Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 1987

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr Speaker—

Harbours Act and Other Acts Amendment Bill;

Superannuation Acts Amendment Bill (No. 2).

ABSENCE OF THE CLERK

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to advise of the absence of the Clerk of the Parliament who, with two regional representatives, is representing the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Regional Secretariat on an official visit to the Parliament of Papua New Guinea.

TONGAN DELEGATION OF COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

Mr SPEAKER: I remind honourable members that a Tongan delegation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association will be here at 2.30 p.m. and that all members are invited to have dinner tonight in the Members' Dining Room with that delegation.

PETITIONS

The Deputy Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Construction of Noise-attenuation Barriers along Western Arterial Road, Taringa

From **Mr Beanland** (95 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will reconsider the construction of noise-attenuation barriers along the widened western arterial road in the Taringa area.

Teacher Aide Hours

From **Mr Beard** (60 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take action to reverse the Budget decision on cut-backs in teacher aide hours.

Amendments to Education Act

From **Mr Sherlock** (10 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will desist from making amendments to the Education Act which will eliminate independent education boards.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Department of Mapping and Surveying for the year ended 30 June 1987

Beach Protection Authority for the year ended 30 June 1987

Gold Coast Waterways Authority for the year ended 30 June 1987.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Orders in Council under the Rural Training Schools Act 1965-1984 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984

Reports—

Board of Teacher Education for the year ended 30 June 1987

Board of Secondary School Studies for the year ended 30 June 1987

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 1986 together with a Ministerial Statement in relation thereto—

Brisbane Grammar School

Brisbane Girls' Grammar School

Ipswich Grammar School

Ipswich Girls' Grammar School

Rockhampton Grammar School

Rockhampton Girls' Grammar School

Toowoomba Grammar School

Townsville Grammar School.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Pesticide Levels in Export Beef

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Primary Industries) (10.05 a.m.), by leave: Honourable members will recall the problem which developed in June following the discovery of violative levels of pesticide residues in shipments of beef to the United States of America. The Queensland Government responded quickly to the problem and took a number of steps to protect our export markets.

Last month, in co-operation with local authorities, this Government introduced a pesticide retrieval program, and stocks of banned organochlorine pesticides are now being received. Stocks of unusable pesticides should be delivered to shire, town or city council depots, which have been established for this purpose. From there, my department will accept responsibility for transporting the chemicals to a central storage area as soon as sufficient stocks have accumulated.

In addition to the offending pesticides, there are also a number of other agricultural and veterinary chemicals which are no longer registered for use in this State. The retrieval system now in operation will also receive other persistent chemicals, such as arsenic compounds and organophosphate pesticides. I draw the attention of all honourable members to that fact. The trade name or active ingredient of other chemicals should be provided to the officer receiving the pesticide. This is important so that an appropriate safe disposal method can be immediately identified. For instance, heavy metals such as arsenic and mercury compounds cannot be incinerated. Arsenic compounds may be reprocessed and recycled as wood preservatives or used for other industrial purposes. Primary producers and house-holders should be careful not to dispose of persistent chemicals in council tips or drainage systems.

I am preparing new legislation on the use and possession of banned or non-registered chemicals, and when enacted, that legislation will contain substantial penalties for the possession of banned chemicals.

Primary producers and house-holders should take advantage of the retrieval program while it is available, the target date for collection of banned chemicals being 30 November. That program provides an economical, controlled and environmentally safe method of removing all unusable chemicals. The Queensland Government will provide a central storage facility in this State until a decision is taken by the Federal Government in regard to a super high temperature furnace to provide a final method of disposal for those banned chemicals.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. Dunwich TAB Agency, Credit-betting

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

"With reference to his responsibilities relating to the TAB—

(1) Has any evidence been uncovered in recent years of credit betting, against TAB rules, through the Dunwich agency or any other agency of the Board?

(2) If so, has such credit betting involved the use of telephone betting accounts and has the TAB any evidence of the person or persons involved?

(3) If such credit betting has taken place, over what period has it occurred, and what have been the amounts of money involved?

(4) If credit betting against TAB rules has occurred through the Dunwich TAB agency, or any other agency, what action has he taken against those involved?"

Mr HINZE: A search has been carried out of records over the past five years and the following information is furnished in relation to the specific questions asked—

(1) (a) There is no evidence of any credit-betting against TAB rules through the Dunwich agency.

(b) There is evidence of credit-betting against TAB rules at the following agencies on the following occasions—

February 1982: Mr G. Adamson—agent—Bowen: amount involved: $10,475;

July 1982: Mrs S. Beresford—agent—Mundubbera: amount involved: $515;

April 1983: Mrs J. Carter—agent—Capella: amount involved: $2,075; and

November 1983: Miss Maloney—agent—Capella: amount involved: $1,471.

(c) There is evidence that over a period from about early 1984 to April 1985 there were, at the Holland Park branch of the TAB, which is not an agency, instances of investments being processed for which the cash was not immediately available. However, on all occasions, funds to cover all transactions, which were investments by Sir Edward Lyons, were provided on the day of the transaction or the day immediately thereafter.

(2) None of the transactions referred to in 1 (a), (b) or (c) related to telephone betting accounts.

In the case of 1 (c), the investments were made by telephone to the Holland Park branch, but were not made against or in respect of a telephone betting account at that branch as the branch is a cash office facility only.

(3) No precise calculation was ever made, or indeed was possible, as to the amount of money involved in the investments of Sir Edward Lyons.

The records of the Holland Park branch did not disclose, and were not such as to disclose accurately, the number of transactions or the total amount of money involved. The best estimate that can be made was that no amount in excess of $2,000 seems to have been involved at any one time.

It must be emphasised, however, that there never has been any deficiency of any kind in respect of the operations of the Holland Park branch.

(4) In the case of the deficiencies referred to in 1 (b), appropriate action was taken to recover the amount of money involved from the persons responsible for the deficiency. In each case, the full amount was recovered and, except in the case of Holland Park, the agency agreements were terminated.

So far as the Holland Park branch supervisor is concerned—at a meeting of the TAB board, held in April 1985, the board resolved that no action would be taken against

any staff member involved in these reported instances, and in particular the supervisor, because of the inferior position she held relative to Sir Edward Lyons who, at that time, was chairman of the board. I accepted that decision and shortly thereafter publicly supported it.

2. Fijian Coup, Involvement of Australian Labor Party

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

"With reference to a television program telecast by the ABC on 16 November about the Fijian crisis in which allegations were made that the Australian Labor Party was implicated with events leading up to the coup in Fiji—

Does this Government have any evidence to confirm these allegations?"

Mr GUNN: So far, I have not heard of any response to these allegations from the ALP. However, all Australians must regard the allegations as being very serious indeed.

As this question comes within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Government, the Queensland Police Department does not at this particular time have any information relative to these allegations.

3. Langdon Report on Dairy Industry

Mr BOOTH asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

"With reference to the Langdon Report, and particularly to the aspect that suggests that the control of the industry should be placed in the hands of people who have no affiliation, experience or knowledge of the dairying industry—

(1) Is this in line with the Government's policy of freedom of choice?

(2) Does he believe that this will give dairy farmers adequate protection in regard to the administration of their affairs?

(3) In the event of certain sections of the industry being discriminated against, how can they obtain justice without adequate representation?

(4) Is it wise to close down viable operations when large expenditure will be required to rebuild in certain areas, and who will underwrite this expenditure?"

Mr HARPER: I assume that the honourable member refers to a suggestion made in a discussion paper, prepared at the request of the dairying industry, that the board of directors of a proposed dairy co-operative comprise, for the first five years—

- a non-farmer chairman;
- a managing director;
- a professional person with market expertise;
- a professional person with financial expertise;
- a professional person with production expertise; plus
- four elected farmer directors.

(1) Undoubtedly the suggestion does provide freedom of choice, as there is no suggestion of compulsion in acceptance or rejection of it, and the thrust is consistent with recent amendments to the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act which were endorsed by the Council of Agriculture.

(2) Yes. Dairy-farmers who are share-holders in a dairy co-operative will be called on to consider a suggestion before a decision is made as to amalgamation.

(3) No doubt the question of adequate representation is only one of many which the industry will consider before making its decision.

(4) Any decision on closures and rationalisation of product mix would be the responsibility of the board of directors of the new co-operative and would no doubt be

made after a comprehensive study of the various options and an economic analysis of them.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Credit-rating of De Laurentiis Entertainment Group

Mr WARBURTON: I direct a question to the Premier. I am sure that he has read the recent reports that Standard and Poors, the world's No. 1 credit-rating agency, has downgraded the credit-rating of the De Laurentiis entertainment group to a very low CCC, saying that the group needed a few major box-office hits if it was to have any chance at all of meeting its debt obligations. Before the Premier committed millions of dollars of tax-payers' funds through the Queensland Government Development Authority to the De Laurentiis film studio near the Gold Coast, did he investigate the financial plight of De Laurentiis? Further, what is his view now, given this new information that Queensland tax-payers have virtually no chance of getting their money back from this venture?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: First of all, I wish the honourable member would go down and have a look at what is taking place. It would really surprise him.

Mr Warburton: Bricks and mortar.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: No. It is very, very interesting.

Of course, the honourable member does not realise that this is an entirely different country and not related to the country or to the organisation to which the honourable member makes reference in that report. The honourable member says that this company has been down-graded in its rating, but the honourable member should remember that the Commonwealth Government—his colleagues in Canberra—was also down-graded.

Indeed, this matter is entirely different. It has nothing to do with what the honourable member is speaking about. This industry will succeed; it will be very good for Queensland.

National Crime Authority Investigations

Mr WARBURTON: In directing a question to the Minister for Police, I refer to a Sydney report in today's *Courier-Mail* that the National Crime Authority is set to reopen investigations into the death of Griffith anti-drug campaigner Donald Mackay, following an article alleging that he was murdered by former New South Wales policeman Fred Krahe.

In view of allegations that Krahe, who died in 1981, had connections in Queensland and the fact that the National Crime Authority has been engaged in a Mafia inquiry in this State, I ask: will the Minister report to this Parliament on any information his department or other sources may have of links between Krahe and Queensland police or criminals in this State?

Mr GUNN: The NCA is involved in investigating crime in all States, not just Queensland. If my memory serves me correctly, Krahe was actually cleared after his death, as the Leader of the Opposition may recall. If the Leader of the Opposition can remember, I think that the coroner's report stated that his death was suicide. Does the Leader of the Opposition remember that? Oh, he does not. Anyway, that is a fact.

