdemeanour on a complaint from a dentist. The standing committee decides that no punishment is warranted, but the board decides otherwise. It might be argued that goodwill on both sides will lead to a solution but, of course, there is precious little goodwill around at present, and that situation can only get worse if this legislation is passed.

The double standards are repeated throughout the Bill. Although the standing committee only gets to attend and vote at board meetings on matters affecting technicians, the board has full representation on the standing committee. Although it does seem extremely unlikely, the board's nominee could conceivably end up as chairman of the standing committee.

The Opposition totally opposes the concept of the Bill. It will oppose the Bill at the second-reading stage and it will certainly oppose the concept of a standing committee at the Committee stage.

Now I turn to the role of the dental prosthetists and the need to include them in any legislation relating to dental technicians. A dental prosthetist is a dental technician who deals directly with the public, that is, one who has chairside status. The New South Wales Dental Technicians Registration Act defined the practice of dental prosthetics as follows—

- “(a) the giving of any advice to or the attendance upon any person as preparatory to, or for the purpose of, or for or in connection with the fitting, inserting, constructing, repairing or renewing of artificial dentures;
- (b) the constructing, repairing or renewing by a person of artificial dentures in connection with the performance by that person of any functions referred to in paragraph (a) or (c), and;
- (c) the inserting or fitting of artificial dentures in healthy human mouths . . .”

Under the Queensland Act only a dentist can carry out these functions.

Access to dental prosthetists has been allowed in New South Wales since 1978. Dental technicians apply for a practising certificate, and again I quote from the New South Wales Act, which states—

“A person who makes application for a practising certificate in the prescribed manner is entitled to be granted a practising certificate if, at the time at which the practising certificate is granted, he is a dental technician and—

- (a) he has, in the opinion of the Board, satisfactorily completed a course of training approved by the Board, fitting him to engage in the practice of dental prosthetics; or

- (b) not being a person referred to in paragraph (a) he has, in the opinion of the Board, satisfactorily completed an examination relating to the practice of dental prosthetics arranged by the Board . . .”

The Commonwealth Government has officially recognised the qualifications of dental prosthetists. Since the Department of Veterans Affairs adjusted its procedures in September 1985, over \$1m has been outlaid in response to claims from veterans and war widows who obtained denture treatment from dental prosthetists. Access to dental prosthetists has certainly been well received by war veterans and has been acknowledged as successful by the department, which is not aware of any complaints.

The Australian Capital Territory Health Authority has prepared legislation to provide for the registration of dental technicians and dental prosthetists, and the right of registered dental prosthetists to supply and fit full and partial dentures directly to the public, subject to conditions similar to those applying in New South Wales. The authority has stated that it holds the strong view that access to dental prosthetists by the public should be on the widest-possible basis so as to create the best-possible environment for both the industry and its clients.

Of course, the registration of dental technicians and the granting of chairside status has been long-standing Labor Party policy in Queensland. I was interested to receive in the mail recently a letter on the subject from a former member for South Brisbane, Fred Bromley. Mr Bromley sent me a pamphlet issued by the Dental Technicians Association of Queensland to delegates at the 1962 Labor Party conference. That pamphlet advised that on 1 July 1958 the Tasmanian Government registered dental technicians to deal directly with the public in the supply of artificial dentures. The association compared that with the position in Queensland and said—

“There is no registration of dental technicians, who have no legal standing. They are refused the right of serving the people of Queensland direct, and refused the personal contact that goes to make for satisfaction in well-fitting dentures at a reasonable price.”

The policy was unanimously endorsed by the conference and remains Labor Party policy today.

The Opposition supports the need to register dental technicians, but it goes further and says that any review of the Act to register dental technicians should also be extended to grant chairside status to those technicians who are competent and qualified—as tested by appropriate examination—to deal directly with the public. There is a demand for this service in the community, as illustrated by the fact that people in substantial numbers have sought out dental prosthetists. It is time that Queensland adopted the attitude that has already been adopted by all the other States. As I mentioned, Tasmania did so in 1958 and all of the other States have now come to recognise that this is a reasonable proposition and is acceptable to any Government.

I do not understand the reluctance of the Minister to agree to this proposition. All honourable members have been substantially lobbied by technicians in recent weeks and months, and I have not heard any reasonable argument as to why their application should be rejected. I can only assume that the Minister and the Government have taken the advice of dentists who feel that this is some kind of challenge to their elitism. If that is so, it is regrettable. As I said, the Government has shown a willingness in the case of the optometrist versus the ophthalmologist to recognise technicians. I see no difference in this regard. The Opposition opposes the Bill.

Mr SHERLOCK (Ashgrove) (9.05 p.m.): Since time began, an increasing number of professions have sought recognition. On the business paper at present is a Bill that deals with the registration of chiropractors and introduces the practice of osteopathy into that legislation. I have no doubt that, before long, we will be considering other medical and paramedical professions that will be seeking registration in their own right. More importantly, we will be speaking about the recognition of their status and their

training. This will happen as we move into higher levels of tertiary education. I believe that perhaps it is part of the process of maturing of the profession or of the craft.

We all acknowledge the right of dental technicians to press their cause. However, it may be that these things are best achieved by evolution rather than by revolution. What is required, of course, is open discussion and dialogue within the dental profession itself. The Opposition spokesman has already referred to that. Honourable members would be well aware that numerous approaches have been made, perhaps to all of us in our electorates, not only by dentists but also by dental technicians, dental laboratory-owners and prosthetists.

A summary of the views of dentists is that there is general agreement within the dental profession for legislative recognition of dental technicians. They believe that formal registration would enhance the status of dental technicians and provide effective control, and that is in the interests of the practice and the public. The vital role of dental technicians in providing technical support and the delivery of dental treatment in such areas as crown and bridgework, dental ceramics generally and the fabrication of cast-metal dentures is such that recognition of their status is long overdue.

There are people with only superficial training who can currently set themselves up as qualified dental technicians and compete with those who have undergone recognised training or an apprenticeship. It is time that this latter situation was resolved. The business of hanging up a shingle in itself is surely not good enough.

Of course, over a period a joint council of dental technicians and dental laboratory-owners has sought, *inter alia*, the registration of dental technicians. As we have heard, it made two major submissions to the then Minister, the Honourable Brian Austin, back in 1985, and earlier this year to the current Minister, the Honourable Mike Ahern. We understand that since that time the council has made numerous representations, which the Opposition spokesman outlined tonight.

A summary of the major views of that joint council, as I understand it, is as follows: it seeks not only the registration of dental technicians, which this Bill seeks to do by defining the parameters and the approved courses for training and so on, but it goes further and seeks the registration of commercial dental laboratories. We recognise that these are the major employers of dental technicians and dental apprentices in this State. There is no doubt that their registration would be in the community interest.

We have heard that the joint council seeks the registration of dental prosthetists. The Bill does not address that matter. No doubt that argument will continue for some time. It is well known that a growing number of dental technicians supply the public with full and partial dentures and mouthguards and deal directly with the public with such things as relines and repairs, which are of a very high standard indeed. The yellow pages of the telephone directory contain many advertisements stating the fact that dental technicians do such work. It is well known in the community that at present not only is the work done at the direction of the dentist, it is also being done privately and directly.

It may be helpful in the context of this debate to review the history of the legislation in other States. As we have heard, dental prosthetists in Tasmania have been legally able to deal directly with the public since 1957. In 1972, legislation was introduced in Victoria to register prosthetists. It is interesting to note that dental technicians were first registered in New South Wales in 1975, although chairside status was not achieved until 1978. In South Australia, legislation to register dental technicians was introduced in 1973. Western Australia most recently introduced similar legislation in 1985.

My research reveals that between 1964 and 1978, in the New South Wales Parliament approximately 90 hours were spent debating the registration and chairside status of dental technicians and prosthetists. Perhaps we have not yet seen the end of this matter. I have no doubt that this argument will be pursued by dental technicians and prosthetists, which is their right, and all honourable members would acknowledge that.

Less than half of the dental technicians in this State wish to deal directly with the public. The remainder are happy to deal directly with dentists and to act under the direction of dentists. The advice that I have given dental technicians in my electorate and in this State is to accept this Bill as a positive stride down the path that they seek. They are moving towards what they believe they need. It is a clear direction down that path towards their objective, namely, the control of their craft.

This legislation does not achieve one of their objectives, namely, the introduction of a dental technicians board and a dental technicians Act. However, by this legislation, the Minister has put in place a standing committee that will be responsible to the Dental Board. That committee will be made up of dental technicians and one member who is also a dentist and who will be able to liaise with the board. We have been given to understand that the chairman of that standing committee, or his deputy, will be represented on the Dental Board when matters relating to the control, registration and training of dental technicians arise or when disciplinary action against them is discussed. Dental technicians have gone a long way down that path.

The Liberal Party supports this Bill. It believes that the Minister has not closed the door; he has left it open to dental technicians and prosthetists to pursue their argument.

Mr McElligott referred to the Minister's closing remarks. I believe that dental technicians can take heart from the statements by the Minister that he will be keeping a close eye on this legislation. He has given that assurance to the members of the profession, and it is to his credit that he has kept that door open. As I said, the Liberal Party supports this Bill.

Mr McPHIE (Toowoomba North) (9.13 p.m.): I support the Bill. I am pleased that the spokesmen for the ALP and the Liberal Party support it also, particularly the provision relating to the registration of dental technicians, which is a great step forward. It is a wonder that this legislation has not been introduced before now.

Dental technicians fulfil a significant role within the dental profession. This legislation, which provides for the registration of dental technicians together with control of their activities, should have been implemented long ago.

I was a little surprised that the honourable member for Thuringowa supported the minority technicians' version of the way in which the Minister handled the amending legislation and its progress. I understand that that version is not correct, and I am sure that the Minister will deal with that aspect in his reply.

The honourable member for Ashgrove gave a fairly good summary of what is involved in this legislation, which provides for the registration of dental technicians. At present no legal restrictions are placed on anybody who operates as a dental technician. The registration of dental technicians is long overdue. There are people who are moonlighting as dental technicians, yet they have no qualifications and no experience of any significance. They are setting themselves up and purporting to be dental technicians. A great improvement in the legislation is that they are being brought under control. The Bill specifies the qualifications required before anyone can be registered, and so it should. As the member for Ashgrove mentioned, it goes further. A standing committee has been set up. It is composed of six technicians and one dentist. It is a self-regulating standing committee which has the power, where necessary, to hear appeals. That is how it should be. When the Dental Board is dealing with items relating to technicians, a technician will be a member of the board. That member will have a vote in those circumstances. That is a good forward step and this is good legislation.

The legislation goes even further, because the control remains within the profession. People have advocated that dental technicians be allowed to move outside the control of the Dental Board and become a completely separate entity. I do not support that, and it is not in the Bill. They must remain within the dental profession. That means that the technician stays within the ambit of the profession and is controlled by the Dental Board, not the Australian Dental Association. The heavy lobbying and antagonism have been against the Australian Dental Association. However, the Australian Dental

Association does not have control under this legislation; it is the Dental Board, which is a separate body with different responsibilities.

The large amount of professional lobbying has been occurring because there is a professional argument within the profession over a dwindling market for two types of people within the profession. The dental processes that have evolved over recent years have been so successful that there is a dwindling demand for dental work, dental plates and that type of service. A few years down the track, the dental technicians and the dentists will see that those needs will have disappeared completely. I do not blame the dental technicians for attempting to protect their own livelihood. However, I do not agree with some of the ways in which they have been lobbying. I will deal with that later.

Mr McElligott: Why are you protecting the dentists?

Mr McPHIE: I will deal with that, too. Really, the dentists are the key people. They are the ones who have the training and knowledge to deal with complicated medical conditions and pathology. Dental care should be left to them. They are the peak of the profession. If the dental technicians want to be dentists, they should attend university and obtain qualifications. In that case, the dentists welcome them, because they will be better trained than the technicians. The honourable member for Thuringowa must recognise that the dentists are the peak in the dental profession.

The time is approaching when technicians will be a dying race. With the progress that has been made, perhaps we will live to see the day when the dentists, too, will be a dying race. Advances in dental technology have been so great and the progress so significant that that is what is ahead. That is what the lobbying and fighting is all about. That is why the Minister has moved to put it in order. In time, if necessary, the legislation can take the matter further. In the meantime, I believe that the technicians should acknowledge that big steps forward have been made in their part of the profession and that they should work together. Why should the dentists and the technicians be fighting, as they have been in some cases?

Shortly, I will deal with the question of lobbying. As a member of Parliament, I resent certain aspects of that. Over a number of years, I have been in touch with several dentists. Friends of mine include dentists and dental technicians. During the time I served in the air force, I undertook an officers training course. Four dentists and eight doctors undertook the same course. Over a 16-week period, I came to know those fellows pretty well.

Mr Casey: As air force officers, you obviously were not learning to fly.

Mr McPHIE: We were not. I inform the honourable member for Mackay that we were not a completely enlightened group, because there were no ladies. However, we considered making the resident dragon at Laverton an honorary member of our OTS course because she was about the best looking Red Cross sheila I had ever set eyes on. However, we did not do that.

Mr Casey: As air force officers, you were obviously not learning to fly.

Mr McPHIE: No, I was not learning to fly. I was training to be an air-traffic controller to help the fellows who were flying.

Let me turn now to comment on the dental technician lobby groups. Lobbying has been directed by the Queensland Confederation of Industry. Here and now, I take that organisation to task over the onslaught that it has directed at members of Parliament. If members of that organisation will take advice on the art of lobbying, I point out to them that their campaign was so massive that it was counter-productive. Many honourable members became fed up because of the amount of bumf that had been received from that organisation. It went straight into the rubbish bin without being read, which did nothing for the dental technicians who employed the Queensland Confederation of Industry.