Within the next fortnight, I will be speaking with members of the NCA. I am a member of the National Crime Authority and I will be going to Hobart. Let me make one point quite clear: the NCA does not investigate crime in Queensland only; it investigates crime all over Australia. Members of that authority work in close liaison with Police Departments in all States, including Queensland. There is no doubt about that.

I have a great deal of respect for the NCA. As a matter of fact—for the information of the honourable member—I will be president of that organisation next year.

Commonwealth Government Education Bodies

Mr FITZGERALD: In directing a question to the Minister for Education, I point out that the Federal Minister for Education, Mr Dawkins, has decided to replace the Schools Commission, the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission and the Australian Council of Employment and Training with a national Board of Employment, Education and Training, and I ask: who will be on this supreme board? Will any one group be likely to dominate it?

Mr POWELL: There has been a fair sort of revolution in the administration of education at the Commonwealth level since Mr Dawkins became Minister for Employment, Education and Training. Mr Dawkins must have been looking at the legislation that was introduced into the Queensland Parliament in April with regard to plans he has for education administration at the Commonwealth level.

As the honourable member suggests, in place of the existing structures there will be a national Board of Employment, Education and Training. What is being done by the Federal Government is in some respects fairly sensible in bringing together all those people who have a responsibility for what happens in education and for what has happened in the education of children, particularly older children.

The board is expected to comprise the following people: the chairman, who most likely will be chairman of the Australian Research Council; three executive members—that is, three full-time public servants; two ACTU representatives; two representatives of business—and most likely that will be fairly large business, I would suggest; two people from education/training providers—that is—people who are providing education and/or training, and it need not necessarily mean that both will be educationists. One is more likely to come from the education sector and another from the training sector. In addition, the board will comprise two independent members. The honourable member asks whether it is likely that there will be a bias in the representation on the board. I would say, after looking down that membership list, that there will be a big bias against education. That is unfortunate.

Although I believe very firmly that a close and permanent dialogue and link needs to be maintained between education, business and industry, I think that, when curriculum programs are decided and when what is happening inside educational institutions is being decided, it is wrong to have the body that is deciding those matters biased against education and against educationists. I suspect that that is what is happening.

It will be noted also that that body has no area of representation of parents. I suppose it can be argued that those people who are on the proposed board are likely to be parents anyhow. It is important that it be noted that the ACTU alone is the only body mentioned that will have direct representation. I really do not think that it is right or proper that the ACTU should have as-of-right representation on that particular council or, for that matter, on any other in that area.

I suggest that, as today we will be debating the Education Act and Another Act Amendment Bill, honourable members might look at the composition of the various boards that will be set up under that piece of legislation compared with what is happening in the Commonwealth arena. I think it will be agreed that in Queensland we are being far more democratic as far as our boards are concerned in giving a much wider representation to people in the community than is the Commonwealth proposal.

Days Lost through Industrial Disputes in Queensland

Mr FITZGERALD: I direct a question to the Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs and I refer him to recently released figures by the Australian Bureau of Statistics that show a drop in the number of days lost through industrial disputes in Queensland. I ask: is this true, and, if it is, what has caused the drop?

Mr LESTER: The latest figures as at the end of July show that the number of working days lost in Queensland dropped to 7 000 from 12 400 in June. For the 12

months ended July 1987, the number dropped to 91 000 from 254 700 in 1986. No other State can come anywhere near this rate of decline in working days lost through industrial disputes.

The other interesting statistic to note is that, for every thousand employees, the number of working days lost in New South Wales was 243; Western Australia, 232; Victoria, 226; and Queensland, only 110. Incidentally, I might add, because we should be concerned, that that figure compares with only six working days lost in Japan. We are trying desperately to compete with that particular country.

I think I should take the opportunity to pay a tribute to our State-registered unions, because some 64 per cent of workers who are registered under State unions were responsible for only 8 per cent of our State's strikes. Some 12 per cent of workers are not in unions at all. The other 24 per cent, who are in federally registered unions, are responsible for nearly 90 per cent of our State's strikes. So the members of State unions who might think it good to be covered by a Federal award are going to buy themselves a lot of trouble. They want to stick where the better results are.

The Queensland figures are the best ever recorded, and I emphasise that. I would like to take this opportunity to give credit all round to the work-force and to the employers. Let us all keep up the good work in the interests of Queensland, our work-force and our employment opportunities.

Promotional Course for Police Officers, Chelmer

Mr BURNS: I direct a question to the Deputy Premier. As he will be the chairman of the NCA next year, I suppose I should have asked him if he has given up his ambitions to be the Premier.

Mr Gunn: I'll invite you to the function.

Mr BURNS: If he has admitted that he will still be the Police Minister next year, he will not be the Premier. Which one will it be? Anyway, I had better ask him the question.

Has the Police Department for some time implemented a system by which police can qualify for commissioned rank by successfully completing a two-part course of 12 weeks at Chelmer, and by which a policeman or a policewoman can have only three attempts at the course if he or she continues to fail? Is it true that the Acting Police Commissioner, Mr Redmond, yesterday issued an order, without consulting his Assistant Commissioner (Training), to set up a four-week course commencing on 11 January, the same date as policemen and policewomen will start Part one of the original 12-week course? Did Mr Redmond lay down that only those who have failed the 12-week Part one and Part two course in the past could attend the four-week course? In other words, do the failures get to do the course in four weeks and do the people who are skilled have to do it in 12?

Did he also make it clear that those who passed the four-week course will be treated for promotion purposes equally with those who pass the 12-week course and that, with seniority, most of those who have failed the 12-week course will be promoted ahead of those who passed?

Mr Gunn interjected.

Mr BURNS: Isn't it good? It is a great system!

As Mr Redmond is apparently moving to promote some of his mates and form his own little rat pack down there, will the Minister step in and ensure that this discrimination against those who passed the exams is discontinued?

Mr GUNN: Over a long period there has been general dissatisfaction with the Chelmer college. Since I became Minister for Police I have visited that college and expressed my dissatisfaction with the course. I can assure the honourable member that I thought that plenty of those who failed that examination should have passed it.

I support Mr Redmond in what he is trying to do at present. I suggest to the honourable member that many of these people will now have an opportunity to again sit for that exam. I wish them well, because it is a good course out in that lovely area. The Chelmer college is a good college. However, the course was a little bit too short, and that opinion has been expressed by past assistant and deputy commissioners. I can assure the honourable member that the wonderful thing about it is that these people who failed and who thought they should have been given a better go will now have the opportunity to sit for that exam again.

Lump-sum Long-service-leave Payments at Age 55 Retirement

Mr SLACK: I ask the Minister for Education: will the Government be changing the regulations covering long-service-leave lump-sum payments to allow teachers between the age of 55 and 60 years to take advantage of the Government's policy of voluntary retirement at age 55?

Mr POWELL: Members will know that in the Budget the Premier announced that there would be voluntary retirement for officers above the age of 55 as from 1 January 1988. Members will also know that the House has already passed the legislation to set in place arrangements for those officers wishing to take advantage of that early retirement through the Superannuation Acts Amendment Bill (No. 2).

The other technicality that now needs to be covered is the provision of lump-sum payments for long-service leave for officers who are between 55 and 60 years of age. The current Public Service Regulations preclude officers retiring younger than age 60 from taking a lump sum in lieu of long-service leave. Later today a small amendment to the Public Service Act will be introduced to make those arrangements possible. I thank the honourable member for bringing that to the attention of the House. I guarantee all those officers who will be between the ages of 55 and 60 as from 1 January 1988 that arrangements will be in place so that they will be able to receive a lump-sum payment in lieu of long-service leave.

Teenage Prostitution

Mr INNES: In asking a question of the Minister for Family Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs, I refer to her statement reported in today's *Courier-Mail* about evidence of schoolgirl prostitution being a sad indictment of society and in which she said that it raised questions of parental control and guidance. I now ask: has the Minister read the Sturgess report of November 1985? If she recalls detailed instance after instance of teenage female and male prostitution, which Mr Sturgess suggested arose from the vulnerability of homeless children, did she read those parts that referred to her own portfolio as well as to the Police portfolio? Why did she stand silently by when later it was denied that such prostitution was taking place? What action has she taken to encourage the implementation of legal reform proposed in that document, for the protection of young people, by way of amendments relating to pornography and prostitution?

Mrs CHAPMAN: In answer to the honourable member—yes, I have read the Sturgess report. It did disturb me greatly. I have had talks with the Justice Minister to see what can be done about that. We have had talks with the Police Minister.

I am afraid that the report in this morning's newspaper does not relate to all homeless children or street children. It is a very sad indictment of our society today that some of the children who have been associated with the people referred to in the Sturgess report, who can only be called blots on society, are not homeless street children. It is very, very sad to think that this has happened.

My department is doing everything possible to try to get children off the streets. However, I personally believe that a lot of the blame rests with the parents of these children. Parents have to have more control over their children. There has to be more discipline. It seems rather strange to me that schoolgirls can be earning up to $1,800 a week and their parents not know about it.

I sincerely hope that the Fitzgerald inquiry brings these people to justice and that they get their just deserts.

Levying of Pay-roll Tax on Bank of Queensland Agencies

Mr INNES: In directing a question to the Deputy Premier, I refer to amendments made to the Pay-roll Tax Act in 1984. At that time the Minister said that the purpose of those amendments, which gave the Government very wide discretion to treat corporate structures as a group, was to prevent the artificial break-down of company organisations into subunits, which would avoid the payment of pay-roll tax.

I ask the Minister: does he know that his Stamp Duties officers have been going through agencies of the Bank of Queensland—self-employed independent small-business people, some of whom were in operation long before the amendments to that Act—demanding instantly, without arrangement and without warning, all their documentation? In addition, does the Minister know that pay-roll tax has been demanded back to 1984, including penalty tax, without any previous warning or indication to those agencies?

I ask the Minister whether the same is being done for TAB agencies, which, unlike the Bank of Queensland agencies, actually have the premises provided as well as the computer systems, the signs and other material, and I ask also whether this is an indication of what will happen to all people in small-business franchise agencies throughout this State.

Mr GUNN: The honourable member for Stafford did approach my department in relation to the grouping provisions applying to branches, agencies and subsidiaries. I had a statement prepared for him. He did inform me that this question would be asked. I will read from that statement and refer to the relevant parts of the Pay-roll Tax Act.

The Act has contained provisions since the mid-1970s under which, in certain circumstances, several employers can be grouped.

Instances in which grouping occurs include—

- where employers are related companies;
- where an employee performs mainly for a business carried on by his employer and another person or a business carried on by another person;
- where an employer has in respect of the employment of an employee an arrangement with another person relating to a business carried on by that other person; and
- where the same person has a controlling interest in each of two businesses.

The effect of grouping is that the annual amount, currently up to $324,000, which employers can deduct from taxable wages, is available only in respect of the group rather than for each employer in the group individually.

The general purpose of the grouping provisions is to counter the practice of artificially spreading employees who are essentially working for the same interests over a number of related or connected employers in order to obtain multiple use of the deduction available to each genuine employer.

In 1984, the provisions were extended in line with amendments introduced in Western Australia to counter schemes evident there. The provisions were introduced to cover the situation where pay-roll tax could potentially be avoided by an employer establishing either a branch business operated by a contract manager or an agency business separately owned and operated by a duly appointed agent, so that the wages paid in the branch or agency business are below that which attracts tax by a single employer. An analogy can be drawn between this means of splitting the pay-roll of an employer's business and the avoidance measures countered by the original grouping provisions.

The potential for employers to minimise their pay-roll tax while expanding their businesses was considerable. Where the business is essentially that of the central employer,

the branch managers and agents are subject to several important controls by the head office, such as accounting for all proceeds and complying with certain procedures relating to the operations of the branch.

The amendment in 1984 therefore provided that where the head or parent business exercises managerial control, whether administrative, financial or procedural, over a branch, agency or subsidiary, they are grouped. The amendment was an anti-avoidance measure and is appropriately strong. Its basic structure is that it casts a wide net and then allows for employers to be excluded depending on the circumstances of their operation. It is provided that where the head or parent business exercises any managerial control, the branch, agency or subsidiary is automatically grouped with the head or parent business. However, where the commissioner for pay-roll tax is satisfied, having regard to the nature and degree of managerial control exercised by the head or parent business and to any other matters that he considers relevant, that it would not be just and reasonable to include an employer as a member of a group, the commissioner can exclude him. There has been public comment as to whether certain bank branches should be grouped and what are the wider implications of the concept of the provision generally.

Owing to secrecy provisions, it is impossible to discuss the business of individual tax-payers publicly. However, it can be said that the Government will apply these provisions in their current form where cases are found that are intended to be caught by them. There have been claims that the provisions will mean that TAB agencies—as mentioned by the honourable member—service stations, fast-food franchises and real estate agencies will all be grouped and be liable for pay-roll tax. However, the position can only be examined in each case individually.

Where a head or parent business exercises managerial control over a branch, agency or subsidiary, they will then constitute a group under the Act. All such branches, agencies or subsidiaries should seek registration under the Pay-roll Tax Act. If they consider that their circumstances are such that they should not be grouped, they should at the same time request the commissioner to consider the individual circumstances of their case with a view to their not being included in a group.

I am sure all thinking persons would agree that the provisions are necessary to ensure the fair administration of pay-roll tax and that they are not an adverse reflection on the Government's commitment to small business, as has been claimed. Branches, agencies or subsidiaries cannot be grouped unless the head or parent business exercises managerial control over them. Further, by protecting pay-roll tax collections, these provisions will enable the Government to continue to provide a very high level of exemption for individual small businesses.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.38 a.m.), by leave: My personal explanation relates directly to the last question. The Minister said that I had been in communication with him and had given warning of this question. I have had no communication whatsoever with the Minister on this matter, and in fact I specifically wished to have a spontaneous, meaningful response, rather than an answer read by him, which somebody else had prepared.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. I believe that the Deputy Premier mentioned the honourable member for Stafford.

Mr GUNN: You are quite correct, Mr Speaker. I was on his deaf side.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Involvement of Aboriginals and Islanders in Expo 88

Mrs NELSON: I ask the Minister for Northern Development and Community Services: in the light of several recent inflammatory and irresponsible outbursts by some Labor and Liberal Party spokesmen and certain elements in the media regarding the

involvement of the Aboriginal community in Expo in 1988, will he advise the House of the significant discussions and hard work going on behind the scenes to ensure maximum involvement in and contribution of Aboriginal and Islander Queenslanders towards the success of Expo? Further, I ask: do those irresponsible and inflammatory outbursts jeopardise all of that hard work?

Mr KATTER: Some of the statements that have been made recently are a matter of very grave concern to every responsible member of this House. The twisting and misrepresentation of statements made by people associated with the Government have been unfortunate, to say the least. More recently, in the middle of very delicate negotiations that have involved Sir Llewellyn Edwards and me, the Lord Mayor made what can only be described as a provocative statement. I excused her on the basis that she obviously does not know what is going on at Expo at the moment. The insensitive manner in which she intervened in this matter has created emormous problems for the people attempting to run Expo. Most certainly, all of us who want to see it hope that it will be a great success.

I now answer specifically the concerns expressed by the honourable member. Firstly, I must commend her for her efforts and contribution in this area. Probably no-one can claim to be more characteristically Australian than people of Aboriginal descent. At Expo we want to assert the cultural heritage that we have inherited from these people.

Mr Scott: You don't mention that in your own Bill. That's how much you are disfranchising them.

Mr KATTER: I will ignore the interjection. It has absolutely nothing to do with the matter. It clearly demonstrates again that, in an effort to score cheap political points, people would place in jeopardy——

Mr Yewdale: Look who's talking!

Mr KATTER: I am not trying to score any cheap political points here at all. What I am trying to suggest is that people maintain some element of sensitivity towards something that can create great benefits for people of Aboriginal descent in this State as well as great benefits for the people of the city of Brisbane and the people of Queensland.

I will answer the honourable member's question, I hope without any more insensitive interjections. A commercial group has taken an area at Expo. At least one businessman of Aboriginal descent who belongs to that group expects the receipts from sale of his products throughout Australia this year to go close to $1m. I am very pleased to say that that person came to me two years ago before he went into business. He was working in a job. At that stage the Government helped to sponsor him. Through the assistance of Sir Llewellyn Edwards and the Expo authority, that man looks like making a very great success of his business in the coming year, as he has already. His bankers and accountants predict that his gross sales will go close to $1m. He is only one businessman of Aboriginal descent who will be associated with Expo. I could refer to half a dozen others.

In addition, we are gearing up our own activities to ensure that between $2m and $3m worth of artefacts are available for sale from such places as Pormpuraaw and Kowanyama. Three years ago, there was no artefact production coming out of either of those centres. If we can get production on line in time to provide the artefacts, there will be another $2m and, we hope, maybe even $3m worth of sales of those goods.

As well, there will be an area in which there will be demonstrations of rock-flaking, from which implements used to be made in the old days; corroborees, fire-making and spear-throwing. Admission charges will be imposed. That will go on continuously throughout the duration of Expo. People will be employed and very large amounts of money will be made for all of the people who will be employed. We hope to get together all of the people who have been involved in leadership of Aboriginal affairs in Brisbane and throughout Queensland. They will be able to put forward their ideas that they want to inject into Expo so that they can most certainly be one of the integral parts of Expo.

That is the determination. I speak on behalf of Sir Llewellyn Edwards, the Expo authority and, I am sure, members on both sides of the House when I say that a major statement will be made by Kath Walker and Don Davidson, people who are of Aboriginal descent. Although I could not describe those persons as friends of the Queensland Government, they have been most supportive and most active. They are determined to see the success of what the people of Aboriginal descent will be doing at Expo.

I am confident that honourable members on both sides of this House will assist in what is trying to be achieved over there. The unfortunate mistakes that have been made in the past—and I will not even mention the lady's name again—will not be made in the future.

Unforeseen Expenditure of Queensland Government Development Authority

Mr WELLS: In directing a question to the Deputy Premier, I refer him to the answer that he gave yesterday to a question that was asked by my colleague the honourable member for Condamine. I refer the Minister particularly to his remark that the Opposition had been, for a long time, calling for details of the $1.53 billion Estimates for the Queensland Government Development Authority. I refer also to the Minister's remark that, "This is a complete document."

I ask: was it, in fact, a complete document that the Minister was quoting to this House? Was he, in fact, quoting only the first part of a Treasury briefing paper, the second part of which contains details of a different transaction, namely, the $1.3 billion unforeseen expenditure undertaken on behalf of the Queensland Government Development Authority?

Is it the second document that contains all of the interesting information—for example, that the QEC and the Department of Transport originally borrowed $408m off shore, while the public accounts reveal that the cost to the QGDA of refinancing it was $439m?

Is the Minister aware that the Opposition did not call for details of the $1.53 billion, because it is in the public accounts, but that it has been calling for details of the $1.3 billion unforeseen expenditure about which the Minister still continues to refuse to provide the details?

Finally, why does the Minister resist public accountability on this matter?

Mr GUNN: Yesterday, when I answered that question, the Opposition considered that the first question that was put to me about Fiji was without notice. Members of the Opposition became very mixed up and would not have heard what I was talking about. They were yelling and screaming like a mob of magpies. I could hardly hear myself speak.

If the honourable member wishes me to repeat my answer, I will do so. If he would like me to table the document—which would be much easier and would not waste the time of this House—I am prepared to do so. However, the honourable member would probably need to have somebody with him to explain what my answer was all about.

I am getting sick of explaining the thousand million dollars of unforeseen expenditure to members of the Opposition. They do not understand it. With the permission of this House, I will table the full document, if that will satisfy members of the Opposition.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Investment of Treasury Funds

Mr WELLS: In directing a second question to the Deputy Premier, I refer him to an answer that he gave last Friday to my question without notice. At that time he said—

> "I am prepared to table a paper in this Parliament on all Queensland's investment and all of the foreign exchange temporary losses that have been made. . ."

I ask: is the Minister prepared to table such a paper this week? If not, will he give the House a rough idea of what is involved in all of those "foreign exchange temporary losses"?

Mr GUNN: As I explained in my previous answer to the honourable member, all funds in this State are invested in interest-bearing deposits—short-term investments. Of course, the reason for that is that we do not have a big barrel into which we put our money. We make our money work for us. To give some indication of our investments, funds are often invested for 24 hours only.

Queensland's funds are in an entirely different position to those of Victoria. That is a sad point with Victoria, which is $730m down.