I point out to the House that the dental technicians who engaged in the lobbying were in the minority. The Australian Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthesis Society was one; the Dental Prosthesis Association of Queensland was another; and the Joint Dental Technicians Council of Queensland was another. I ask all honourable members to take notice of the information I am about to give the House because I believe that it is spot on.

It is my information that in total, there are 400 dental technicians in Queensland, which is a good round figure. The Australian Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthesis Society is a group that was formed in Victoria and in Tasmania, but it does not operate in Queensland as an association or a society. The second group that has bombarded members of Parliament is the Dental Prosthesis Association of Queensland, which has 20 members out of 400 technicians in this State. The other group, the Joint Dental Technicians Council of Queensland, does not have any members. In spite of that, it also has bombarded members of Parliament. It is a collective body that represents other groups.

The amount of rubbish that has been sent is a lot of nonsense. It is my information that more than 70 per cent of dental technicians do not belong to any group—not even to the groups that have not been lobbying. Some groups that have not been lobbying also operate in Queensland. The Laboratory Owners Association contributed no input—at least not over my desk—yet it has approximately 40 members. The Dental Technicians Association did not have any input, either.

Mr White: Why would they write to you anyway?

Mr McPHIE: The honourable member for Redcliffe might know about those associations. I do not know whether he received any material from them.

The Dental Technicians Association also has 40 members, and there are approximately 180 Government dental technicians in this State. By breaking down the figures, it can be seen that the dental technicians who have engaged in lobbying and have employed the Queensland Confederation of Industry are a collective minority. They are the ones who have been causing the trouble.

Mr Cooper: Where are they getting the money from?

Mr McPHIE: I do not know where they got the money from.

Mr Eaton: They work for it.

Mr McPHIE: They are putting the money up because they are fighting to defend their jobs. I do not blame them for that, but I do blame them for the way in which they have gone about it.

Mr Eaton: Their livelihood is at stake.

Mr McPHIE: That is correct. I agree with the honourable member for Mourilyan. I am not taking them to task about that. I am taking them to task over the way they have gone about it.

I wish to address a few comments to 50 or 60 people who form part of these vocal groups. They have taken great delight in citing lower costs as justification for their stand. Some of their members who are not required to be registered under existing legislation are moonlighting. Although some do not have any qualifications, others have excellent qualifications. I acknowledge that. These people are saying that they can undercut dentists. I do not doubt that they could if they wanted to. Honourable members ought to look at what occurred in New South Wales when registration of technicians was introduced. Since registration was introduced in that State, dental technician charges have increased. In some cases, if not all, the costs are greater than those charged by most dentists.

Mr Simpson: Oh, that's rubbish!

Mr McPHIE: What the honourable member is saying is not right. Although the honourable member for Cooroora may not agree with me, I must inform him of some other facts I have obtained. I have facts and figures that support the statements I have made.

I do not doubt that some honourable members would have figures that support a contrary stand. I am not referring to individual cases, but to a broad cross-section. I point out to the House that in New South Wales the illegal operation of dental technicians has not been eradicated. It is part of the argument advanced by these lobby groups that registration will eradicate illegal practices.

In other States the illegal operation is continuing, and it will continue in Queensland, too. We have to be very much aware of that. Let me refer to some of those people who are in Queensland, those 50 or 60 who are represented in those vocal groups. Some of them have been forced to leave their jobs in other States and, for a variety of reasons, they have come up here. Some of them have come of their own free will and some of them are quite well qualified. However, some of them have questionable training. Some of them have no jolly training. It is on the job that they have been able to pick things up; they have had no formal training.

Mr Eaton: If they had very poor training, they wouldn't last very long.

Mr McPHIE: That is right. Some of them do not have that training. If the honourable member goes out, as I have done, and canvasses them to try to get the majority view of the technicians who are operating throughout Queensland, bearing in mind that more than 70 per cent of them do not belong to any association, he will find that the majority of them support the legislation that the Minister has presented. They support it because they see it as a sensible step forward. It is a timely step and it is a progressive step. I will admit, as the Minister has, that there may be further steps down the line, depending on how this legislation is put in place.

Mr Eaton: The dental mechanics do not support the Minister's Bill.

Mr McPHIE: No, 50 or 60 of them do not. The majority of them do. More than 70 per cent of them do not belong to any association. Fifty or 60 of them are causing all the noise. They are a minority.

I take them to task because I resent some of the things that have been said in the correspondence that I have received from them. I have received threats of chaos if the Minister's Bill is passed. I have received threats of civil disobedience if the Minister's Bill is passed. Some of those people have signed statements in which they said that they would break the law if the Minister's Bill is passed. I would like to draw to the attention of those people the laws of this State dealing with intimidation of members of Parliament. I believe that I have been intimidated by those people, and I resent that. I think it is offside. There is no way in the world that those people will ever get past first base with me while they continue with that sort of action. It is a despicable way to carry on.

Mr McElligott: If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.

Mr McPHIE: They are the people who cannot stand the heat. They intimidate MPs. The honourable member would be one of the first to agree with me that when he considers he is intimidated he will not tolerate it. I have seen how Opposition members act when they think they have been intimidated. I have seen the way in which they get up and squeal. I have just referred to an actual case of intimidation. Those people are threatening chaos, law-breaking and civil disobedience if the Minister's Bill is passed. I resent that. I do not think that this matter should be brought up in the House, but they have written to me and they have signed statements. I say to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and to all of them who are listening, if they are in the House—and probably some of them are in the gallery—that it is on their heads if they choose to break the law.

I congratulate the Minister on introducing this legislation. It is timely and it is correct. I say to him: please put it in place and see that the provisions concerning registration and qualification are adhered to.

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (9.28 p.m.): I never cease to be amazed at some of the cock-eyed legislation that this Government brings into the House. Anyone listening to the remarks of the member for Toowoomba North would think—and he expressed this opinion—that this legislation was really all about dentists and whether he was in favour of them. Legislation such as this should be all about people's teeth, because that is really what it amounts to. It should be about what will happen to people's teeth or what the cost of new teeth will be. After all, the main thing that a dentist does with a person's teeth is pull them out and throw them away. It is the dental technician who carries out fittings to enable people's teeth to be replaced so that they can keep munching on the good primary products of this State, namely, our steaks, fish, prawns, crustaceans and all those sorts of things.

I want to add my few comments to this debate, for and on behalf of, if nobody else, a couple of constituents in my area who are very good dental technicians. I believe they have approached the Minister and others in the Government in an endeavour to get a fair deal for themselves. They just want to do their job. That is what they want to do. They want to get on with doing their job, a job for which they are well trained and for which they are very, very well qualified indeed. That is what this legislation is all about.

Legislation exists both in this State and in other States that provides the means of controlling people in professions, including health professions, other than by the creation of boards. I know that the Minister said publicly that he did not want to establish another quango. I do not really think that another quango is needed. Legislation can be introduced to provide self-control so that these people can carry out their professional work. Neither the public nor members of the profession want to have the work controlled by a quango. The whole point is that a good job be done in the provision of replacement teeth and the other dental work that dental technicians are well trained to do and are quite capable of doing at a reasonable price. That is the crux of the matter. Most dental technicians recognise that they can perform these functions for people without the exorbitant on-cost imposed by dentists. That is what has to be considered in debate on this legislation.

This so-called private-enterprise Government says that work must go out to tender so that it can be done at the cheapest price, yet here in this House it introduces legislation that compels a dental technician to go through a dentist to be able to provide people with a new set of false teeth. That means that the cost is twice what it should be. All that the Opposition is saying is that the costly rip-offs in health services will continue, particularly in the provision of false teeth.

No-one in this House would deny that in recent years one of the biggest increases in costs in the community is the cost of all phases of health services. Surely to goodness, if members of this House can see a way, through the operations of dental technicians, to bring about some reduction in the cost of the provision of health services to ordinary people in the community, they ought to adopt it.

I have heard the Minister and other members criticise Medicare and the Commonwealth's provision of money for health services in this State. There is always talk of the rapidly escalating costs. In Great Britain the National Health service is suffering from escalating costs. Yet what are members in this place really doing about escalating cost here? What effort are we really making to try to reduce some of these health costs? The work of dental technicians is a means by which members could effect cost-savings to most people in the community. At some time or other most people find that they have to undergo some sort of treatment through dentists and later through a dental technician.

Surely to goodness there could be a referral system to help in this regard. Why not? If a person wants a new set of glasses, he has a number of choices available to him. If he has had to go to an ophthalmologist, he is given a referral that eventually takes him to an optical technician. A person could go to an optometrist who may send him on to an optical technician. Whether that person works for himself or for the optometrist, a patient can still be referred to him. In some cases a doctor can make such a referral. People have the choice of going to an optical technician or a company such as OPSM and procuring glasses at a much cheaper price than perhaps was the case in times gone by. That has brought about a helpful reduction in costs.

Mr Eaton: If they are National Party, they are optical illusions.

Mr CASEY: The honourable member is pretty right there.

The Government is trying to create an illusion by making people go through dentists to have work done by a dental technician. There is no reason why this profession cannot be treated in the same way as optometrists. There is self-regulation in that profession, just as there is in the professions covering architects, doctors and lawyers. This State has legislation that brings about self-regulation for those professions. If their members step over the line, they run the risk of having their professional status cancelled. That is the big sword that has to be hung over the heads of all of those professions. The self-regulation covering real estate salesmen provides a means for them to lose their licences without having a lengthy procedure in front of a quango or some other procedure that forces prices up.

Motor vehicle inspectors are another example. Under the roadworthiness certificate system, motor vehicle inspectors obtain a licence. If they are found to be in breach of that licence, the licence is simply cancelled. It is their livelihood. In order to protect their livelihood, they ensure that they do good, proper and capable work for and on behalf of the people.

So it is with dental technicians. There is no reason why dental technicians cannot have a licensing system. If it is found that there has been something faulty in a technician's work or that there has been a deliberate attempt to side-step the law and a breach has occurred, surely to goodness the technician's licence can be cancelled.

There is no need for every dental technician in Queensland to work through and under a dentist and have the price of his work doubled just so that somebody can receive a huge rake-off. As the member for Thuringowa said, that particular "somebody" is the highest-paid professional in Australia.

There has to be a better system. If the technicians breached the law, their licence could be cancelled. As I understand it, dental technicians in Tasmania have their own self-regulatory control. I believe that it was introduced in 1957. From 1957 through to 1985, which is the last year for which I have seen a report, there have been only three breaches by dental technicians in the whole of Tasmania. Those technicians have been taken to task because of that. However, dental technicians in Tasmania can operate directly with the public.

The question of chairside status has been mentioned. I think that most dental technicians would accept the fact that if they are to achieve that status, they need to study for and obtain additional qualifications. They are prepared to do that. And why not? Why can they not be licensed directly to do that sort of work as well? Anything that can be done to bring about a lowering of the exorbitant health costs in our community should be done. That is the main reason why I join with the member for Thuringowa in opposing the principles that are contained in the Bill. I believe that the Bill should be examined and amended. The Minister ought to tell the House before he completes his reply just exactly what did happen at those three conferences that he has had with representatives of dental technicians. It is all very well for Mr McPhie to criticise correspondence that he has received from people in the community——

Mr Ahern: I will do that.

Mr CASEY: I will be pleased if the Minister does so. It gives the Minister the opportunity to either accept or deny the points that have been made.

Unquestionably, all members of Parliament are lobbied strongly from time to time. If members did not accept that that was going to happen, they should not have taken on the job. It is part of the task of a legislator to accept, listen to and adjudge between representations that are made to him, regardless of what it is in relation to, be it an individual's problem or a problem being experienced by a group in the community. That is why members of Parliament are elected. Mr McPhie says that he just throws in the rubbish bin the stuff that people bring to him.

Mr McPhie: I didn't say that.

Mr CASEY: My word the honourable member said that!

The honourable member can do what he wishes. All honourable members can do as they wish. It is on his head at election-time to be answerable to his constituents, if the dental technicians want to campaign strongly in his electorate. I suggest that if this legislation is passed, that is what they ought to do. They should take note of those National Party back-benchers who supported the legislation and campaign strongly against them in their electorates at the time of the next election.

I would be pleased if the Minister would tell honourable members just what did happen at those conferences. I read the correspondence that I receive from people. I have a good look at it. Certainly there were some repetitive aspects. However, the repetition consisted of statutory declarations signed by people and submissions made by representatives of organisations, and all of them said the same thing: the Minister had promised them that he would give the dental technicians their own separate board.

Mr McPhie: He did not.

Mr CASEY: I will repeat what I said. I said that all of these representatives made that statement. The Minister now has the opportunity to reply in this Parliament. I sincerely hope that he does. It will then be on the record and then a judgment can be made as to who is correct.

Mr SMITH (Townsville East) (9.40 p.m.): Obviously the reason why the Opposition is opposing this Bill is not that the proposal adds some statutory control over dental technicians and others in the dental field, but clearly because of the limitation of the right of technicians to deal with the public in any capacity at all. If the Minister had approached this legislation in a different way, there would have been a measure of agreement on how much direct contact there ought to be. To ban it outright means that once again Queensland is attempting to swim in the opposite direction to the thinking of mainstream Australia and it is unfortunate to see this happen.

There has been a vigorous campaign waged at two levels. In the first instance there is the situation where one group is heavily lobbying the Government and attempting to use what might be called the old-boy network, whereas in the second instance dental technicians and others associated with them have no choice other than to appeal to a wider public in respect to the justice of their case. For that reason it is unreasonable to criticise those people for lobbying. One must ask oneself how else they will get the message across, and the answer is that they have no other vehicle. This entitlement is granted to them in this free country and they would be very foolish not to use it.

One of the reasons for the response by traditional dentists is the fact, as other speakers have said, that they play a diminishing role, as has happened in other professions. Some professions have declined whilst others have been on the ascent. The dental profession is one in which there has been a loss of basic work due to increased health standards through knowledge and education, for example the use of fluoride and the like. As in other professions, technicians have taken over work that was performed by people at a higher professional level and it is clearly possible for them to do this in the dental field. This will result in a loss by the dentists, because, due to the aspects I

mentioned before, some of the traditional work has gone and dentists are now trying to claw back some of the work which, by and large, they conceded to dental technicians. As a matter of fact dental technicians have been operating in laboratories for many years and it is surprising that such a vigorous campaign is being mounted to turn that situation around. It is not an attempt to prevent something from happening; it is an attempt to turn the situation around.

Dentists and the Government must be realistic because there are expanding roles to be played by dentists. Nobody doubts the importance of the dental specialists; the people who reconstruct the teeth of victims of accidents or violence, and they do a wonderful job. Dental technicians operate at the other end of the scale, but traditional dentists, with the aid of new technology, are able to move into the area of implants. This is a rapidly growing field, although quite expensive, that offers a widening scope. In a society that places so much importance on appearances, there is an increasing emphasis on cosmetic dentistry and traditional dentists are moving into that field.

I feel that the only realistic effect of the implementation of an unjust law or registration is that an offence will not be stamped out, but that people, who were otherwise law-abiding citizens, will be made criminals and they will be driven underground. As another speaker said, there is no way in the world that this practice can be stopped. This world is cost-conscious and there is no doubt whatsoever that dental technicians can operate without the overheads of a main line dental practice and are able to deliver some services, quite safely, at a lower cost. No-one will argue that a dental technician should be able to go ahead and do a bridge and crown without some kind of intervention by a dentist, but as was stated by the honourable member for Mackay, it is interesting to note that whilst a dentist refers work to a technician, the reverse does not apply; the technician is not able to refer to work to a dentist. For the system to be successful, it ought to be a two-way street, and as that matter is not addressed, the legislation is deficient.

One of the most common areas of work for a dental technician would be with the full denture and the repair of a denture. It is quite ridiculous to say to a person who is unfortunate enough to wear a full denture and who has a breakage that he should have to go through a dentist to have his or her plate repaired. It is quite simple, and technicians are quite capable of carrying out the work without any risk to the patient. I know that the Minister in his reply will say that patient care and attention to health detail is a very important element, and I would agree with that. I am simply saying that in his sweep-all approach, it is an injustice to deny technicians any direct access. I believe that a more thoughtful approach would have been to define clearly the area in which technicians could work by direct public contact. I think that the Government and the Minister would have earned much more credit had they taken that approach.

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Health and Environment) (9.45 p.m.), in reply: Down through the years this issue has been quite a difficult one for Governments. It has generated a great deal of heat in all of the States of Australia in which the debate has taken place. Queensland has been no exception. Tonight, I think that in their contributions all honourable members supported the concept of registration of dental technicians. So we are basically in agreement that the time has come in the State of Queensland for the registration of dental technicians. The basic disagreement tonight has been, firstly, how we do that and how we supervise it; and, secondly, whether we allow dental technicians full clinical status. The differences between us appear to lie in two areas: firstly, how will the supervisory board or committee operate; and secondly, should there be clinical status or should there not?

After long consultation over some years, the Queensland Government has opted for a traditional conservative approach to the issue. If one looks at how Governments around the rest of the country have dealt with the problem in terms of Labor politics and conservative politics, the Queensland Government is opting for the conservative response, which I guess is no surprise to anyone, since the National Party is certainly a conservative party. However, the recommendations made by the Government represent

a concession to what has been tried in some other States of Australia. It is certainly a middle ground between the dentists' position on one hand and the technicians' view on the other.

The dentists have recommended that there should be registration of dental technicians but that it should be attended to solely by the Dental Board. On the other hand, the technicians have suggested that they should have their own board and their own legislation. It has been decided to dedicate a standing committee of the Dental Board, the chairman of which will be a dental technician, and he will be on the Dental Board for the purposes of discussion of dental technicians' issues. That represents quite a compromise and quite a difference from what the dentists have recommended. I believe that it is worth a good try. It has the capability, with goodwill, to bring both sections of the profession together. It asks them to work together in resolving some of their differences and to look at the trends that are taking place in their profession.

Some very substantial trends are occurring, some of which have been referred to tonight. The old days when a person reached a certain stage in life at which the dentist decreed that all his teeth came out and a full prosthesis was inserted is changing. With the school health services and preventive health services that are now operating, those days are slowly passing. Today, a substantial move is being made into more conservative dentistry areas and much more sophisticated dental technicians' work. In all practicality, the dentist and the technician must today be working closer and closer together.

The ethos behind the Government's proposal tonight is to try to keep them working together and to give the technicians pretty much complete control over their own profession whilst still maintaining a link with the Dental Board. That is the idea behind the legislation, and that is why I have said that I will be maintaining a close watch on the situation to see how it works in practice; so that some of the dreadful allegations that have been made about the idea behind the legislation will not be realised in practice. My party members have indicated that they want close supervision of the issue because I am the Minister.

Mr McElligott: For now.

Mr AHERN: I ask the honourable member to repeat that interjection.

Mr McElligott: For now—the Minister for now.

Mr AHERN: The honourable member for Thuringowa will not be the shadow Minister for Health tomorrow. He is going tomorrow.

Mr McElligott: How do you know that?

Mr AHERN: Is the honourable member prepared to take a bet with me on that issue? My information in that regard is quite reliable.

There is no doubt at all that the honourable member for Thuringowa is leaving the shadow Health portfolio tomorrow. Because the honourable member has invited me to comment, I will tell him why that is so. It so happens that I am in possession of a particular document that fell off the back of a truck as it came past Parliament House. The document to which I refer is the ANOP's qualitative political research into the Labor Party at present. It is interesting to note what that research reveals. Three marginal wards in Brisbane were researched as well as the State seat of Thuringowa in Townsville.

Mr McElligott: How can the dental technicians trust a man who deals in stolen goods?

Mr AHERN: I ask the honourable member to wait a minute. I am entitled to make this point.

Mr Speaker, had you been in this House for the honourable member for Thuringowa's presentation, during which he was quite scurrilous in his criticism of me, you would know that I have to reply to his comments.

In case honourable members opposite did not have a chance to peruse this document, I will table it shortly. It states—

“The preferred Labor vote in Thuringowa has actually gone backwards to a small degree . . .”—

since the last State election. It has decreased by half a per cent since the last election. The person who carried out the research stated that in the State seat of Thuringowa—

“the relatively high Liberal preference transfer to Labor has dropped, resulting in a preferred vote figure for the ALP which would put Thuringowa in the knife edge category at the moment.”

For reference I lay upon the table of the House the said document.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr AHERN: There is no doubt why the honourable the Leader of the Opposition has decided to shift his shadow Health Minister. As Minister for Health in Queensland, I will be giving him an undertaking on behalf of this Government that the supervision that has been called for by my party members will be honestly carried through.

In relation to some of the issues that the honourable member raised about the quotes from the Dental Technicians Association—I have done a tremendous amount of consultation with the Australian Dental Association, the Joint Dental Technicians Council and individual technicians. I have spent hours and hours in discussions with various committees, the central council of the National Party, the health committee of the National Party and a whole range of forums in relation to this matter. On no occasion have I told any dental technicians' group that a dental technicians board and separate dental technicians legislation would be introduced. I make that statement with absolute confidence in the knowledge that, on most occasions, if not all, I have had departmental witnesses or other witnesses to the veracity of my statement.

Today I received a visit from one of the lobbyists for the dental technicians, a Mr Scott from New South Wales, who had lunch with one of my officers and me and who spoke about a number of members as well. He told me that he believed that a number of the technicians had behaved badly in the presentation of their case and that they had done a great deal of harm to the arguments that were being put forward. I said to him that I felt that I had been misrepresented on a number of occasions and that that had not been helpful, and he agreed.

In relation to the newspaper report about the Miscellaneous Workers Union to which the honourable member for Thuringowa makes reference—I was telephoned by a reporter and asked, “Is the Miscellaneous Workers Union in favour of the registration or not?” I said, “I believe the Miscellaneous Workers Union is in favour of registration.”, which they are. It was written up by the reporter as “completely in favour of the legislation”, which I had never asserted. However, that is how it is in relation to reporting of some issues from time to time. Honourable members who make statements to the press understand how that sort of misunderstanding can occur.

The member for Thuringowa said also that technicians will only have a say on technicians' business in relation to the Dental Board. That surely is reasonable. Is the honourable member asking that the dental technicians should have a say on the totality of issues coming before the Dental Board? I think not.

The clinical status question is surely an issue that must be resolved after the issue of registration is resolved. That is the position from which the Government is looking at the issue, anyway. At this stage it is moving forward to resolve the first issue, which is how to register the dental technicians of Queensland. I regret that there appears to be a long-running civil war operating in this profession. I hope that my efforts in bringing people together will be helpful in assisting the professions to work much more closely together. I feel that there has been fault on both sides and that there is a necessity for the industry, or the profession, to work closer and closer together. Because of the various changes in trends that are occurring in the professions, close working relationships and

professional relationships are appropriate and necessary. I urge the professions to get closer together in the future than they have been in the past.

I thank the member for Toowoomba North for his vigorous defence of my legislative proposals tonight. I thank the member for Ashgrove for his understanding of the situation as well. I have indicated that I will be keeping a very close eye on the situation, as is my responsibility, my duty and my habit as Health Minister.

The honourable member for Mackay has made a statement to which I wish to refer before resuming my chair. He talked about the issue of disciplinary action. I ask him to pick up a copy of the Bill and read clause 20. Proposed new section 26F relates to disciplinary action. It says—

“(1) Where the board is satisfied after inquiry under section 26G that a dental technician—

(a) has been convicted in Queensland of an indictable offence or has been convicted elsewhere than in Queensland of an offence which if committed in Queensland would have been an indictable offence;

or

(b) is incompetent in relation to his work as a dental technician or has been guilty of gross negligence in the manner in which he has performed any such work,

it may, with the consent of the Standing Committee first had and obtained, by order—

(c) direct that the dental technician's name be removed from the Register of Dental Technicians . . .”

Firstly, an indictable offence must have been committed. An indictable offence is an offence relating to a jury.

Mr Casey: Surely we could have a system under which there would be an automatic cancellation for an indictable offence? We did that for real estate agents and lawyers.

Mr AHERN: I understand that these provisions are all mirror provisions of all the other statutes that operate under the Medical Act and Other Acts (Administration) Act in Queensland. All of these particular areas operate under the same set of proposals within this department and have been proven to work. They work elsewhere in this legislation for the Dental Board, so why not operate this way for offences in relation to technicians as well? I remind honourable members that the provision states “with the consent of the Standing Committee”, on which six out of the seven positions are occupied by technicians.

I would say that the Government has moved in a spirit of co-operation. The legislation is worthy and reflects the trends that are occurring in the profession today. I think a reasonable arrangement has been reached. For argument's sake, if the Government had proceeded along the path suggested by the honourable member for Thuringowa and set up a separate dental technicians' board under separate dental technicians legislation, the newspapers would cry out that the Government had created another quango. Moreover, the dentists would be represented in this Chamber and speeches would be made in support of them instead of in support of dental technicians.

A reasonable position has been arrived at with goodwill. On my part and on the part of officers in my department, goodwill exists. I hope that this legislation will work to keep the profession together in line with modern trends occurring in the dental industry in Queensland. I think this legislation is worthy of the support of the House.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 53		NOES, 29	
Ahern	Lee	Ardill	
Alison	Lester	Braddy	
Austin	Lickiss	Burns	
Beanland	McCauley	Campbell	
Beard	McKechnie	Casey	
Berghofer	McPhie	Comben	
Bjelke-Petersen	Menzel	D'Arcy	
Booth	Muntz	De Lacy	
Borbidge	Neal	Eaton	
Burreket	Nelson	Gibbs, R. J.	
Chapman	Newton	Goss	
Clauson	Powell	Hamill	
Cooper	Randell	Hayward	
Elliott	Row	McElligott	
Gately	Sherlock	Mackenroth	
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherrin	McLean	
Gilmore	Simpson	Milliner	
Glasson	Slack	Palaszcuk	
Gunn	Stephan	Scott	
Gygar	Stoneman	Shaw	
Harper	Tenni	Smith	
Henderson	Veivers	Smyth	
Hinton	White	Underwood	
Hobbs		Vaughan	
Hynd		Warner	
Innes	<i>Tellers:</i>	Wells	<i>Tellers:</i>
Katter	Littleproud	Yewdale	Davis
Knox	FitzGerald		Prest

Resolved in the affirmative.

Committee

Hon. M. J. Ahern (Landsborough—Minister for Health and Environment) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—

Mr McELLIGOTT (10.09 p.m.): I have chosen to move an amendment to clause 4 to introduce the registration of dental prosthetists, because this clause presents the first opportunity for that to be done. It is unfortunate that, in introducing the amendments to the Act, the Minister did not take the opportunity to grant chairside status to qualified dental technicians in this State, as has been the case in all other States.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! There is far too much noise in the Chamber. The honourable member is trying to make a point and I think it is only fair that other honourable members listen.