I believe that the only honourable member in this House who would understand the investment procedure is Sir William Knox. This Government amortises its funds into a sinking-fund. The profit and loss in that particular fund remains for the duration of the particular loan. It is a good system that has worked well for many, many years and will continue to do so. This Government does not intend to do what Mr Jolly has done in Victoria. He exposed the Victorian Government to a loss of $730m. Because our funds are amortised into a sinking-fund for the duration of a particular loan, the situation that occurred in Victoria will not occur here in Queensland.

As I said the other day, the QEC has a current credit balance in that sinking-fund of $186m.

Radar Equipment at Cairns Airport

Mr MENZEL: I ask the Minister for Water Resources: is he aware of the dangerous situation at the Cairns Airport with regard to air safety because there is no proper radar to direct the high volume of air traffic? As the Federal Labor Government is responsible for that situation, what is the local Federal Labor member, Mr Gayler, doing about it? Because of the ineffective representations of Mr Gayler, will the Minister make representations to the Federal Government to stop a possible air crash and a loss of life at Cairns?

Mr TENNI: I appreciate the fact that the honourable member, like everyone else in that area, is concerned at the lack of radar equipment to ensure the safety of those people using the Cairns Airport.

An Opposition member: What has this got to do with water?

Mr TENNI: The Cairns Airport is controlled by the Cairns Port Authority.

On numerous occasions over the years, representations have been made to the Ministers responsible in an endeavour to have radar equipment installed at the Cairns Airport. Prior to the last Federal election, the member for Leichhardt made a promise in the *Cairns Post* that radar equipment would be installed at the Cairns Airport. I have not had the privilege of seeing or being informed of the type of radar equipment that is intended to be installed.

Mr Scott: It is all in hand.

Mr TENNI: I hope that the honourable member for Cook is right, because I am worried. I believe that the pilots who operate in and out of the Cairns Airport would have a greater knowledge of what is required than the honourable member for Cairns, Mr Gayler, the Minister concerned or me. I am very concerned about the comments that are being made by respected pilots from Ansett and Australian Airlines and by other light-aircraft pilots, that a Mickey Mouse-type system of radar equipment will be installed merely to keep the promises made by the Federal member for Leichhardt. I am not sure whether those comments are correct, but I hope that the member for Leichhardt will investigate the proposals that are being put forward. I hope that he will listen to people such as the member for Mulgrave, the port authority, the pilots who

operate in and out of that airport and me, and make certain that high-quality radar equipment is installed at that airport.

At present, eight permanent international air flights a week, many charter flights, normal commercial flights and light aircraft arrive at that airport. Because the mountains are very close to the Cairns Airport, it is most important that a very high quality radar system be installed at the airport.

Along with the member for Mulgrave, I challenge the member for Leichhardt to make sure that whatever equipment is installed is to the satisfaction of the people flying in and out of that airport. I will be absolutely disgusted if in fact the political announcement made prior to the election results in the installation of an inferior Mickey Mouse-type radar system which could possibly put at risk the lives of people.

I assure the member for Mulgrave that I will be keeping a very close watch on the type of equipment that is proposed to be installed. If it is not suitable for the airport, I will make certain that I object very bitterly about it.

Interstate Transfer of Prisoner from Brisbane Prison

Mr PALASZCZUK: In directing a question to the Minister for Corrective Services, I refer him to the gaol inmate who recently informed prison officers about a gun smuggled into Boggo Road. I ask—

(a) Have prison officers entered into an agreement with the prisoner to effect an interstate transfer for him in return for information volunteered by him?

(b) If so, at what stage are negotiations?

(c) If the transfer cannot be effected, will the Minister give consideration to some form of home detention or a special parole for the prisoner concerned?

Mr NEAL: I advise the House that no guarantee whatsoever can be given to a prisoner that he could expect an interstate transfer, because transfers to another State are matters decided by the particular State to which the prisoner wishes to be transferred. The Queensland Government has no control over decisions made by another State.

As to the prisoner to whom the honourable member for Archerfield refers—I advise the House that some time has elapsed since documentation from the Queensland Corrective Services Department was forwarded to the appropriate authorities in the State mentioned. I understand that a decision will be conveyed to me today, if it has not already arrived. I am hopeful that that decision will be favourable.

Appointment of Teachers

Mr HAYWARD: I ask the Minister for Education: can he inform the House whether teacher trainees who completed their training in 1986 and are still unemployed will be given preference in employment in the Education Department over teacher trainees completing their training in 1987?

Mr POWELL: The Education Department recognises the fact that some people who graduated from their college courses in 1986 claim that they have been left aside. Certainly, they are unemployed. Often that is because of a number of reasons—not the least of which is that they choose not to accept——

Mr Hayward interjected.

Mr POWELL: The honourable member is shaking his head. He thinks he knows more than I do about this matter.

Mr Hayward: I don't know anything about it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Minister for Education.

Mr POWELL: Obviously, in some cases, that occurs because the person involved will not take an appointment to a place that he regards as being unsuitable. When a

person is employed as a teacher in the Queensland Education Department, he has to guarantee that he will accept transfer to anywhere in the State. That has to be maintained as a policy.

Some people who graduated in 1986 have not received a job yet, because people with superior qualifications and superior ability are ahead of them. For the 1988 school year, those people who graduated in 1986 and who are yet to receive a placement have been advised to apply for an interview. They will be interviewed along with the 1987 graduates. Jobs will be offered according to the number of places available and the number of vacancies that occur.

Queensland Government Development Authority

Mr HAYWARD: In directing a question to the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer, I refer to an answer to a question asked last Friday in which he stated that in 1986-87 the QEC improved its offshore debt position by $95m, and I ask: is it the case that, as a result of the world stock-market crash and a decline in the value of the Australian dollar in October, the Queensland Government Development Authority has incurred serious losses? Will the Deputy Premier detail losses the Queensland Government Development Authority has incurred in the last two months? Would he support an investigation by the Auditor-General into activities of the Queensland Government Development Authority over these last two months?

Mr GUNN: I have just answered a question regarding amortising the fund, which is a special sinking-fund of the Queensland Government for all loans. I do not know whether I will have to repeat the answer. I have already said it. I know that the honourable member would not have understood it, but I would suggest that he read *Hansard* and study it, because I do not intend to repeat the answer.

Relocation of Water Police from Rosslyn Bay to Gladstone

Mr HINTON: I direct a question to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Police, and I inform him that there have been persistent reports in the Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin* that two water police currently operating out of Rosslyn Bay, Yeppoon, may be relocated to Gladstone. I ask: can he assure the House that this is not so?

Mr GUNN: I am sorry; I did not hear the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to place the question on notice.

Increase in Administration Fees for Students

Mr HINTON: I ask the Minister for Education: is he aware that the Federal Government has increased the so-called administration fee from $250 to $263? Is he further aware that the Brisbane College of Advanced Education has required continuing students to pay that fee by 18 December 1987?

Mr POWELL: I am aware that in its most recent Budget the Federal Government raised the so-called administration fee from $250 per year to $263 per year. I am also aware that its payment is made a condition for enrolment in all colleges of advanced education and universities throughout Australia, not only those in Queensland.

The enrolment deadline for the Brisbane College of Advanced Education is as the honourable member suggested. As the fee is a requirement of enrolment, unfortunately students who are not eligible for any discount or any dispensation have to pay it at that time. I might add that those students who are receiving AUSTUDY do have that amount paid back to them. However, their difficulty arises when they are required to pay that amount in December. I am referring to a continuing student, not a new student. As I said, that amount has to be paid in December. The AUSTUDY payments do not usually come through until April—provided the Federal Department of Education does not have a fault with its computer, as it had this year, when some students did not receive their payments until August. Therefore, the student who is eligible for AUSTUDY has to pay

out the $263 at the end of this year. He will probably not be paid back until April or May next year.

At the beginning of the academic year the student is faced with a mountain of expenditure for books as well as finding accommodation and all that goes with it. Parents of students in higher education who live outside the area where there is an institution of higher education know of the great problems that those students have in fitting in. The fee of $263 is just one more imposition that is being placed on those students.

I might add also that students who are doing their higher-education courses via external studies——

Mr Davis: You are getting very unpopular with those Cabinet Ministers because you are answering too many Dorothy Dix questions.

Mr POWELL: The honourable member for Brisbane Central just loves me to stop and repeat things so that he hears them more clearly.

The disadvantage that faces students who have to obtain their higher-education qualifications through external studies is compounded even more, because, whereas a student who is in full-time study will complete his course in three years, it sometimes takes an external student up to 12 years—with diligent study, I might add—to obtain his degree. That means that in those circumstances such a student pays the administration fee 12 times compared with the three times that it is paid by a full-time student.

The Federal Government needs to come out and be honest about the administration fee. It is just a surreptitious way of introducing tuition fees. The sooner the Federal Government comes clean and is honest about the whole thing, the sooner the students and the public of Australia generally will be better satisfied, and we will better be able to do something to combat the insidious way in which the Federal Government is doing it at the moment.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I refer to the previous question, and I call the Deputy Premier to answer it.

Mr SCOTT: I rise to a point of order. Why is it that at question-time if Opposition members miss their call they do not get a second chance to ask a question? The Minister was half-asleep and he does not deserve the consideration of the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am sure honourable members would agree that it is desirable not to have too many questions on notice. I call the Deputy Premier to answer.

Relocation of Water Police from Rosslyn Bay to Gladstone

Mr GUNN: At times the acoustics in the Chamber are extremely bad. I missed the question. I appreciate the honourable member's concern over this matter. I inform him that the investigation into whether to shift the water police from Yeppoon to Gladstone was commenced by an officer of police up there without the knowledge of Brisbane headquarters. The position has now been examined, and I inform the honourable member that there is no way in the world that the headquarters for the water police now at Yeppoon will be transferred to Gladstone. The investigation carried out by the Brisbane headquarters shows that that is not necessary.

Viability of Workers' Compensation Funds

Mr BORBIDGE: In asking a question of the Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs, I refer to reports that the Victorian Labor Government's much-vaunted Workcare workers' compensation scheme faces economic collapse and now threatens to bankrupt many businesses in that State. I now ask: how does that parlous state of affairs compare with the situation in Queensland?

Mr LESTER: In the Victorian newspaper the *Age* of last Saturday, an article claimed that workers' compensation costs in Victoria are set to rise because the scheme has a current debt of $2.5 billion. If that scheme is to remain viable, by 1991 premiums in

Victoria will have to treble. That is an indication of the great difficulties facing employers and employees in Victoria.