Mr McELLIGOTT: I was amazed at the contribution made by the member for Toowoomba North, who attempted to indicate that only a minority of dental technicians sought chairside status for their profession. What he was really saying was that these very competent and qualified people ought to be prevented from making a reasonable living out of their profession.

He also indicated that they were seeking to take business away from dentists. The fact is that the construction and fitting of dentures accounts for about only 15 per cent of the business of the average dentists. To rebut his argument that only a minority of dental technicians want chairside status, let me say again that, in the survey conducted by the Miscellaneous Workers Union, 84 per cent of dental technicians felt that dental technicians should be able to deal with the public.

I wish to quote from a letter dated 22 October 1987 to the Minister for Health from Matt Singleton, who is the member for Coffs Harbour and Shadow Minister for Industrial Development and Decentralisation. I think he is a colleague of Government members and a National Party member of the New South Wales Parliament.

In his letter he introduces a Mr Reginald Francis Scott, the State President of the Dental Prosthetists Association of New South Wales. In his letter he said—

“I would like to say that the former Liberal Country Party Government in New South Wales passed legislation to register Dental Prosthetists in this State, however strong efforts were made by the Dental profession to stop direct contact with the public. I firmly believe that this was one issue which did our government great harm and saw us narrowly defeated in the election in 1976 in this State. Since that time Dental Prosthetists have been able to work directly with the public and I have never had one complaint about the service or charges made by members of the Association in that time and, in fact, I have used the services of a Dental Prosthetist for many years because of the failure of my family dentist to adequately fit dentures following an accident in 1957.

I trust that you can give sincere consideration to the worth of the members of the Dental Prosthetists Association in Queensland because I believe that they would act equally as professionally as the members of the Association in this State.”

I believe that the argument in favour of granting chairside status to technicians is very soundly based and I am amazed that the member for Toowoomba North has rejected that argument so strongly this evening.

The point I make by moving an amendment is to introduce the concept into the debate. In his reply to the second-reading debate the Minister referred to the fact that the Bill is the first stage and that the recognition of dental prosthetists will follow.

If he is prepared to repeat that assurance this evening and to put some time-frame on it, the Opposition can accept that undertaking. However, before he responds, I will formally move the following amendment—

“At page 2, line 19, after ‘Dental Technicians’ add—

‘and dental prosthetists’.”

Mr SHERLOCK: Because it is premature, the Liberal Party will not be supporting the ALP’s amendment. The Minister has already said that he believes that the clinical status of dental prosthetists should be resolved after the registration issue now under debate is resolved. In the second-reading debate I outlined the history of the legislation in other States in relation to chairside status. We in the Liberal Party support the view that the dental profession and its ancillary craft should be resolving this issue and not calling upon legislators to resolve it for them. I repeat my advice to dental technicians, that is, that this is two or three positive strides down the path but it is by no means the end of the journey.

Mr AHERN: I do not want the honourable member for Thuringowa to be putting words in my mouth tonight. I think that an examination of *Hansard* tomorrow will reveal that what I have said is that the issue of registration must be resolved first and that the issue of chairside status is something that can be considered later. However, to presume that it will be favourable consideration would be premature. I have not said that. That would be to presume upon my colleagues’ consideration of the issues. I have certainly not done that so far. This issue has been debated thoroughly tonight. The Government is opposed to the amendment and will not be supporting it.

Question—That the words proposed to be added be so added—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 29

Ardill
Braddy
Burns
Campbell
Casey
Comben
D'Arcy
De Lacy
Eaton
Gibbs, R. J.
Goss
Hamill
Hayward
McElligott
Mackenroth
McLean
Milliner
Palaszczuk
Scott
Shaw
Smith
Smyth
Underwood
Vaughan
Warner
Wells
Yewdale

Tellers:
Davis
Prest

NOES, 52

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

Resolved in the negative.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 5 to 10, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—

Mr McELLIGOTT (10.22 p.m.): The Minister indicated that the establishment of a dental technicians' standing committee was a conservative approach. I suggest that he has adopted the attitude of simply throwing crumbs to the technicians. This will not be acceptable to them. They believe—and the Opposition strongly supports their case—that, as professional people, they are entitled to have their own registration board, and the proposition contained in the Bill to appoint a standing committee is hog-wash. There is nothing contained in the standing committee that gives the technicians any real control over their own industry. In every respect they are subservient to the dentists, and it is quite obvious that the National Party has adopted the attitude that dentists shall exercise control over technicians. That has never been more clearly demonstrated than it has in clause 11 of the Bill under consideration this evening.

The Opposition has indicated that its choice was to have a separate Act to register and control dental technicians in this State. Having failed in that attempt, the Opposition adopts the secondary position that it is prepared to accept and argue for a dental technicians' registration board constituted under the Dental Act.

I move the following amendment—

“At page 4, omit lines 8 to 26 and substitute—

'Division 2—Dental Technicians Registration Board

- (1) There shall be a Dental Technicians' Registration Board consisting of 7 members and of those members—
 - (a) one shall be a person nominated by the Minister who by virtue of his appointment shall be Chairman;
 - (b) one shall be a dental technician who shall be a person conducting dental technician training at a tertiary institution approved by the Minister;

- (c) one shall be a dental technician nominated by the Dental Technicians' Association of Queensland;
 - (d) one shall be a dental technician nominated by the Australian Commercial Dental Laboratories Association (Qld. Branch);
 - (e) one shall be a dental technician nominated by the Dental Prosthetists' Association of Queensland;
 - (f) one shall be a dental technician from a State Government Dental clinic—being a financial member of the Miscellaneous Workers' Union;
 - (g) one shall be a dental technician nominated by the Joint Dental Technicians' Council of Queensland.
- (2) The members of the Board shall be appointed by the Minister by notification published in the Gazette.
 - (3) A nomination for the purposes of subsection (1) shall be made within the time and in the manner determined by the Minister and, if not so made, the Minister may appoint a person who is qualified as prescribed to be nominated.
 - (4) A person may hold office as a member of the Board in addition to any position he holds in the Public Service of Queensland.' "

The other matter in regard to clause 11 and to the succeeding parts of the Bill that I think need clearing up by the Minister relate to my inability to find any reference to the appointment of a chairman of the standing committee. The Minister referred to the fact that the chairman of the committee will be a dental technician. I assume that in most situations that would be so. However, the Bill provides for one member of the standing committee to be a dentist—a member of the board. As I mentioned in my speech, it is not an impossibility that the chairman of the standing committee could in fact be that dentist. I think that there is an anomaly in the Bill. Unless the Minister can clear up the matter to the satisfaction of the members of the Opposition, we will certainly be expressing our concern about that.

Mr SHERLOCK: The Liberal Party will not be supporting the ALP's amendment. It is a very poor amendment; in fact, it is not a good amendment. Subsections (2), (3) and (4) of the proposed new section 16A in the amendment moved by the Opposition are unchanged, so we are really only dealing with subsection (1). In the Bill, proposed new section 16A (a) states that a member of the Dental Board shall be a member of the standing committee.

That is a good concept because it provides liaison, which is its purpose, between the Dental Technicians Standing Committee and the Dental Board. It provides for liaison between the dentists and the dental technicians. This person will form the bridge. This is the very thing that dental technicians are looking for. It is not envisaged in the Bill that he be the chairman.

Tonight the Minister said that the chairman of the standing committee proposed in the Bill shall be a technician. I also seek clarification of that. As the Opposition member said, perhaps it is an anomaly. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) in the amendment moved by the Opposition is the bad part of the amendment. Members of the Opposition want a person, not a dentist or a dental technician, on the committee. That is very fine, but it is not definitive enough. Even further, they want that person, not necessarily a dentist, a dental technician or anyone involved in the practice of dentistry or the craft, to represent dental technicians on the committee and, in addition, to be the chairman. I point out that he would also represent them on the Dental Board. In certain circumstances in which there is not a sympathetic Minister, that could work against the interests of dental technicians. Therefore, the Opposition's amendment is bad in that sense.

In proposed new section 16A (b), the six other representatives of the seven members of the standing committee appointed by the Minister are nominated by one or more associations accepted by the Minister. I find it difficult to accept the ALP's proposal,

because it is extremely definitive. Tonight, honourable members have said that many of the associations are minority groups. The amendment provides for six of the groups to be specified in the Act, and that may not be in the best interests of the practice of either dentistry or dental technicians in the future. For those reasons, the Liberal Party will be voting against the amendment.

Mr AHERN: I do not propose to go back across issues that have been canvassed very thoroughly in the substantive debate. However, I want to refer to the specific question as to whether or not the chairman of the standing committee will be a dental technician. It is clearly intended that he will be. It will be enshrined in the Act that he will be.

The particular provision is contained in clause 12. Proposed new section 16D (1) states—

“The provisions of sections 8, 9, 11, 13 and 14 apply, with any necessary modifications, to and in respect of the Standing Committee and the members thereof.”

Inter alia, proposed new section 16D (2) (c) states—

“a reference in those sections to the president or deputy president shall be construed as a reference to the chairman or deputy chairman as the case may be;”.

If honourable members think about that and seek advice from parliamentary counsel, they will realise that the chairman of the standing committee will be a dental technician. That is certainly the intention of the legislation and that is how it will be. I am advised that that is how those particular words will operate in practice.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 52		NOES, 29	
Ahern	Lee	Ardill	
Alison	Lester	Braddy	
Austin	Lickiss	Burns	
Beanland	McCauley	Campbell	
Beard	McKechnie	Casey	
Berghofer	McPhie	Comben	
Bjelke-Petersen	Menzel	D'Arcy	
Borbidge	Muntz	De Lacy	
Burreket	Neal	Eaton	
Chapman	Nelson	Gibbs, R. J.	
Clauson	Newton	Goss	
Cooper	Powell	Hamill	
Elliott	Randell	Hayward	
Gately	Row	McElligott	
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherlock	Mackenroth	
Gilmore	Sherrin	McLean	
Glasson	Simpson	Milliner	
Gunn	Slack	Palaszcuk	
Harper	Stephan	Scott	
Harvey	Stoneman	Shaw	
Henderson	Tenni	Smith	
Hinton	Veivers	Smyth	
Hobbs	White	Underwood	
Hynd		Vaughan	
Innes	<i>Tellers:</i>	Warner	<i>Tellers:</i>
Katter	Littleproud	Wells	Davis
Knox	FitzGerald	Yewdale	Prest

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 11, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 18, as read, agreed to.

Clause 19—

Mr AHERN (10.37 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

“At page 7, lines 25 and 26, omit—

‘that is, in the opinion of the Board, at least equal to that’
and substitute—

‘which course is, in the opinion of the Board, of a standard at least equal to the apprenticeship’.”

This amendment has been brought to my attention by the Parliamentary Counsel, who has had a second thought about the matter. He says that the amendment is necessary to make it quite clear that a course completed outside this State was being compared with Queensland’s apprenticeship. On a second reading of the matter, he had some doubts about it. I am sure that he is right.

Mr McELLIGOTT: The Opposition supports the amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 19, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 20 to 28, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

Third Reading

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

CULTURAL RECORD (LANDSCAPES QUEENSLAND AND QUEENSLAND ESTATE) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 10 November (see p. 3969).

Mr BRADDY (Rockhampton) (10.41 p.m.): This is the first occasion during 1987 when Parliament has been given an opportunity to debate legislation that relates significantly to the Aboriginal and Islander people of Queensland. I suggest that it is therefore an important occasion and one in the course of which the Parliament should review the conduct of Aboriginal and Islander affairs in this State and discuss heritage and cultural matters, which are also a significant part of this legislation.

I suggest that it is of some significance also that this debate occurs at a time when Aboriginal and Islander people again are being defamed and discriminated against by the Queensland Government. I refer particularly to the detention unit at Boggo Road prison—the so-called “Black hole”—and the attempt made by the Queensland Government, through the Minister for Corrective Services, to apportion a significant part of the blame and the reason for reopening that unit to the so-called black activists of Queensland.

Mr NEAL: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is misrepresenting the facts of the situation. The words he is using are objectionable to me, and I ask that he withdraw them.

Mr Comben: It was reported in the *Courier-Mail* last Thursday morning.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Scott: The Minister can make a ministerial statement tomorrow—which members of the Opposition cannot make.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Cook! The Minister finds comments made by the honourable member for Rockhampton offensive and asks that they be withdrawn.

Mr BRADDY: In accordance with the forms and procedure of the House, I have no objection—and, of course, can have none—to withdrawing the words that the House finds objectionable in terms of the forms and procedure.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockhampton will continue.

Mr BRADDY: I refer to the Minister's statement about black activists. They were words that the Minister for Corrective Services chose to use. Therefore, I can only conclude that he does not find those words objectionable.

The legislation presently before the House repeals the Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act, which was relevant. It is certainly important to talk about the modern culture of Aboriginal and Islander people in this State. It now appears that, once again, the Government has embarked upon an exercise of black-bashing because the Minister for Corrective Services gave as his major reason for reopening this unwholesome and detestable unit the fact that black activists, as he calls them, within the Boggo Road prison have supposedly set upon a course, by virtue of Commonwealth money, of manufacturing or assembling arms to set in train an armed uprising. That is the allegation that the Minister for Corrective Services has made.