The Queensland scheme has no debt at all. Our workers' compensation scheme is self-funding and still has the lowest premiums in Australia. Queensland has a 50 per cent merit bonus, which does not apply in other States. In Queensland, employers do not have to pay the wages for the first few days that an employee takes off. That is not the case in other States.

The total debt of the New South Wales scheme is of the order of $500m. In South Australia employers have to pay a premium of $3.30 per $100 of wages. In New South Wales, it is $3.20; in Victoria, $2.60, but that is set to rise to $7.80; and in Queensland, it is only $1.50. The indications are that into the future it will remain at that level or even lower. In many instances the premiums in Queensland are lower than they were some 10 years ago. Is it any wonder that employers are considering coming to Queensland?

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

BILLS: REMAINING STAGES

Allocation of Time-limit Order

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Leader of the House) (11.09 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That so much of the Standing Orders and Sessional Orders be suspended to enable the following Bills to be passed through all their remaining stages on this sitting day. At the times so specified, or before if debate has concluded, Mr Speaker or the Chairman, as the case may be, shall put all remaining questions necessary to pass the Bill including clauses en bloc and any amendments to be moved by the Minister in charge of the Bill, without further amendment or debate—

Stock Act Amendment Bill, second reading at 12.30 p.m.; report from Committee and third reading at 1 p.m.

Education Act and Another Act Amendment Bill, second reading at 6 p.m.; report from Committee and third reading at 8 p.m.

Builders' Registration and Home-owners' Protection Act Amendment Bill, second reading at 10 p.m.; report from Committee and third reading at 10.30 p.m.

Industrial Development Act Amendment Bill, second reading at 11.15 p.m.; report from Committee and third reading at 11.30 p.m."

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The question is——

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (11.10 a.m.): Mr Speaker, I want to speak to that motion. The Opposition opposes absolutely the sausage-machine approach of this Government——

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Leader of the House) (11.11 a.m.): I move—

"That the question be now put."

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The question is, "That the question be now put." Those of that opinion say "Aye", against say "No".

Mr LICKISS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The "Ayes" have it.

Mr LICKISS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

An Opposition member: Divide!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! A division is required——

Mr LICKISS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will state his point of order.

Mr LICKISS: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the Standing Orders, which put the responsibility directly on you, as Speaker, to ensure that sufficient debate has taken place before a question is put. It is at your discretion. I suggest to you, Mr Speaker, that no debate has taken place, and I ask you to rule that putting the question is out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, I appreciate the point of order. I have made my decision and I must stay with that decision. I have put the question and it has been resolved in the affirmative.

Opposition members: Divide!

Question—That the question be now put—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 44		NOES, 39	
Ahern	Hynd	Ardill	Palaszczuk
Alison	Katter	Beanland	Prest
Berghofer	Lester	Beard	Scott
Bjelke-Petersen	McCauley	Braddy	Shaw
Booth	McKechnie	Burns	Sherlock
Borbidge	McPhie	Campbell	Smith
Burreket	Menzel	Casey	Smyth
Chapman	Muntz	Comben	Underwood
Clauson	Neal	D'Arcy	Vaughan
Cooper	Nelson	De Lacy	Warburton
Elliott	Newton	Eaton	Warner
Fraser	Powell	Gibbs, R. J.	Wells
Gately	Randell	Goss	White
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherrin	Hamill	Yewdale
Gilmore	Simpson	Hayward	
Glasson	Slack	Innes	
Gunn	Stephan	Knox	
Harper	Stoneman	Lee	
Harvey	Tenni	Lickiss	
Henderson		McElligott	
Hinton	*Tellers:*	Mackenroth	*Tellers:*
Hinze	Littleproud	McLean	Davis
Hobbs	FitzGerald	Milliner	Gygar

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

AYES, 44		NOES, 39	
Ahern	Hynd	Ardill	Palaszczuk
Alison	Katter	Beanland	Prest
Berghofer	Lester	Beard	Scott
Bjelke-Petersen	McCauley	Braddy	Shaw
Booth	McKechnie	Burns	Sherlock
Borbidge	McPhie	Campbell	Smith
Burreket	Menzel	Casey	Smyth
Chapman	Muntz	Comben	Underwood
Clauson	Neal	D'Arcy	Vaughan
Cooper	Nelson	De Lacy	Warburton
Elliott	Newton	Eaton	Warner
Fraser	Powell	Gibbs, R. J.	Wells
Gately	Randell	Goss	White
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherrin	Hamill	Yewdale
Gilmore	Simpson	Hayward	
Glasson	Slack	Innes	
Gunn	Stephan	Knox	
Harper	Stoneman	Lee	
Harvey	Tenni	Lickiss	
Henderson		McElligott	
Hinton	*Tellers:*	Mackenroth	*Tellers:*
Hinze	Littleproud	McLean	Davis
Hobbs	FitzGerald	Milliner	Gygar

Resolved in the affirmative.

STOCK ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 15 September (see p. 2513).

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (11.22 a.m.): I regret to say that this House has once again been reduced to its old level of the sausage-machine, ramming through pieces of legislation in order to suit the Government's program. Unfortunately, the Government's program now seems to be dictated by a desire to get out of this Chamber because members of the Government are being severely embarrassed by the performance of their own Premier.

During the debate on the last piece of legislation that was the responsibility of the Minister for Primary Industries, I said that it was a pleasing change not to have the debate on the legislation guillotined. Unfortunately, that pleasing situation did not last for very long and the Government has gone back to its old practice once again. The gagging of this debate after one hour means that members of the Opposition, members of the Liberal Party and, I presume, members of the Government, many of whom represent rural electorates and many of whom, I would think, would have a deep and abiding interest in this type of legislation, will be denied the opportunity to represent their constituents.

The Stock Act Amendment Bill is, in part, the Government's response to the pesticide residue crisis that has smitten this State and this country during the last three or four months. I must say that the Bill is a fairly lousy response. I know that it is not the total response of the Government. In that sense, the Opposition supports the Bill. There is nothing in the legislation that members of the Opposition oppose. To a certain extent, we believe that the Bill typifies the Government's performance in relation to the pesticide crisis in that it is too little, too late. The Opposition is aware that many changes that ought to be made have not yet been made and have not been included in this legislation.

Firstly, I would like to raise the issue of the treatment of some stock. A few years ago a public campaign over the ill-treatment of stock being transported by road and rail to the sale yards and meatworks at Cannon Hill and to other countries from throughout the State was launched. At that time over 14 000 people signed petitions and attended rallies to protest at the cruelty to the animals that were destined for the local slaughterhouse. They argued that the cattle, sheep and pigs were entitled to be treated humanely even though they were destined for slaughter. The Labor Party subscribes completely to that point of view.

The Government was eventually convinced to act on that issue. As a result, a number of changes were made to transport procedures and watering timetables. Again, it was too little, too late. Although those changes brought improvements, there is still room for improvement, especially in regard to the transport of horses for human consumption and pet food.

Recently, my attention has been drawn to the shocking condition in which horses sent by rail from far-north and central Queensland arrive at Landsborough for off-loading to trucks for slaughter at Caboolture. Horse-lovers and animal-lovers everywhere would be outraged at reports that I have received of emaciated horses with sores, broken legs and open wounds and even with eyes hanging out being unloaded at Landsborough. Wild horses rounded up and loaded on trains kick, strike and bite at each other, and it is not hard to understand how a horse can go down in a wagon after days of swaying, bumping and fear. If a horse goes down, it is hard to get it back up. It is not only wild horses. Domestic horses from private owners are not treated much better on the way to some of our knackeries. I am aware that horses are spelled on long train journeys, but reports that horses are in very poor condition and unsuited to such a long trip continue to reach my office.

Horses are sent to Caboolture for slaughter for human consumption from centres as far away as Mareeba and Longreach. As long as the owner certifies that those horses are disease-free, there is no inspection by departmental officers before loading. The horses can be as poor as church mice; they can be injured and emaciated, but without inspection they are loaded and commence the long rail journey to Caboolture.

Railwaymen and people living along the rail line have told many stories of distressed and injured animals. Surely, those animals require better treatment than they are currently receiving in Queensland. A police officer in central Queensland told people who complained that, in his opinion, the horses were in a very bad state.

One measure of a society's compassion is the way in which it treats its animals. I ask the relevant Minister to act to prevent any further cruelty to travelling stock. In addition, the amendments to the Animals Protection Act, which were promised by Mr Hinze as Police Minister in 1982, should be brought before this House as a matter of urgency.

The whole issue of the pesticide residue contamination crisis began approximately four months ago when excessive levels of chemicals—mostly organochlorine chemicals—were found in beef shipments to the United States. That crisis has thrown the entire beef industry into turmoil. It has caused excessive dislocation to both the Government and industry in the sense that Australia's reputation as an exporter of high-quality agricultural produce has been severely tarnished. That reputation can be re-established, but it will take time.

The viability of meatworks has been threatened. The number of jobs of meatworkers who are at risk is as high as 5 000 in Queensland. All sectors of industry and Government will have to absorb additional costs in order to combat the problem. Of course, that is now being done.

The problem of pesticide residues in beef is destined to rank with drought or soil erosion as one of the greatest single threats facing Queensland agriculture today. The fact that the crisis has passed does not mean to say that the problem has disappeared. I know, and everyone associated with the industry knows, that the problem will continue to bubble on for many years to come.

The beef-export industry, which has been thrown into turmoil, is worth in the vicinity of $900m to Queensland alone. The problem poses a grave threat to the whole of the pastoral industry—not only the beef industry—and, of course, to the welfare of those engaged in that particular industry. The shock waves will reverberate for a long time. Many of the implications are too horrendous to contemplate, not only for the rural industries concerned, but also for consumers, the Government, the administering bureaucracy and public service, the legal system and even for domestic land management.

As of last week, my advice is that 354 individual farms throughout Australia have been quarantined—that is, commercially frozen—by Governments because of residues of insidious organochlorine pesticides such as DDT, dieldrin, aldrin, heptachlor and chlordane. Those residues have been discovered not only in stock but also, of course, in crops, and they have been detected in soil samples.

Queensland leads the way in this field. It is probably something that we ought not to be proud of in one sense, because it shows that we have a problem of greater magnitude than that in most other States in Australia. However, it also may mean that our detection procedures are more efficient. I hope that that is the case. To my knowledge, 152 properties in Queensland, 124 in Western Australia and 89 in New South Wales have been quarantined. They are the latest figures that I have available. In Victoria, no properties have been quarantined, but that is because of a deficiency in its legislation in that it cannot impose a quarantine order on properties.

The time has come for a sober assessment of our record—and it does not bear too close a scrutiny. For years, the organochlorines have been used particularly in agriculture in Australia. We have always known that they are persistent insecticides with a high residual effect. In fact, when I was attending college years ago, that was touted as their

particular strong point. They were broad-spectrum insecticides and they would keep on killing. In other words, their residual effect would remain and would be effective for weeks, months and so on. They remain in the soil, in fatty tissues of animals and in fatty tissues of humans for many years. They have been known to remain 20 years and longer in the soil. They are cumulative in the sense that people can become infected. Consequences of a build-up of insecticide can show in people after exposure over a long period. They are said to be potent poisons. If enough of them are consumed, they are carcinogenic, which means that they cause cancer.

The sudden discovery of high levels of pesticides in export meat shipments earlier this year was a devastating threat to Australia's trade and a major international embarrassment for Australia. Of course, that has led to bans in the various States of Australia of the pesticides concerned until investigations are carried out. In most cases, I believe that the bans were made absolutely.

How could that situation just happen? As I said previously, when I was attending college 30 years ago, we knew of the residual effects, the persistence and the cumulative effects of these particular insecticides. The fact is that it did not just happen. It was caused because the authorities—in this sense, the Government, the members of the department and, of course, primary producers themselves—were not prepared to face up to the issue. It would be fair to say that we have been stricken by a severe case of myopia over a lengthy period.

People in Queensland are living in a cocoon. Some people in the primary industries sector are still not prepared to face up to the facts. I hear them talking about issues—in a most defensive way, I might say—and saying that the maximum recommended levels for these particular pesticides are too low. They say that many times the maximum recommended levels pose no danger to human health. I happen to agree. I think that the safety factors inherent in the permitted levels are very, very high indeed. In other words, I do not believe that the recommended levels pose a threat to human health if people consume foods containing insecticide levels that are well above the maximum recommended level. However, that is not the point; that is a totally irrelevant argument.

Mr Randell: It is what they think overseas.

Mr De LACY: Exactly. What the honourable member for Mirani has said is correct. What is important is what people say overseas. It is the opinion of people who are importing Australia's products and the opinion of people with whom Australia wishes to establish markets that count. Whilst contamination does not pose a health threat to American consumers, it certainly poses a threat to the health of our industry. Everybody needs to accept that.

It is irrelevant to the argument whether or not the maximum recommended levels are a good indicator of the hazard to human health. The fact is that a long time ago, the United States banned DDT, although I am not sure of the date. Somebody suggested that that occurred in 1972, but I would not bet on that. I am certain, however, that it was a long time ago and that ever since, United States importers have been reducing their maximum recommended levels.

It took a scare of the proportions that occurred in Australia this year before Australian authorities would act; before they were prepared to follow the United States down the track. Many authorities in Australia are guilty of gross complacency. I would not make the charge any stronger than that, but complacency is something that Australia can ill afford in the highly competitive export environment that prevails in the world today and which is characterised by a surplus of primary commodities—both mineral and agricultural. If Australia is to compete and to continue to use its agricultural products in overcoming a serious balance of trade problem, steps must be taken to ensure that Australia's products are seen to be clean and competitive in every way.

The whole issue of complacency is symptomatic of much of the inward-looking, over-defensive approach that has been adopted by primary producers in Australia over the years. I can foresee that much the same kind of thing will happen in the kangaroo

cull quota. I hear primary producers arguing that the European Community is wrong and that it does not know what is going on in Australia, and all that sort of thing. The fact is that if Australia wants to sell kangaroo meat to the European Community, Australia's primary producers have to listen to what it is saying. Whether or not the European Community has assessed the kangaroo problem in Australia accurately is not the issue. The issue is the European Community's opinion. With the stroke of a pen, the European Community could decide not to import kangaroo meat from Australia because of the perceived problems inherent in our attitude to the welfare of our kangaroo population.

Mr Randell: They have been advised of this by Australia's competitors.

Mr De LACY: It may or may not be based on misinformation. I agree with the thrust of the honourable member's interjection, in the sense that these decisions may be arrived at on the basis of incomplete information or even on the basis of misinformation. The fact is, however, that the European Community is providing the market. It is exactly the same in respect of the pesticide residue problem.

The Queensland Government has been culpable in a variety of ways. In this House on a number of occasions, I and other members of the Opposition have raised issues that point to less than a thorough attitude on the part of the Queensland Government.

In July I raised the matter of an investigation which was commissioned by the Department of Primary Industries into dieldrin residues in the Bundaberg area. The State Government commissioned that investigation 10 years ago, in 1977. The report of that investigation contained alarming information about the residues of dieldrin in milk. Both dairy and beef cattle contained levels of dieldrin that were over and above the maximum recommended level. But what did the Government do with the findings of that report?

Mr Harper: Acted on it.

Mr De LACY: I would be pleased if the Minister would tell me how the Government acted on it, because right up till this present day the offending chemical, dieldrin, has been used to control soldier fly in sugar-cane. It is sprayed onto open soil.

That investigation found that dieldrin residues could travel through the air for many, many miles and contaminate pastures not in the immediate vicinity. The Minister said that the Government acted on the report. However, I would like to know how it acted on it if the process which was causing the problem was continued to be carried out. The Minister never answered that before. I would be very keen to hear the Minister say how the Government acted on it. My impression is—and I think the member for Bundaberg has made this point on a number of occasions—that the report was merely put away in the too-hard basket and, to a certain extent, it was suppressed.

The member for Bundaberg—and it seems that, because of the gag, he will not have an opportunity to speak in this debate—also made an accusation that even the ban on dieldrin is a bit of a Clayton's ban because cane-farmers can still use dieldrin on a permit basis.

Mr Harper: Do you support him?

Mr De LACY: I support him in his notion that it is a Clayton's ban, in that dieldrin is still being used, yes.

Mr Harper: Would you take it away altogether immediately?

Mr Randell: Answer that one.

Mr De LACY: It is a good question. It is a fair question. No, I do not think that I would, simply because at this stage there does not appear to be available an economic alternative to dieldrin.

I think it is probably fair to say that over the years our complacency has caused us to arrive at a stage at which that alternative is not available. Because we have just been going on along our merry way and hoping that nothing would happen—or pretending that nothing was happening—we have arrived at the stage at which the only effective or economic control available for that sugar-cane pest is an insecticide which is banned in Queensland—or ought to be banned—and is banned in most States of Australia and, I might say, in most countries of the world.

Others and I have raised a number of other issues which prove that the Queensland Government has again been less than assiduous in its desire to control that very problem. I have raised the matter of incidents that have occurred in relation to two chemicals. One of them is Bravo, which was being imported by a farmer on the Atherton Tableland and distributed to other farmers. Its trade name is Bravo 720; its proper name is chlorothalonil. It was being imported by Mr Joe Trimarchi of Atherton. By arrangement with a large number of farmers, he imports it and sells it to them, or distributes it to them. An argument on semantics could easily arise. However, the fact is that it is an unregistered chemical. The veterinary and agricultural chemical companies are not allowed to import the chemical and they are not allowed to sell it, yet that person can. Why can he do it? He simply says that he is not importing it for sale, he is just importing it.

Mr Harper: I am drafting legislation on that very point.

Mr De LACY: I thank the Minister for that indication. I was going to raise that question. There is a need to introduce legislation that will overcome this problem.

On 16 September 1987, the member for Tablelands, Mr Gilmore, asked what was really a Dorothy Dix question in an endeavour to embarrass me. I might say that it did not do that at all. In answer to that question, the Minister said that Mr Trimarchi apparently collects money from other growers and arranges the purchase of Bravo in the United States, that no sale of products appears to take place in this State and that, therefore, there is no breach of the Agricultural Standards Act. That is an incredible endorsement of a farmer's attempt to avoid the provisions of Queensland legislation.

Mr Harper: It is Commonwealth legislation.

Mr De LACY: The registration is covered by Queensland legislation.

Mr Harper: The Commonwealth has the responsibility for the importation.

Mr De LACY: Yes.

The Minister has said that no sale of product appears to take place in this State and that there is no breach of the Agricultural Standards Act, which is State legislation. The Minister did go on to say in answer to that question that the Commonwealth is responsible for controlling imports. However, although imports are part of the whole scene—and I do not think that that ought to be allowed—I was not talking about them, I was talking about the buying and selling of these chemicals.

Mr Randell: There is no problem until it is imported.

Mr De LACY: Yes, that is right, but the State can do things in the area over which it has jurisdiction.

This person was actually selling an unregistered product. The Minister is saying that he is not selling it because he does it by agreement. Let us face it: that is only semantics. The attitude adopted by the Government supports what is a very obvious attempt at by-passing or avoiding State Government legislation, and that ought not be supported.

The Minister has just said that he is drafting legislation. Legislation that will overcome these problems needs to be drafted. The Minister would have done himself and his department more credit if he had said that Mr Trimarchi is obviously avoiding

the provisions of the State legislation and that he is looking at the legislation and endeavouring to close those loopholes. That would have been the proper answer, and that is what he should have said. That is what I am requesting should happen today.

At present, the control and distribution of chemicals in Queensland are in a mess. The Government has shown all the signs of being confused, complacent and incompetent. The left hand does not know what the right hand is doing. The other story about Dinoseb is almost as bad. If I remember it correctly, the National Health and Medical Research Council has recommended that it not be approved, and it certainly was withdrawn from sale in the United States. The message to the chemical companies was that after this year there would be no further shipments. The companies got over that by saying to farmers that if they wanted some they would have to buy up now because they would not be able to get it next year. Attitudes such as that are certainly not in keeping with a responsible approach to the use of agricultural chemicals in Queensland and Australia.

An article in the *Courier-Mail* of 8 October carries the heading "Cattle council slates Qld Govt over pesticide crisis" and states—

> "A National cattle industry leader yesterday criticised the Queensland Government over the beef pesticide residue crisis.
>
> The Cattle Council of Australia president, Mr Wally Peart, said the Government had been tardy in not banning problem chemicals years ago. He also questioned the State's financial contribution towards solving the problem.
>
> 'I don't think the Queensland Government measures up very well,' Mr Peart told a United Graziers Association conference in Brisbane.
>
> Some States had been much more responsive than others, with Tasmania and Western Australia shining examples.
>
> The Queensland Government had been aware of the problem for many years, but there was evidence it had been put in the too-hard basket."