I can only say that all of us in Queensland cannot but be reminded of a similar sort of allegation that was made a couple of years ago by the Leader of the Government, the Premier of this State, relating to the so-called training in Queensland of Aboriginal terrorists by Libyan agents. That allegation proved to be absolute nonsense. It was, of course, yet again another defamation of the Aboriginal people of this State by the Premier of this State. When confronted in relation to that allegation and challenged to produce his proof, the Premier was totally unable to do so.

The people of Queensland are not unaccustomed to seeing Government Ministers in this State attack Aboriginal people and use that attack to advance, as they see it, the cause of their own Government. It is, therefore, a sorry state that the Minister for Corrective Services has again, on behalf of the Government, embarked upon such an exercise. He has been challenged in this House—and I challenge him again—to bring forward the proof supposedly relating to the assembling of those arms in Boggo Road prison.

Mr RANDELL: I rise to a point of order. I cannot see any relevance to the Bill in the member's statements. Mr Speaker, I ask you to ask him to come back to the Bill.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! At this stage there is no point of order. However, I ask the member for Rockhampton to desist from that line of attack.

Mr BRADDY: As I said at the outset, this is the only piece of legislation in 1987 that relates to the Aboriginal and Islander people of this State. In accordance with the customs of this House, it is proper to embark upon a review of all matters that relate to Aboriginal and Islander people. It was in that context that I made the allegations. Indeed, I call upon the Minister for Community Services to stand up for the Aboriginal and Islander people in relation to the allegations that come from this Government and to ensure, as far as he can, that those people are not defamed by any other members of his Government.

In responding to the ministerial statement by the Minister for Community Services on the tabling of the Powder-Law report on Aboriginal deaths in custody, I have to make a number of points in the course of this debate. Some of those points are in direct response to the Minister's statement and some set the background against which those deaths have occurred. The Minister referred to the lack of power available to Aboriginal people on the former reserve communities, which are known now as trust areas. He spoke of a situation in which those people had little or no ability to overcome the outside forces that oppressed, frustrated and depressed them. He went on to say that their whole lives had been a conditioning to a perspective, an outlook of hopelessness and despair.

The Australian Labor Party does not disagree with that underlying theme in the course of this debate. Indeed, the whole debate can only be worth while if it achieves the objective of economic, cultural, social and political independence and self-government for the Aboriginal people of Queensland. Independence on these terms is long overdue. It is a right that is enjoyed by all other Australians and it certainly must be made available to the original Australians whose ancestors have lived in this country for at least 40 000 years.

1987 is a landmark year in this debate. It is 20 years since the referendum was passed giving the Commonwealth Government the power to make laws for Aboriginal people. That referendum was passed overwhelmingly by 92 per cent of electors. It was passed not only in every State but also in every electorate. It is 30 years since the present National Party State Government was elected. The Bjelke-Petersen Government has had 30 years in which to do something positive about the relative powerlessness of Aboriginal people to enable them to address their problems of oppression, which was referred to by the Minister.

The Bjelke-Petersen Government has had the powers, acting on its own initiatives or in conjunction with successive Federal Governments, to do what the Minister now agrees with my party must be done, that is, to ensure by all possible means and with all possible speed that true independence is granted to Aboriginal people so that the culture of the Aboriginal and Islander people may be enabled to be retained in Queensland, to be fostered and to be enhanced.

The Government's record must be critically examined to see what it has done with the powers it has now, and has had for many years. In the late 1970s, when the Aboriginal people of Aurukun and Mornington Island sought independence and the conservative Fraser Government passed legislation for that purpose, the Queensland Premier stepped in with all the powers of his Government and initiated State legislation to degazette those reserves and thereby remove the force of Federal law.

In the course of his second-reading speech, the Minister referred to his own legislation, the community services Acts, as landmark legislation. That legislation, which came into force on 31 May 1984, provided for Aboriginal councils to continue in office but with greater powers and responsibilities than ever before. It replaced the old Aboriginal Advisory Council with the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council, again with more powers than the previous body had. One of the authors of the Powder-Law report, Mr Pearce Powder, is both the deputy chairman of the Woorabinda Aboriginal Council and the deputy chairman of the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council. He was undoubtedly chosen by the Minister not only because he holds those two positions but also for his personal qualities and ability.

Mr Katter: No, he was chosen by the ACC. He was a good choice.

Mr BRADDY: I take the Minister's interjection. Clearly he was a good choice. The Minister made the decision on the recommendation of the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council. It is a pity that the Minister does not always accept the advice of that council, particularly in relation to this legislation—but I will come to that later.

Mr Katter: It was an ACC appointment. It was their appointment, not ours.

Mr BRADDY: It was the Minister's appointment on the recommendation of the council, as I understand it. The Minister has the power to appoint.

Whilst referring to Mr Powder, I want to assure the House that he was not labouring under any misapprehension about access to coroners' reports during the inquiry. Mr Powder has assured me that when he and Mr Law asked for these reports, senior police officers told him they were not to be made available and, in any case, two reports were still to be completed. The Minister was unnecessarily critical of Mr Powder, I suggest, in relation to his complaints about the availability of, and access to, coroners' reports.

I will return to the Minister's landmark legislation that came into effect in May 1984. It is now November 1987, and there is a good opportunity to examine the true

situation in relation to Aboriginal self-management. Of course, out of that Aboriginal self-management must come the fostering of a flourishing culture for Aboriginal and Islander people.

At a recent Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council meeting in Cairns, which I attended, representatives of those councils and the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council all discussed with me the serious shortfalls in funding that the Department of Community Services is providing to them to carry out their newly acquired local government responsibilities, including the fostering of Aboriginal culture. Indeed, one of those councils, the Woorabinda Aboriginal Council, has produced a detailed report on its lack of resources to carry out its job and duties. I believe that report was forwarded to all members of this Parliament.

I table the report from the Woorabinda Aboriginal Council headed "PROBLEMS FACED BY COUNCIL". I request that it be incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid on the table the following document—

WOORABINDA ABORIGINAL COUNCIL

Council Chamber,
Woorabinda, Q'ld., 4702.
Telephone: (079) 35 0160
Reference:
Date:

PROBLEMS FACED BY COUNCIL

1. Council is expected to provide a range of local government and other services to the community. These services include:
 - Housing—both new construction and repairs and maintenance to existing houses
 - Employment—both full time and C.D.E.P.
 - Water supply—maintain bore, pump, pipeline, water treatment plant, tower and mains
 - Roads—access and township roads
 - Welfare—care of children, youth, the aged, families in crisis
 - Justice, Law and Order—maintain Aboriginal Court, and Aboriginal Police Force (Note—Aboriginal Police Force under day-to-day control of Queensland Police Force)
 - Public Transport—using charter permit from Transport Department
 - Community Development—encouragement of small business development, installation of community facilities (such as accommodation for visitors, leisure facilities, and so on)
 - Property Improvement—cattle properties very run down and require extensive fencing, weed control, pasture improvement, roadworks, houses, sheds and dams maintenance, etc.
 - Town Plan—development of a town plan (not previously in existence)
 - Airstrip maintenance
 - Mimosa Social Club
 - Capital Works Program—for construction and maintenance of large community projects, such as sewerage systems, community hall, public library, aged person hostel, etc.
 - Arrange Training Programs for individuals and groups within the community—apprenticeships, vocational courses, plant operators, administration, arts and crafts, etc.
 - Make funeral arrangements and maintain cemetery
2. As Council does not have large reserve funds of its own to spend, (the only money which Council can decide how to spend being profits from the Social Club), and large amounts cannot be raised in the community through rates and charges at present, the Council depends on various Federal and State Government Departments and agencies for the money required to provide these services.

3. In order to provide the services above, the Council has to maintain offices, work sheds, store sheds and other buildings, trucks and other heavy machinery, tools and equipment, administrative records and account books, and so on.
4. The Government Departments who give Council money to do various things all want reports every three months on how that money is spent. They also want a statement from the Auditor-General each year that the money has been properly spent. Council has to pay for the Auditor's report. This costs about \$7,000 each year.
5. As well as the costs of maintenance, administration, and auditors, there are high insurance costs on buildings (houses, offices, etc.), vehicles, and other things which must be insured. The Council's insurance bill for the next twelve months from now will be between \$80,000-\$85,000.
6. As well as these costs, the Council has to pay a large amount in wages. Over the next twelve months the Council wages bill will be about \$2,220,000.
7. These are the operating or recurrent costs of providing the services.
8. As well as the operating costs, for the services we can provide now, there are a number of large community projects which need to be built. Once they are built they will also cost a lot of money to run. The capital (or construction) costs of these projects are estimated to be as follows, if they are built now:

Community Hall	\$ 400,000
Old People's Hostel	\$ 400,000
Extra new houses (to meet present demand—approx. 25 houses)	\$ 1,750,000
New water mains	\$ 155,000
Sealed roads	\$ 1,500,000
Public toilet block	\$ 50,000
Sewerage plant	\$1m-\$1.5m
New water reservoir	\$ 270,000
New vehicle workshop/stores	\$ 145,000
Single persons quarters/guesthouse	\$ 120,000
New Council Chamber/offices	\$ 150,000
Public Library	\$ 250,000
Boundary/stock fencing and gates (approx. 100km @ \$3,300/km)	\$ 330,000
Other livestock development costs	\$ 500,000
Swimming pool	\$ 350,000
Repairs and maintenance, existing houses (60 houses @ \$10,000 each average)	\$ 600,000
Shopping centre	\$ 400,000
Service station	\$ 200,000
Electricity to Bores	\$ 90,000
Block development—new subdivision (10 blocks at \$12,000 each)	\$ 120,000
Purchase of replacement Plant and Heavy Machinery	\$ 700,000
TOTAL	\$ 9,480,000

9. On the information Council has at present, Council will be very lucky to get \$1,500,000 towards these capital costs in the 1987/88 financial year.
10. These capital costs are for the development of the township and the Woorabinda block alone. No figures are available yet on the costs of developing the other four properties.
11. The attached sheet shows that the Department of Community Services (D.C.S.) is not giving Council anywhere near enough money to provide the local government services which they were responsible for until 14 April 1987.
12. D.C.S. recently spent \$42,000 on the "Woorabinda Community Infrastructure Report", March 1987, which was produced by Consulting Engineers, Edmiston and Taylor. The report looks at the town water supply, sewerage, electricity, roadworks, and drainage, the airstrip, and the costs of maintaining what we have now, as it is, and the costs of improving those services.

13. That report says that \$194,340 is required to maintain the water, sewerage, electricity, and roadworks and drainage services alone in 1987/88, AS THEY ARE NOW, with no improvements and with no allowance for operating costs.
14. Yet D.C.S. has only allowed \$157,000 for these and other services for 1987/88.
15. In the water supply area, D.C.S. have provided Council with only \$15,000 (total operating costs). That is to operate the whole system, from pumping the water out of the bore right through to the point where it runs out of the taps in town.
16. Edminston and Taylor said that basic maintenance alone of the water supply, in 1987/88, will cost \$28,230. Operating costs are extra. The \$15,000 that D.C.S. have allowed will be used up in buying the diesel fuel to run the motor which drives the pump.
17. *Every* project that the Council undertakes in Woorabinda has to get money for wages, materials, vehicles, and so on from several different sources, because no one Government department or agency ever produces enough money to meet the full cost of the project.
18. This makes the Council's budgets and account books very complicated and difficult to understand. It also makes it difficult to train local people in how to run the administration.

ANSWERS TO THE PROBLEMS

19. All the Commonwealth Government Departments and agencies, and all the Queensland Government Department and agencies who provide either money or services (or both) to Woorabinda **MUST WORK TOGETHER**, with each other, and the Council.
20. Woorabinda can no longer afford to have government departments saying that they are only interested in the projects that they fund, or support in other ways.
21. Both the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments have to recognise that Woorabinda needs a lot of things which should have been done years ago.
22. It doesn't help Woorabinda or anyone else to try to blame someone because the water supply is bad, or there aren't enough houses, or whatever. That won't fix the problems.
23. If both Governments agree there are problems to be fixed, and also agree on how much money they are prepared to spend each financial year, and then make sure both Commonwealth and Queensland public servants work together on the problems with the Council, then—and only then—will something positive be done.
24. The Council wants the people of Woorabinda to be independent and run their own affairs.
25. The Council does not want to run everything.
26. Council calls on the Commonwealth Government and the Queensland Government to work with us and the people of Woorabinda to fix up the problems.

T. G. MUNNS
CHAIRMAN.

1 July 1987.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT HANDOVER—WOORABINDA—13 April 1987

DCS money to Council in 1987/88, compared to what DCS spent in 1984/85

	DCS 84/85	COUNCIL 87/88
TELEPHONES	17,123	10,000
OFFICE REQUISITES	5,504	nil
ELECTRICITY	4,100	nil
HYGIENE & SANITATION	7,200	4,600
AIR TRAVEL—Administration	1,200	nil
WATER SUPPLY	12,000	15,000
ROADS, PARKS AND GARDENS	8,700	7,800
VEHICLE REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	46,800	nil
HEAVY EQUIPMENT R & M	31,066	22,000
MECHANICAL WORKSHOP	12,125	22,000
ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDINGS	14,000	5,000
FUEL	37,621	45,000
	(for approx. 25 vehicles)	(for 50)
FREIGHT	28,888	16,000
ADMINISTRATION	nil	7,000
POLICE	nil	2,600
TOTALS	\$226,327	\$157,000

Mr Scott: That is one of how many Aboriginal councils in Queensland having that trouble?

Mr BRADDY: The majority of the Aboriginal councils in Queensland are faced with inordinate difficulties.

One would not suggest that progress is not being made on many of these councils. However, it is the pace of the progress and the level of dedication of the Queensland Government to that development that are in question. The commitment of sufficient resources to enable the progress to be made is in question. One must be fair and say that there is progress. There is heart now that was not there, say, 20 years ago. However, the pace of the progress is too slow. The ability of people to sit down and plan has not been sufficiently enhanced.

I return to the Woorabinda council. In March of this year that council made a very detailed and well-presented submission to the Department of Community Services on its plant and equipment needs. The council advised me that it took the Department of Community Services three months to acknowledge receipt of that submission. That was for that council a particularly important submission. That is an example of what I was talking about.

The level of commitment is not sufficiently high. It is not good enough for the Minister and the department to say, "We are well-meaning." The Minister and the department have many years of neglect to make up for in Aboriginal and Islander affairs. The level of commitment called for from the Minister and the department is therefore correspondingly high when one compares it with the long years of neglect.

Every member of this Parliament is well aware of the varied and wide-ranging responsibilities of local authorities nowadays. These wide-ranging and varied responsibilities have suddenly been thrust upon people who are not adequately prepared for it. That is not my summation of their position; it is their own summation.

For years leading up to the granting of local government powers, the people on the Aboriginal reserves and the Islander reserves were requesting significant training and

advancement, and their requests were never approximately met, let alone adequately met. These councils must now deal with many different State and Federal authorities in the course of their day-to-day administration.

It is not only the State Department of Community Services that creates problems for Aboriginal councils, which are progressively and responsibly seeking to exercise self-management and independence. The Minister has on occasions in this Chamber referred to the responsibility of community police, that is, the Aboriginal police force created by this landmark legislation, which has been the subject of discussion for some two years.

The Minister's landmark legislation has created a glaring anomaly. Responsibility for these police is unfairly and uneasily divided between the Aboriginal councils and the Queensland police force, with each council being responsible for equipping the Aboriginal police with an office, a vehicle, uniforms and other necessary equipment and maintaining these items, but the Queensland police officer stationed at the trust area concerned being responsible for daily direction and control.

Obviously that pleases nobody. The State Government should introduce legislation as a matter of great urgency to make provision for the Aboriginal police to be employed, trained and equipped by the Queensland police force. This was the first recommendation of the Powder-Law report, that is, that there should be effective training and career paths for community police.

The Aboriginal people of Queensland are still waiting for a properly organised Government response to their request. Individual councils have been told that some training will be given. From time to time there has been talk of one-week and two-week courses. There is great turmoil amongst the Aboriginal people in relation to Aboriginal police. Different communities have been coming up with different answers.

It is not uncommon in modern Australia for people to be trained as assistants in all sorts of areas. We are now used to paramedics and assistants in hospitals. Clearly the time has come to regularise and, in a sense, legitimise the Aboriginal police force in Queensland. I suggest that the Aboriginal communities are showing a far greater sense of responsibility in this matter than the Queensland Government. The Aborigines demand that they should not be put into a position of operating a law enforcement system without that system being properly set up and authorised under Queensland law and without the people who work in that system being properly trained in accordance with Queensland law to enable them to carry out their jobs properly. Other local authorities are not expected to train and run their police forces, yet the Aboriginal communities of Queensland are. There is absolutely no good reason for imposing this burden on Aboriginal councils, which are not equipped to do it in any way.

The report that I referred to earlier from the Woorabinda council points out that the Department of Community Services has provided only \$2,600 in 1987-88 for all Aboriginal police operational costs, excluding wages. When the Aboriginal people complained to the Government that they have not been provided with either training or sufficient funds to carry out their policing tasks, the Government said, "You have got to do it. You get on with it."

Another anomaly in the landmark legislation is the supply of electricity to Aboriginal communities in Queensland. Instead of the regional electricity boards accepting the same responsibilities as they have elsewhere and supplying metered power to individual consumers, generally the boards continue to supply the power to the Department of Community Services, which has to maintain grids, read meters and bill the consumers, etc. There is no good reason for this sorry state of affairs to continue. I understand that this situation can only be remedied by a decision of Cabinet, which has the responsibility to ensure that discrimination against Aboriginal people does not continue in regard to electricity supply.

Everyone accepts that in our life-time there has been a continuing pattern, throughout the period since white colonisation, of discrimination against Aboriginal and Islander people. It is only in comparatively recent times that all members on both sides of the

House have applied their minds in any consistent fashion as a community to changing this. I accept from the numerous statements made by the Minister in this regard that he accepts his responsibility. I accept his goodwill, but goodwill must be translated into action and must result in reforms in the communities—reforms which proceed at a realistic pace.

When will Cabinet exercise its powers and stop treating Aboriginal communities in the relatively unfair and discriminatory fashion to which I have referred? Again, I give the House the example of the Aboriginal police. Despite the protests of the Aboriginal people, that they are being discriminated against, the Government must answer their pleas.

Mr Katter: What do you mean by that?

Mr BRADDY: In relation to discrimination?

Mr Katter: Of the police.

Mr BRADDY: The Aboriginal communities are the only local authorities in Queensland that are required to police their communities, yet they have been provided with a comparative paucity of training and funds to which I referred earlier. That is severe discrimination. They demand proper funding and training. They do not wish to be in the position of arresting or detaining people without proper training. It is mainly the responsibility of the Queensland Minister for Police and his department to provide this. It is in that department where most of the dodging of the issue has occurred. Too often in Queensland people say that Aboriginal people are not sufficiently responsible; yet, when they call upon the Government in a responsible manner, the Government does not heed.

Other areas of discrimination exist in relation to the provision of health services to the Aboriginal communities. Some months ago, the Minister for Health issued a press release. He stated that health services would be rationalised and that the health-care staff currently employed by the Department of Community Services would come under the control of the Health Minister and be amalgamated with the Aboriginal health program personnel.

Mr Comben: Did that happen?

Mr BRADDY: To the best of my knowledge, nothing has yet taken place on what would seem to be a very sensible decision from the point of view of both the communities and the administrator.

I call upon the Minister for Community Services to inform the House about the current position of the health programs for Aboriginal people. It is all very well to talk about culture, but we best preserve a people's culture when we preserve their lives and their health in the most advantageous and advanced manner. Today, Queensland has still not faced up to its proper responsibilities for the preservation of the health of the Aboriginal people of this State both in the urban context and on the Aboriginal reserves.

Mr Gilmore: Would you care to tell us about the cultural landscape Bill?

Mr BRADDY: There are some people who believe that when they are embarrassed they should try to distract members of the Opposition. As I indicated at the commencement of my speech—and perhaps for the benefit of the honourable member who was not listening I should point it out again—one talks about culture best when one sets up a total system that preserves the people in their entirety: in health, in education and in Government. In that context, this Bill is important, because the Aboriginal people have made it very clear that they desire these very important reforms to be carried out. If they are carried out, they can devote their considerable abilities, energies and talents to advancing the culture of their people.

Having visited many of the communities and having talked to representatives of those communities at Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council meetings, it is clear that the

Aboriginal councils do not have the resources that shires take for granted in the important town-planning, building and construction areas. Whilst they are battling for those matters, they again find difficulty in carrying out proper programs for themselves and their families, and indeed for the culture.

We are aware now that there is potentially a great market in Queensland for the Aboriginal people themselves in the production of modern Aboriginal works of art and, therefore, a benefit to be obtained for the State of Queensland from the production and sale of those works of art. When we talk about culture, it is ridiculous to talk about it unless we enable a system of Government, of planning, of health care and of education to enable that culture to be advanced.

As I said, many of the councils have indicated that they just do not have the resources allocated to them to carry out the town-planning, building and construction that they need. Indeed, many of the Aboriginal communities have simply grown, and grown significantly in recent years. I am informed that the population of Woorabinda is between 900 and 1 000. When I first went to Rockhampton in 1965 or thereabouts, the population of Woorabinda was about 350. The population has increased enormously. That places great stress on Government departments and on the Aboriginal community itself to meet the needs of the community. Therefore, the Government needs a significant understanding of the need to advance more and more resources to the communities. Indeed, many of the communities have grown to such an extent in such a short time that they are unable to solve their problems or to plan properly. The lack of planning has created extensive problems in the provision of physical services such as water, power, roads, sewerage, drainage and enforcement of proper building standards.

The Minister for Local Government has a planning and building division within his department. How much, if any, of those resources that are controlled by the Minister for Local Government has been made available and used for the benefit of Aboriginal communities? Does the Minister for Local Government believe that he has a responsibility in that regard? I ask the Minister for Community Services to indicate how that responsibility is being met by the Minister for Local Government, if it is met at all. Is there any way that the division to which I have referred can improve its delivery of service to Aboriginal communities in the near future?

All honourable members would accept that poor water supply, dust from unsealed roads, power that is both expensive and unreliable, and poorly constructed and overcrowded houses can only add to health and social problems, which in turn can lead to depression, frustration and, ultimately, high infant mortality and early adult deaths—whether they occur in police custody or in individual communities. Too much second-rate allocation of resources has been given. As I have mentioned, the allocation of power has been, and continues to be, a problem because too low a priority is given to Aboriginal and Islander people.

The final irony of this Government's supposed commitment to self-management by Aboriginal councils of local government powers has been the way in which the Local Government Grants Commission has handled the issue of regularising local authority funding.

In September 1986, Parliament passed an amendment to the Community Services (Aborigines) Act, which established Aboriginal councils on the very same footing as the other 134 local authorities throughout Queensland.

The Local Government Grants Commission is under the control of the Deputy Premier. It was not until the previous Commonwealth Minister for Local Government wrote to the Premiers in very precise terms just prior to the last Federal election that the commission started to take its responsibilities seriously in relation to Aboriginal councils.

In his ministerial statement in which he tabled the Powder-Law report, the Minister for Community Services sought to pour scorn and derision on the role of the Commonwealth Government in providing resources to Aboriginal communities and councils throughout

Queensland. The Minister claimed that the Federal Government was paternalistic and refused point-blank to enter into any self-management programs. Of course, that is nonsense to anyone who knows the facts.

The first and major refutation that must be placed on record is the Federal Government's strong support for the introduction of the Community Development Employment Program known as CDEP. The Powder-Law report made a clear recommendation for the introduction of CDEP in communities that do not yet have it, as a means of reducing boredom and reliance on alcohol while creating a positive community development opportunity that would almost certainly not be otherwise available.

For the benefit of honourable members who are not familiar with that program, I will spell out the main points. CDEP started in Aboriginal communities only after an exhaustive process of personal interviews of each and every person who was eligible for unemployment benefits. A clear majority of unemployment benefits recipients must agree to surrender voluntarily their right to unemployment benefits. They must agree also to work so many hours or days a week for the dole equivalent to which they are entitled.

A further condition is that a CDEP advisory committee, drawn from the community, be established on an ongoing basis to advise the council concerned on the particular projects that the CDEP work-force should carry out. After that is done, the council concerned is then paid the total community unemployment benefit entitlements plus a small administrative on-cost component, and then people go to work. Wages are paid on the basis of the nearest equivalent award. Taxes are paid by each individual worker. Some very innovative projects have resulted. Clearly, council workers in communities concerned so far have personal involvement and a discretion to be involved if they wish. Many other projects and ongoing programs are funded by the Federal Government through several departments and agencies.

Without exception, there are two main conditions to this funding. The first is that the council or community concerned must initiate the project. The second is that public moneys spent by the Aboriginal bodies be properly accounted for.

Mr Burreket: All theory and no practical.

Mr BRADDY: I think that the interjection was, "All theory and no practice." What I am talking about is the fact that there is practice. Communities are enthusiastically putting into progress a program of CDEP that is far from theory but is successfully going on. I refer to the Woorabinda community as a prime example. The people there rejected unemployment benefits, which members of the National Party are continually calling upon people in Australia to do. They urge them to get out and work and stop being dole-bludgers. However, when an Aboriginal community such as Woorabinda does it, some mindless back-bencher from the National Party talks about all theory and no practice.

The second point that I was making is that public money spent by Aboriginal bodies should be properly accounted for. The only other limitation is whether or not funds are available. That, of course, is common to all areas of public expenditure at the Federal, State or local government level.

Mr Burreket: What happened to Palm Island?

Mr BRADDY: I think that the interjector is the National Party member for Townsville. He is a member who no doubt has many Aboriginal and Islander voters in his community. No doubt they will be pleased to see reference to his interjections, which clearly come from a mind that is incapable of recognising the abilities and the contributions made to Queensland by the Aboriginal people. I will make it my business to make sure that members of the Aboriginal community in Townsville see the interjections from the honourable member and understand the lack of goodwill to them that clearly emanates from that member.

One of the vital areas of Federal Government involvement in Aboriginal matters in Queensland is training for private and public enterprise development in Aboriginal communities, whether in trust areas or not. That highlights the difference between the Federal Government and the State Government.

The Federal Government is anxious, before it hands moneys over for private or public enterprise development, to train the people so that there is a greater certainty of success. If the same level of commitment was given by the Queensland Government, there would be increasingly more examples of successful business enterprise by the Aboriginal people. However, all that Queensland Government members such as the member for Townsville do is sit there and knock, whinge and complain, point to every example where Aboriginal communities make mistakes, and say, "There they go again." The National Party back bench as a whole distinguishes itself for its lack of sympathy for, and knowledge and understanding of, the advancement of the Aboriginal people.