Mr Harper: The whole problem started with the shipment from Western Australia, which is the major offender.

Mr De LACY: Yes, but Queensland has had plenty of offending shipments itself. He was making the point that all Governments had drifted into this. I do not think one State is any holier than any other. The point that I intend to make now is that the Queensland Government has been much slower and less thorough in its response than most of the other States of Australia have been.

The question is: what has the Queensland Government done? It is very interesting to note that the Minister made a ministerial statement this morning in which he gave honourable members an update on action that is being taken by the Queensland Government. I have been following that, mostly by reading *Queensland Country Life.* I must pay a compliment to that newspaper because on issues such as this that are of vital importance to the rural sector, it is certainly very much aware of what is going on. It has its finger on the pulse and it keeps the rural community well informed.

I am very pleased that many of the problems that the Minister has encountered over the last couple of months are being resolved, albeit slowly. I would be the last person to say that the solutions to these problems can be easily found. The Minister is experiencing immense problems in Queensland. Certainly the other States are also experiencing immense problems. The only difference is that those states dealt with their problems a couple of months before the Minister dealt with the problems in this State. I suppose one way in which to act is to let the other States make the mistakes and learn from their mistakes. I do not know to what extent the Minister has learned from their mistakes. It must not be forgotten that this was a massive problem that required quick and urgent attention. I think that sometimes it is better to take action and sort out the mistakes afterwards.

Mr Harper: We acted before any other State.

Mr De LACY: I will detail a variety of things that the Minister has not done. For example, the legislation to control the distribution of chemicals is not yet in place.

Mr Harper: Is it in place in any other State?

Mr De LACY: Yes. New South Wales has legislation to control the distribution of chemicals.

Mr Harper: But the other States are still talking about uniform national legislation.

Mr De LACY: I agree that there is a need for uniform national legislation. However, I do not think that that is a reason for States not to have legislation.

What I was leading up to was the retrieval program. I do not think that the Minister was correct in saying that the retrieval program in Queensland was put in place ahead of the programs in the other States, because——

Mr Harper: I was referring to our response to the residue problem.

Mr De LACY: The banning of the chemicals, yes. That was prompt. At the time I agreed with it. It needed to be done and it was done, as it was done in all States. It is just a pity that programs to try to find viable alternatives to these chemicals were not in place many years ago.

The Minister's program has been to use the local government authorities as collection agencies. I am not opposed to that. However, I think that to a certain extent it may have been a copping-out or a way of saving money for the department. This is an overall responsibility of the Department of Primary Industries. In most other States the department accepted those responsibilities. It was accepted that with the responsibilities would come a lot of problems, a lot of use of scarce resources and, of course, a major financial commitment.

The fact that Queensland has more than 130 local authorities probably means that this State has a lot of collection agencies, provided they co-operate—and most of them have co-operated. The last figures that I saw revealed that there were only 13 local authorities that at that stage had not entered into the program. I am not sure that that means they will not enter into the program——

Mr Harper: They all have.

Mr De LACY: The Minister says that all the local authorities have now entered into the program. I know that until a couple of weeks ago the Mulgrave Shire Council and even the Cairns City Council had not entered into the program. They were not necessarily opposed to it. They just wanted some assurances. I am pleased that the program is starting to work. There was a 30 November deadline——

Mr Harper: There still is.

Mr De LACY: That is right. The Minister mentioned that this morning. There are many problems. I just do not know what all of these local authorities are doing in regard to temporary storage facilities——

Mr Lee: Canberra could help them out by giving them the money for that high-temperature furnace.

Mr De LACY: With respect, that would not solve this problem at all. It has to be transported to the high-temperature incinerator. Temporary collection or retrieval points are needed right throughout the State.

Mr Littleproud: We've got it.

Mr De LACY: To a certain extent, yes.

Even short-term retrieval stations will experience problems. I do not blame anybody for these problems. I know that there are thousands of litres of unused chemicals and

chemicals that will never be used sitting around on farms throughout Queensland. Many of these chemicals are in rusty containers and the labels have been lost. If put together, many of these chemicals may form explosive mixtures; no-one knows if they are compatible with one another. If they are put into storage and the containers leak, will there be channels around the storage areas that will collect the leachate? Because of possible explosions, will approvals be given by the fire safety people? I do not have all the details—somebody told me this in passing—but I understand that an explosion or fire was caused by phosphorus pig baits being placed in close proximity to something else.

Mr Harper: That was in New South Wales.

Mr De LACY: Was that in New South Wales? I am not point-scoring on this issue. I am merely setting out some of the problems that exist and which will continue to exist. They that are common to all States of Australia.

Mr Randell: Why do you not pay credit to the State Government and the local authorities for the co-operation that they have given to try to solve this problem? There is a great co-operative effort. All the State Governments and local authorities got together to solve the problem.

Mr De LACY: I am not arguing against that. I am not saying that it is not the best approach.

Mr Randell: You are not giving them credit.

Mr De LACY: There are still problems associated with it. If there is co-operation with the local authorities and if those problems can be overcome and there is sufficient surveillance of the program by competent members of the Department of Primary Industries, it can work. However, with 137 receival depots without proper supervision, problems can be created. In deference to the interjection from the honourable member for Mirani, I will say that there appears to be a good co-operative effort, and it is a way of addressing what is a very difficult problem.

I wish to look at what is happening in some of the other States, because when this problem occurred, I saw it as my responsibility to contact some of the other States to see what they were doing. This legislation has been on the book for a while and I was hoping that I could assist the Minister by making this contribution and telling him what has happened in the other States. For a long time, all the States, including Queensland, have had legislation which regulates the use of chemicals, but not their disposal. In 1985 the New South Wales Government enacted the Environmentally Hazardous Chemicals Act. This enables chemical waste to be identified and, if hazardous, it provided for regional disposal.

Mr Harper: Who had responsibility for that?

Mr De LACY: Not the Agriculture Department. There is a special department down there.

Also, companion legislation was introduced—and again this is not the Agriculture Department—under the Local Government Act called the Local Government and Waste Disposal Act, which allowed for regional disposal. In this regard New South Wales is a long way in front of Queensland. This is not the fault of the Department of Primary Industries; it is due to a lack of forward planning and co-ordination and that same old complacency within the Queensland Government to which I referred earlier.

Last year the Department of Agriculture in New South Wales prepared two booklets giving guide-lines for disposal procedures to be adopted in urban and rural areas. These booklets have perhaps been published by this time. Additionally, New South Wales has set up a task force, consisting of representation from the State Pollution Control Commission, other departments, including the Agriculture Department, local government and the Australian Veterinary Chemicals Association, to develop a retrieval and disposal infrastructure.

When I spoke to the Minister, he said that, if the guide-lines were not fully effective, it may be necessary to translate those guide-lines into regulations. However, it was generally expected that this substitution may not be necessary; in other words, the guide-lines would be sufficient.

Like Queensland, New South Wales has also taken action to ban a variety of pesticides, particularly the organochlorines. In July, the New South Wales Government announced an amnesty for the return of pesticides, and did all the things that the Queensland Government is really doing only now, in October and November. All the problems that Queensland is facing now were faced by New South Wales in July. So Queensland is three months behind New South Wales. It is a bit like the old story of the pilot who, as he comes into Queensland, says, "You are now entering Queensland. Turn your watch back three months."

The New South Wales Government has identified its regional locations throughout the State as retrieval depots, and these are usually in New South Wales regional offices of the Department of Agriculture. The amnesty in New South Wales was to last for three months, until 15 September, but it was extended, I think, for another month. I think that the amnesty period has concluded. New South Wales could have an amnesty period because it has in place legislation that provides that it is illegal to possess those chemicals. There is no point in having an amnesty unless we can say to people, "You are not allowed to have those chemicals." In a ministerial statement this morning, the Minister assured me that that type of legislation was being prepared, and I welcome that. Although I do not know whether I have the final figure, during my last communication with the authorities in New South Wales I was told that 80 000 litres of liquid chemical and 11 000 kilograms of solid chemical had been collected. That is a tremendous amount of chemical that was surrendered, predominantly from the farming community.

Mr Lee: How do you get it in?

Mr De LACY: I do not know. It is up to the farmers to bring the chemicals in. It is illegal for them to have those chemicals on their properties. A retrieval depot is provided at which the chemicals can be lodged.

I would suggest that in Queensland there would be a quantity similar to that surrendered in New South Wales, or even more. Retrieval of the chemicals in New South Wales is somewhat easier than retrieval in Queensland, because the area of New South Wales is not as big as the area of Queensland. New South Wales has an area of agriculture similar in size to that of Queensland.

Mr Lee: It doesn't grow cane, either.

Mr De LACY: That is correct. It may be that some of the agricultural products in New South Wales are not as susceptible to pests and diseases as are the products in Queensland. I think it is fair to say that tropical crops are more susceptible to pests and diseases than are temperate crops.

Given the experience in New South Wales, the size of the respective States and the levels of chemicals involved, it would be a miracle if Queensland could get its act into gear and get all the chemicals in by 30 November. I am very doubtful whether that objective is achievable.

Over the last few years, New South Wales has had a public health and environmental public relations program, which I think has been far superior to what has happened in Queensland. As everybody knows, the Queensland Government has always been very defensive about environmental issues. When people have raised environmental problems in relation to agricultural chemicals, the knee-jerk reaction has always been to dismiss them, whereas other States have been much more sensitive and progressive. I think it is fair to say that the other States have adopted an approach that is more co-ordinated than that adopted by Queensland.

The Minister probably has the hardest job of any Minister in Australia simply because it seems that he is in this alone and that he is not receiving very much assistance from other departments and from other Ministers. That is a pity, because it certainly requires a great deal of co-ordination between different departments.

I would like to touch briefly on the major problem of the final disposal of the chemicals. Most of the States have solved that problem by saying that it is a Commonwealth responsibility. That is the way in which Queensland solves many of its problems. The fact is that it is a hoary old chestnut and the problem still remains. If an impetus was needed, we got it this year. I am hopeful that that impetus will cause the Commonwealth Government, together with the States, to come up with an acceptable solution to the problem.