Mr Eric Law, one of the authors of the Powder-Law report, a former member of the Minister's personal staff and now employed by his department, was for some months recently personally involved in a training program for Aboriginal people who were employed as council clerks or in other administrative capacities. It is those sorts of programs that the Commonwealth Labor Government continues to foster, to provide funds for and to develop. A heavy emphasis in that particular program was placed on financial administration. It was jointly organised between individual councils, the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council and a number of State and Federal agencies. However, the Federal Government provides by far the lion's share of the money for these programs. Indeed, the major initiative for the program followed tabling in the Federal Parliament of the report of the Committee of Inquiry into Aboriginal Employment and Training, otherwise known as the Miller report.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I find it difficult to reconcile what the member is speaking about with what is contained in the Bill. I understood that this Bill is about preservation of relics.

Mr BRADY: The Bill is about preservation of relics; but, if one reads the Bill in detail, it can be seen that it is particularly relevant to the Aboriginal and Islander people. It is my understanding that on occasions when these matters are being debated, a wide-ranging debate pertaining to matters that are relevant to the Bill is allowed.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Chair will determine relevance. I think that the honourable member has strayed a long way from the provisions of the Bill. I am entitled to ask for some relevance.

Mr BRADY: I refer you, Mr Deputy Speaker, to page 3 of the Cultural Record (Landscapes Queensland and Queensland Estate) Bill, which repeals the Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act in whole and which amends the Aborigines Act and Other Acts Amendment Act of 1975. It is in that context that I am making these observations.

Honourable members will note that this Bill is presented to the House by the Minister for Northern Development and Community Services. Certainly it is not in his capacity as Minister for Northern Development that he is presenting this Bill; it is very much in his responsibility for Community Services which, in Queensland Orwellian speech, means Aboriginal and Islander affairs.

The Miller report relates to Aboriginal people. It sets out, hopefully, to preserve Aboriginal culture in this country. It states that, without proper work programs so that Aboriginal people can survive, there is no chance that Aboriginal culture can be fostered and advanced.

The Miller report was commissioned by the Hawke Government's Ministers for Employment, Industrial Relations and Aboriginal Affairs. The report placed special and significant emphasis on ensuring that Aboriginal people achieved economic, cultural, social and political independence as quickly as possible by all available means. It proposed a rationalisation of Federal Government services to Aboriginal people to ensure

that those services were relevant and efficient. Waste brought about by duplication of services was to be reduced or eliminated entirely. The report highlighted the need for Aboriginal people to become established in a wide variety of private-enterprise ventures. In short, it is a very comprehensive and lengthy document. It was largely accepted by the Federal Labor Government.

The plain facts of the matter are that any considered analysis of publicly available documents will show that the Federal Government has provided the vast majority of funds for programs to improve the living standards and the culture of Aboriginal people. One only has to examine the building that is being constructed at present in Rockhampton, as a Bicentenary project to enhance the culture of the Aboriginal and Islander people, to understand that it is intended to be available to foster Aboriginal culture for the benefit of Aborigines and Islanders and also to provide cultural exhibitions for other Australian people. The sums of money made available for that building were provided by the Commonwealth Government, which has been attacked continually by the Minister for Community Services for not being fair dinkum—as he claims—about fostering the interests of Aboriginal people and the culture of Aboriginal people. The review I have given tonight—short though it is—shows how unreal the Minister's attack is and how considerably effective the Federal Government's efforts have been by comparison with efforts made by the Queensland Government.

It would be fair to say that the Hawke Government has only followed the lead set by the Whitlam and Fraser Governments. In other words, at the Federal level, a distinctly bipartisan approach has been adopted over many years towards the fostering of Aboriginal people in all their pursuits, including their culture.

I want to turn briefly to the other major area of Aboriginal affairs in Queensland, that of housing. It is well known and documented that standards of housing, particularly on trust area communities, have been very low for many years. In many cases the standards would be rejected out of hand by other Australians.

Successive Federal Governments, through the Commonwealth Aboriginal assistance fund and currently the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement, have provided large sums to the Queensland Government for Aboriginal housing. Those funds have been administered by the predecessor of the Department of Community Services. In 1986-87 the allocation was \$14.1m. I understand that this year it will be about \$15.2m. It is most unfortunate that the Minister and his department do not have a good track record of consultation with Aboriginal people as to how, where and why those funds will be spent. Anyone who has any detailed knowledge of Aboriginal administration by the State Government——

A Government member: What funds are you referring to?

Mr BRADDY: Housing funds.

Anyone who has any detailed knowledge——

Mr Burreket: Let's hear about the Bill.

Mr BRADDY: I would like to see the interjector foster his heritage if he were forced to live in the housing conditions in which many Aboriginal people in Queensland still live. It is a pity that he is not on the list of speakers for this debate, because I would have great pleasure in sending a copy of his speech to the Aboriginal community.

As I was saying, anyone who has any detailed knowledge of Aboriginal administration by the State Government will be well aware of the last 30 years and of the role played by Mr Killoran, a close friend and confidant of the Premier. Many people know Mr Killoran's role in saving the Premier's party leadership when it was under severe attack some years ago. Even Mr Killoran's closest friends and supporters will concede that he ruled the department with a firm grip. I have to congratulate the Minister on the part he has played in ensuring a fresh approach and a more open administration under the present Under Secretary, Mr Leo Pitt.

Mr McElligott: Why don't you congratulate Mr Scott for having him removed?

Mr BRADDY: Indeed, it was the member for Cook whose long and active campaign no doubt contributed to Mr Killoran's removal and it is with pleasure therefore that, as Mr Scott's successor as shadow Minister for Community Services, I can congratulate the Minister on the appointment of Mr Pitt. Certainly, the department has been much better run, much more fairly run and much more active under the present under secretary. It is most unfortunate that the administrative practices established under Mr Killoran's rule will take some considerable time to disappear entirely.

The other point that must be made is that it appears that the Department of Community Services is still having difficulty in understanding and accepting the different role it should now adopt with the transition of powers to Aboriginal councils. Obviously the administration of a community was far less complex under a single non-elected manager than it now is under an elected council. Another major recommendation contained in the Powder-Law report referred to the importance of preserving and strengthening Aboriginal culture. It would be a gross irony if at the time the rest of the nation is gearing up to celebrate 200 years of European settlement in Australia we ignored, down-graded or rejected the culture and history of Australia's original inhabitants. Historians and other social scientists are only now beginning to understand and document Aboriginal culture and history. We are only now beginning to understand that before European contact the Aboriginal people had a complex culture and traditions with its own laws and customs. This traditional culture was not static but for many thousands of years it provided good stewardship of the land, people and the resources. Aboriginal culture has a definitive role in, and contribution to make to Australia's past, present and future.

I understand that this debate is to stop at 11.30 p.m.

Mr Powell: If you want to waste the time, you continue talking.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If there is any arrangement between the spokesman for the Opposition and the Leader of the House then I will accept it, but I am in no position to ask the honourable member for Rockhampton to resume his seat.

Mr BRADDY: My understanding was that this debate would finish at 11.30 and I would continue my speech tomorrow.

Debate, on motion of Mr Powell, adjourned.

ADDITIONAL SITTING HOURS ON WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER

Sessional Order

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Leader of the House) (11.30 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That, notwithstanding the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 19 February, the House shall meet for the despatch of business at 10 o'clock a.m. on Wednesday, 18 November 1987.”

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Leader of the House) (11.30 p.m.): I move—

“That the House do now adjourn.”

16th World Scout Jamboree

Mr SHERLOCK (Ashgrove) (11.30 p.m.): I rise to draw the attention of the Parliament and the people of Queensland to the first official event in Australia's Bicentenary. I refer to the 16th World Scout Jamboree, which is to be held at Cataract

Scout Park at Wedderburn, 70 kilometres south of Sydney, in December this year and January next year.

This world scout camp is significant because it is the first of Australia's Bicentenary events. It will be opened by the Governor-General as Chief Scout of Australia at the stroke of midnight on 31 December. It is also significant because it is the first ever of the 16 world jamborees held since 1920 to be held in the southern hemisphere. Australia is proud to be the host nation.

The jamboree will bring together scouts—14 422 boys and girls—from 85 countries ranging from Brazil to Iceland, North America and the countries of Africa, Europe and Asia. The logistics of running this international city that is fully sewered and has its own roads, sophisticated communications, hospital facilities and commercial centres in the Australian bush would prove daunting to large commercial enterprises or, indeed, our own defence forces. The operation has been mounted successfully by volunteers, who have worked for some four years. The logistics of catering alone are enormous in providing 95 000 kilograms of vegetables, 200 000 litres of milk, 250 000 eggs, 90 000 loaves of bread, and almost 50 000 kilograms of meat, fish and poultry and 20 000 kilograms of rice to cater for the religious, cultural and even medical needs of an international community.

The overall monetary value of the jamboree and its associated services is of the order of \$40m. These funds are contributed by the young people themselves. They pay their own way. Without sponsorship from Australian companies and communities who see the value of the enterprise, the cost would be significantly higher.

A total of 1 700 Australian adult leaders and an equal number from overseas will take two weeks' leave and pay for the privilege of working their hearts out to enable the world's young people to have this once in a life-time experience. I wish to pay tribute in the House to those volunteer leaders and thank them for the sacrifice of their family-time during the new year holidays.

Although the value to the Australian economy is significant—injecting \$10m in accommodation and travel in pre-jamboree and post-jamboree tours, more than \$1m in camping equipment, \$300,000 in departure tax alone to the Australian Government and \$20m to the airlines in fares—the real value is in the building of international understanding between nations, their people and in particular the young, who are tomorrow's citizens of the global village that is the world.

These young people will share an experience that will not be repeated again in their life-times. The unique opportunity to live together for a fortnight under canvas and to share their cooking methods, culture and language side by side will do much to build bridges of understanding between the young people of the world. These relationships will transcend Governments and differences in religion and politics and highlight levels of human understanding and agreement.

Although the Scout Association of Australia is the host body, the real hosts of this jamboree will be the 2 655 Australian 13 to 18-year-olds who will move into camp 24 hours ahead of their overseas mates to welcome them to their own camp-sites. As leader of the Australian contingent, I have a dedicated team drawn from all over the country, but based largely in Queensland, which has carefully planned each Australian troop to be a microcosm of Australia. Thirty-six young people and four leaders drawn from all States will form a troop. Fifty-three of the 67 Australian troops have a patrol of six girls and 38 troops will have the unique experience of hosting an additional small contingent of scouts from another country. Small groups of 6, 10 or 15 boys and girls will camp together with Australians, sharing the chores of daily camp life and, more importantly, joining in the fun of a wide range of adventure and cultural activities.

On 8 January 15 000 jamboree city residents will move en masse to a surf carnival at one of Sydney's southern beaches, offering an unforgettable glimpse of Australian beach life. There are a number of agencies that teach young people how to make a living. The scout movement worldwide teaches young people how to live.

Bilinga Interchange

Mr GATELY (Currumbin) (11.35 p.m.): I raise a matter that I believe is of grave concern to the residents of Coolangatta and also the residents of Tweed Heads. I do so following an answer to a question I posed to the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing pertaining to the amount of money that this Government has spent on the Bilinga interchange to connect with the Tweed Heads by-pass. The answer was that this Government has spent \$3.25m on the interchange itself, and, according to a program pre-determined by the New South Wales Government, an additional \$250,000 was spent to complete the four lanes of the by-pass.

I raise this matter because it is currently fouling up progress in the area of Coolangatta. It is fouling it up to the point at which that great area, which at one time would have been termed the tourist Mecca of the Gold Coast, has become the dead, dead heart of tourism in Queensland.

I also wish to speak about the posturing by the temporary Premier of New South Wales, who recently criticised the efforts of the National Party member for Byron, Mr Don Beck, for not being able to get things done in his area. There is only one hypocritical character in the whole deal, and that is the Premier of New South Wales. He ought to have more sense and be positive in his attitude. He is affecting tourism in Queensland, and that is the point that I raise.

Mr Ardill interjected.

Mr GATELY: If I need "bottlebrush" to tell me what to say, I will ask him.

The temporary Premier of New South Wales hoodwinked the people of New South Wales. He claimed two lots of money and had to pay it back. I will tell honourable members a bit more about that.

In regard to the posturing by that temporary Premier—he has abdicated his responsibility to the people of the Tweed Heads area and the State of New South Wales. He is dumping all the money on to the Darling Harbour debacle. In addition, he is not doing anything for other parts of the State and he is fouling up the Queensland tourism industry and the businesses of Coolangatta. Traffic is still running through an area in which this Government has carried out the works necessary for a by-pass.

Again, the temporary Premier of New South Wales has got the hide and temerity to say how much he is doing for the people of Byron and the Tweed when in fact he has dumped all of the highway traffic onto a road called Kennedy Drive, with total disregard for the people who live in that residential area. He could not care less about them. As a Premier, he will not be there very long because the people of that area do not accept his actions.

No environmental impact study was carried out. When I asked questions about it in days gone by, I could not get an answer. These are the people who talk about having all the right ideas and ideals in relation to the environment and the protection of people's rights. What rubbish. It is sheer and utter rubbish.

The temporary Premier of New South Wales will do nothing for the people in that area. More importantly, his actions are affecting the development of Coolangatta. It is a matter about which I will speak at a public meeting next Monday evening. At that public meeting a plan for future development of a total concept will be put forward with a positive approach to seeing that at least Queensland members of Parliament do something for the people in their areas. I implore that person—who purports to be a Premier of a State—to have the guts to get up, do the same, complete the by-pass and take the traffic to where it ought to be, which is not in the main street of Griffith Street, Coolangatta.

The Queensland Government has already paid out money for the by-pass and has been duped again by the Labor Government of New South Wales. It is downright hypocritical of Mr Unsworth to say that he does things for the people in the Byron electorate. What rubbish and nonsense! He must put up or shut up, because after the

next election he will not be Premier of New South Wales. There will be a new Premier in that State, and then maybe the job will be done.

Proposed Resort/Marina Development at Palm Cove

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (11.40 p.m.): I wish to raise the matter of a proposed resort/marina development at Palm Cove north of Cairns. This project is generating a great deal of heat in that part of the world.

The 60 hectares of land in question was purchased by the Japanese company Daikyo Kanko last year for a total of \$25.2m; an amount that is remarkable in itself. As part of the project the company proposes to excavate 7 hectares out of dry land to create a marina. That is bad enough in itself, in that it will involve a massive change to the landscape; but in order to gain access to the marina, the company proposes to excavate a channel across the beach. The company will then erect two concrete retaining walls or breakwaters across the beach and out into the sea. I am advised that this will go 115 metres out to sea and the two walls will be 55 metres apart and 6 metres high above low tide. That is a massive structure and will have a calamitous effect on the physical environment of local residents. It will create a range of other environmental problems, the most important of which—and the one that concerns the people in the area most of all—is that it will physically divide Clifton Beach and Palm Cove, two adjoining beaches and an area where many residents stroll from one beach to another.

Obviously the project will have a great effect on beach erosion and other effects and consequences which at this stage cannot be predicted. I know that the Minister for Maritime Services is in possession of some advice that he picked up overseas to the effect that the project will improve the beaches on both sides. I believe that that cannot happen, and I do not think that the Government is in a position to predict.

There will be the problems of siltation, ongoing dredging and increased suspended silt load in the near-shore environment. What will happen to the white sandy beaches? Will they be no more? In addition, there will be an aesthetic problem because the project will spoil the character of what up till this stage has been a relatively undisturbed shoreline. I point out that people live in that part of the world because of the very pleasant natural surroundings.

Our worst fears are finally coming true in north Queensland. The beach—which in Australia has always been considered to be public and inviolate—is being taken away and used for private purposes. Australians are under the impression that that is something unique in this country, and to a large extent it is. I was always under the impression that other countries—the United States in particular, which is a haven for big resort developments and white-shoe people, etc.—had private beaches. I have in my possession a letter which was written to the people involved with the rate-payers' association at Clifton Beach.

Mr Palaszczuk: Can you read it?

Mr De LACY: Yes, I will do that.

The letter comes from the city manager of the city of Miami Beach. I intend to table this letter, which says in part—

“There have been no marinas excavated from dry land with entrances cut through the open beachfront in Florida or, to my knowledge, in the United States. The County, State, and Federal Agencies, Specifically the Army Corps of Engineers, prohibits this type of activity in the United States. The reason being is that the more entrances you have to the ocean, the greater the erosion.

Breakwaters in general have been found to prohibit the coastal flow of sand as you have stated in your letter. All of those, which were in existence along our City's beaches, have been eliminated in that it was found that they cause more erosion than helping to prevent it. All of the marina constructions, that takes place in our County, undergoes strict review by the permitting agencies involved and in

general, it is very difficult to build a marina at this time since all of the bays within our County are considered to be a marine aquatic preserve."

I think that that makes the point in very lucid terms that this sort of development is a development that we can ill afford.

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

Time expired.

Local Government Responsibilities for Water Supplies

Mr BERGHOFER (Toowoomba South) (11.46 p.m.): Tonight I wish to refer to local government responsibilities for water supplies. Today, some local authorities are in dire straits because of the problems caused by a lack of rainfall in some districts. Local authorities in Queensland are responsible for water supplies. Some local authorities have direct responsibilities; others come under the responsibility of water authorities such as the Townsville/Thuringowa Water Supply Board or the Brisbane and Area Water Board.

It is the responsibility of the Toowoomba City Council to supply water. In the early days, water was supplied through bores. About 45 years ago Cooby dam was built. The dam holds 23 000 million litres, and in those days it cost \$500,000 to build. That was the responsibility of the council. Perseverence Creek Dam was built about 22 years ago. It holds 30 000 million litres and cost \$7m. Cressbrook Dam was completed 4½ years ago at a cost of \$48m. That dam has a capacity of 81 000 million litres. It was the responsibility of the council to build that dam. The council obtained subsidies from the Government. Unfortunately, after 4½ years, that dam is still only 11 per cent full. The levels in the dams around the State are an indication of the rainfall that has occurred. Even though a large amount of money was spent in building the dam, insufficient rainfall has been received. During a period of 10 years another dam has overflowed only once. That occurred four years ago, in May. It is unbelievable how little rain has fallen since that time.

I have been a member of the Toowoomba City Council for almost 15 years. After I was elected to the council I fought for the installation of water-meters. If it was not for water-meters, Toowoomba would have been without water many times during that period. Following the installation of water-meters, water consumption dropped from 108 gallons per man per day to 76 gallons per man per day. At the moment, Toowoomba's dams are down to 44 per cent of their capacity. If water-meters had not been installed and if the rate of water consumption was still 108 gallons per man per day, Toowoomba would have run out of water by now. Various councils, such as the Townsville City Council, have made decisions to extend their dams. Unfortunately, Townsville has not had sufficient rains for more than six years to fill its dam. It will cost the council \$10m or \$12m to obtain water. However, it is able to obtain water from the Burdekin Falls Dam.

The Brisbane and Area Water Board supplies a large area, including Brisbane, Ipswich and Logan. I believe that its dams are below 25 per cent of capacity. I believe that it has only a 20-month supply of water. If sufficient rainfall is not received, from where will the board obtain its supply? Honourable members have heard about the dire straits in which the Gold Coast City Council found itself in recent times. Fortunately, it received sufficient rain to fill its dam. Despite that, the level of the dam is going down very quickly.

Toowoomba has a problem because it is located on top of a range. Water runs away from Toowoomba. It has only very small creeks from which it can obtain its water supply. The cost of pumping water is very costly. Perseverence Creek Dam is 1 000 feet below the top of the range. Cressbrook Dam is another 800 feet below that again. The Toowoomba City Council must pay pumping costs for some of the biggest lifts to bring its water back to the top of the range.

I read recently in a newspaper about the water supply problems that are being experienced in Miles, Kingaroy and Oakey. In fact, Oakey's water supply is provided by bores that are slowly running dry. Gatton is a prime example of a town in which the water supply is running out. I believe that water rates in that town will be increased to \$435 per year, which represents almost \$10 per week that the people of that town will be required to contribute towards their water supply. If the rains do not come soon to build up water supplies in those towns, they will experience severe water supply problems.

Years ago in Brisbane the city council voted to introduce water-meters. Millions of dollars were spent on the purchase on those water-meters but they were not installed. The Brisbane City Council does not seem concerned about the water supply shortage. It still allows the use of sprinklers on certain days. It makes me wonder what some cities would do if they ran out of water. From where would they get their water supplies?

Time expired.

Manufacture of Souvenirs by Mr Ron Hurley

Mr PALASZCZUK (Archerfield) (11.51 p.m.): In reference to a speech that I delivered in this House a few weeks ago regarding the lack of quality souvenirs in Queensland, I would like to bring to the attention of the House positive developments in that regard. At that stage I was concerned—and still am—about the damage that souvenir shop owners are inflicting on the tourist industry. Thousands of tourists are leaving this country with poor-quality products such as tea-towels, stuffed koalas and stubby-holders that do not represent the Australian way of life.

With Expo 88 just around the corner, and the influx of jumbo jet loads of Japanese tourists, there is an urgent need to improve the quality and the nature of our souvenirs. We need to produce souvenirs that remind tourists of our unique way of life in contrast to their own way of life. We need to encourage the growth of an industry that is entirely Queensland orientated with labour, product, and more importantly, Queensland culture.

Recently, an established Aboriginal artist Mr Ron Hurley drew my attention to his attempts at manufacturing souvenirs in Queensland. His inspiration and enthusiasm to make souvenirs that represent our rich Aboriginal heritage has been troubled by a lack of funds.

Mr Hurley is an Aboriginal entrepreneur who runs an all-Aboriginal company, Gynala Australia Aboriginal Designs, which is based in Queensland and, more specifically, in Brisbane. Mr Hurley is concerned about his company's ability to become established without some form of Government funding.

Mr Hurley's company produces T-shirts, curtain fabrics, silk hangings and glass tops with colourful Aboriginal designs printed on them. More importantly, the T-shirts are made entirely from Queensland cotton and display Aboriginal totems. Because they are believed to have been created 40 000 years ago during a period of dream-time, those totems are rich in Aboriginal culture. They are supposed to represent different tribes, clans or individuals of tribes of that time and are supposed to have been passed down through the generations. The T-shirts are obviously ideal for tourists who want high-quality lasting reminders of the Australian way of life.

Mr Hurley's products are professionally marketed with pamphlets that describe briefly the Aboriginal heritage in both Japanese and English languages. However, in order to continue producing those souvenirs, his company must have financial backing from the Queensland Government. Queensland is servicing a group of people who demand high-quality souvenirs, such as Mr Hurley's products. Those people are willing to pay more money provided that those souvenirs are of higher quality.

In order to keep Mr Hurley's company going, the Queensland Government must put its money where its mouth is and start backing this type of souvenir-manufacturing industry.

Mr De Lacy: With an appeal like that, how could they knock you back?

Mr PALASZCZUK: I certainly hope that Government members are taking notice of my suggestions. I notice that the Minister for Industry and Technology is present in the House. I hope that he will take on board my suggestions about Mr Hurley.

As I was saying previously, these investments are certain to benefit Queenslanders, and the Queensland Government, as more jobs will be created locally and more profits will be retained locally.

For the Aboriginal people—their mysterious and rich heritage will be recognised internationally. The company has already created jobs for a number of Aboriginals and encouraged Aboriginal artists.

For the tourists—they will have a greater range of souvenirs to choose from. But, most importantly, they will no longer have to take home souvenirs of Australia made in the sweat-shops of south-east Asia.

For the State tourism industry—its image will be improved. The slogan “We make it great in the Sunshine State” will have true meaning for more souvenirs.

Clearly, there is a market for Queensland-made souvenirs and, more specifically, a market for Mr Hurley’s products.

I call upon the Government, through its Ministers for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs, Industry and Technology, and Family Services, to give this man a go.

Fishing for Sport

Mr HENDERSON (Mount Gravatt) (11.56 p.m.): On the week-end I was reading the *Sunday Sun* of 15 November 1987. On page 141 I came across an article headed “Catch of the Week”. Below that heading is a photograph of a very large fish with two people. The article states—

“This 225kg cod took an hour and three-quarters to land at the River Heads, near Urangan.

Des Hosmer, of Jimna, via Kilcoy, landed the huge fish on a 50kg line.

The line was attached to a 10 inch hand reel.

Mr Hosmer made the catch off the oyster beds at the boat ramp.”

It goes on to talk about the bait and so on. It then says—

“This fish could not be officially weighed in, but we are led to believe this is a land record for this species in Australia . . .

The fish was about 2.4m long and nearly a metre high. Its girth measured about 3m.”

When I read that article, I was utterly disgusted. I am sick and tired of seeing these fishing Rambos prowling up and down the reef killing absolutely harmless fish of that size which are part of the biological heritage of this nation for no other reason than so-called sport. These fishing fools are depriving our reef of its groper and large cod, which cannot be eaten. Most of them are impregnated with mercury. Many of them are so toxic that they are totally unfit for anything. However, these people insist on catching those fish, dragging them out of the water, posing with them for a photograph and then using them for crab bait or something like that.

I wonder whether members have honestly thought to themselves how valuable a part of the ecology of that area those large fish are? Unfortunately, we are tending to kill them all.

Recently, the famous groper Ulysses was killed off Townsville. Ulysses was a very prominent tourist attraction. One night some drunken fools decided to shoot its head in with rifles.

Mr Eaton: That was off Mission Beach.

Mr HENDERSON: Yes. These drunken fools go around and kill these valuable parts of our biological heritage of this State.

I am getting absolutely sick and tired of seeing that. If those people were catching the fish to eat it or to do something constructive with it, I could understand their having some pride in it. However, this large fish, which I would estimate took a hundred years to grow to that size, is quite harmless and has lived in the area for a long period. It is obviously an integral part of the ecology of the area of the oyster beds off River Heads. However, this fool comes along, catches the fish, gets his photograph taken with it and then, as I said, probably throws it away.

It is time that this practice stopped. It is time that Governments throughout Australia decided to put a stop to it, whether it be spear fishermen shooting gropers on the Great Barrier Reef or instances such as the one to which I am referring. As I said before, it is almost criminal that it is allowed to continue in this way.

I ask: what would one do with a fish of this size? The answer is: nothing. It is wasted. It is just the thrill of catching it and the thrill of killing it. It might be important to note that recent studies carried out on the psychology of these types of fools show that probably the only reason they kill the fish, anyway, is that they have sexual hang-ups of some description and this is their only way of showing dominance. If that is the way that people are going to manifest their psychological inadequacies—by depriving this nation of part of its biological heritage—I for one want to register my disgust, and I will continue to register it in the hope that something can be done.

Finally, I appeal to everyone who has a sincere interest in the biology of the Great Barrier Reef and its associated areas to think carefully of the importance of our groper, our large cod and so on to those areas. They are quite harmless. There is absolutely no reason whatsoever why these fishing Rambos would want to kill a fish as large as that, apart from pride and satisfaction of a distorted ego, which would probably be better served by talking to a psychiatrist than by throwing pilchards to cod.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 12.01 a.m. (Wednesday)