Australia certainly needs a high-temperature incinerator. It seems incredible that such a sparsely populated country as Australia cannot dispose of its agricultural and toxic chemical waste. This issue is a little bit like airports or prisons; everybody agrees that we should have them, provided that they are located somewhere else and not in our own back yard.

Concern has been expressed at the Minister's proposal for a high-temperature waste disposal unit in Queensland. I guarantee that the Opposition would not react adversely to such a proposal. Obviously such a unit would have to be situated in an area that is a fair distance from closely settled residential areas. Because of the increasing demand for the disposal of toxic waste—and of course, this is a bigger issue than that which applies to the agricultural sector—it seems to me that there could even be an economic reason for the placement of such a unit in Queensland.

When I spoke with the New South Wales Minister, he mentioned the disposal of that State's chemical waste by sending it to be incinerated in one of the disposal plants in Europe or in the high-temperature incinerator ship that plies throughout the world. A proposal was mentioned that ANL should be approached to convert one of its older craft into an incinerator ship. I do not know what has happened to that proposal.

Some of the other States are moving towards the construction of one of those incinerators. Western Australia has a clear proposal for a disposal incinerator in the gold-fields. I understand that the Northern Territory has a proposal for the construction of an incinerator at Tennant Creek. Victoria had a proposal for one, but that has now been ruled out.

Instead of sitting back and waiting for the Federal Government to solve this problem, the Government should appoint a select committee or an expert committee to consider this matter. As I said, I guarantee that the Opposition will not react adversely to the proposal. Obviously, it would have to be considered. If such an incinerator were to be sited in Lytton, I probably could not guarantee that the Opposition would support it. However, it could be constructed in many other areas of Queensland.

Mr Lee: What about Archerfield or Willawong?

Mr De LACY: No, I do not think that the Opposition would support it in Archerfield—or Cairns, for that matter. It is about time that we showed a bit of leadership and bit the bullet.

Mr Harper: It is being addressed at Agricultural Council level. The Ministers from all States and the Commonwealth discussed it three or four months ago at that level.

Mr De LACY: Do we have a site for it?

Mr Harper: Practically all States except South Australia have agreed to make a site available. I think Victoria has pulled out now. It is largely a question of funding. I think that the Commonwealth has accepted that it has a responsiblity to provide the funds.

Mr Lee: That is good news.

Mr De LACY: It is good news.

This is one of the things that must be done by co-ordination between the States and the Commonwealth. It is a major problem that is much bigger than the agricultural industry's problem. The disposal of toxic waste from urban centres and industrial centres is developing into a massive problem for modern society. Something must be done about it.

I turn now to the issue of compensation. In the early days I heard that both Western Australia and Victoria had put in place a compensation package. I was originally attracted to the idea. However, the more that I read and hear about it, the less I am attracted to it. I have heard of people rorting the system in Victoria. They are filling up empty drums of DDT with water or other types of chemicals and claiming the $1.50 a litre compensation. In Queensland, we have to appeal to people's sense of responsibility and make it easy for them to surrender those chemicals.

There was a major problem with some of the chemical companies. I have no brief for chemical companies. They are mostly large multinational companies with much money. However, they have purchased and processed some chemicals on the basis of existing legislation. They have large stocks. What happens to those stocks? Because they were acting within the law as it then existed, should they be compensated? That needs to be examined.

Chemicals companies in Queensland have imported, supplied and stocked wholesalers and retailers with a number of chemicals, particularly organochlorines, which are now on the banned list. Those chemicals were imported and distributed in good faith on the expectation that their sale was legal. Who is left carrying the can—the retailer, the wholesaler, the company or the Government? I do not know. I hope that the Minister is looking at that problem.

I am aware that Consolidated Fertilizers Ltd had something like 1 000 tonnes of fertiliser that had been impregnated with BHC for application on sugar-cane fields. What a massive disposal problem we have there if that BHC cannot be used and if the company has no financial incentive to dispose of it.

The real challenge that faces Australian agriculture is to change society's overall attitude to the use of agricultural chemicals. A changed attitude is necessary to protect consumers, users, non-target species and the environment. There will be economic incentives for us to change our approach. The tougher action being taken by meat-importing countries is only a taste of what is to come.

The present stringent requirements of the USA pale into insignificance compared to those to be imposed soon by the EC. All meat from animals treated with hormonal preparations will be banned. Minimal residue levels are to be introduced to the full range of veterinary chemicals and therapeutics.

Our goal should be for a pollution-free agriculture. We have that potential and it is in our interests to achieve it. We know world markets are seeking pollution-free products. We have developed new markets following the devastating effects on European agriculture following the Chernobyl incident. Unfortunately our reputation has been dented by the problem of chemical residues in meat. However, provided we respond positively, learn from the mistakes and take a long-term view, I am confident we can re-establish our reputation.

The Opposition does not oppose the legislation being presented to the House today. In fact, it supports it. The only thing that it opposes is the way in which it is being rushed through without full and adequate debate.

Mr COOPER (Roma) (12.13 p.m.): I wish to comment on some of the remarks made by the member for Cairns. As the ALP and the Liberal Party are supporting the legislation, we could have proceeded with the Education Bill. Most honourable members would prefer to spend more time on that.

Mr De Lacy: Oh, it's our fault?

Mr COOPER: The honourable member for Cairns spoke for so long. However, I will not worry about that, because I want to get on with the matter. I want to leave five minutes for the Liberal Party. I hope that the member for Nundah does not merely give honourable members a lecture. The debate is on the Stock Act. He can speak about other things at another time.

The member for Cairns said that the actions of the Government were too little, too late. That is a grossly unfair statement to make. I will elaborate on that later in my speech. He also mentioned criticism from Mr Wally Peart, who was the president of the Cattle Council of Australia. I knew of that criticism prior to its occurring. I do not believe that the criticism was justified. Following a question from me in the House to the Minister relating exactly to what Mr Peart was criticising the Government for, the nine-part question was answered very comprehensively. Mr Peart may have had other things on his mind at the time that might have brought about his criticism.

The actual disease, as it has been called because of the provisions of the Stock Act, could easily be compared with something as drastic as foot-and-mouth disease. In saying that, I do not mean to be overly dramatic. What I mean is that an outbreak of foot-and-mouth would cause markets to close in the US and in other countries. If this Government had not moved as swiftly as it did—which was a darned sight quicker and more effective than any other State—the US market would have closed and other markets would have followed suit. In that regard, this problem could have been, and would have been, just as serious as the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, because the effect on the economy of Queensland and on the nation would have been absolutely devastating.

I commend the Minister and officers of the Department of Primary Industries because Queensland led the nation at the first instance. Support from the Minister and the DPI officers maintained confidence in the programs that were already in place.

I turn now to comment briefly on some of the programs that have been in place during the last three years. Prior to the big blow-up of this problem, 14 000 tests were carried out across a range of 23 chemicals, including organochlorine pesticides and organophosphate cattle dips. That program has been extremely valuable in drawing to the attention of the industry the problem that existed. Western Australia and New South Wales conducted similar programs. It was therefore unexpected, bearing in mind that that program was in place, that in the first six months of this year the US authorities detected a fivefold increase in the number of pesticide residue violations in beef emanating from Australia. Because Australia has to maintain its reputation as a clean supplier, trade was at stake and notice had to be taken of what the US authorities were saying. It strikes me that that was rather coincidental.

The problem was caused by the discovery of meat with residue levels above the maximum permitted levels in less than 0.5 per cent of meat products, which is a very low level. One would have to eat approximately three tonnes of the meat for it to have an adverse effect on health. However, when the US cracks the whip, Australia has to jump.

Part of the action taken by the Queensland Government was establishment of a residue extension committee, which was followed by establishment of regional committees. Those committees covered the entire State of Queensland and included my electorate of Roma. I inform the House that the shire councils have been extremely responsive and very co-operative in acting as receival points for chemicals that had been stored on properties. The shire councils are to be commended. They are being provided with containers in which to put chemicals, if problems associated with rusty containers arise.

The major points in the legislation were covered previously. What worries me is the disturbing aspect of behaviour on the part of the United States. In the 1960s, I can remember the hygiene requirements that were imposed on abattoirs throughout Australia. Compliance with US conditions was a massive imposition on the industry and those involved in it. Australian producers do not have any choice; and they did not have any choice at that stage, either. The abattoirs were all brought up to an extremely high

standard in hygiene. In the 1970s, Australia was hit with the BTEC program, which is due for completion in 1990. Again, that program was a massive cost to the industry.

The whole industry throughout Australia has done the right thing. The problem has been tackled assiduously and at tremendous cost. If the producers did not comply, they would have lost the market. That has been done and the program is nearing completion. Is it not coincidental that there are problems with the US authorities again?

Mr Lee: The grazier has already paid for it though, hasn't he?

Mr COOPER: I know that. It is a massive cost. The tax-payer has contributed, but it has been a massive imposition.

Mr Lee: It was $9.60 a beast.

Mr COOPER: That is right. Similarly, in this most recent instance, a substantial contribution in mitigation of the cost has been made by the State Government. However, the producer is paying also by way of a levy.

In the 1980s, Australia has been faced with a pesticide residue issue. I simply say that we in Australia should stay tuned for what the United States authorities will impose in the 1990s.

I wish to examine the performance of the US authorities, because it may be of interest to honourable members. I read an article titled, "Food Safety: Where are we." In 1979, a US Senate committee had this to say—

> "The USDA has some of the same problems that the FDA has in monitoring food for pesticide residues. This is because the USDA also uses a multiresidue method to test for pesticide residues in food that does not detect all pesticides currently in use."

The article continues—

> "The USDA cannot legally detain raw meat and poultry pending test results unless it has reason to believe that the animal is violative. Because meat and poultry are generally marketed within 48 hours after slaughter, and sample analysis usually takes between 6 to 25 days to complete, meat and poultry is often sold to consumers before it can be determined whether they contain violative amounts of pesticide residues.
>
> . . .
>
> However, only 1 in 8,000 livestock and 1 in 700,000 poultry are tested in USDA laboratories for chemical residues. Due to the fact that it is difficult for the USDA or the FDA to remove violative meat and poultry from the market, meat and poultry that contain pesticide residues above tolerance levels may regularly be sent to market bearing the USDA inspection stamp."

As far as I am concerned, that is not much of a performance.

Mr Milliner: What can we do about it?

Mr COOPER: The United States should get its house in order before it starts issuing instructions to Australia. That is where the chemicals emanate from. The United States produces the damned things and then it sells them to Australia and other countries. I am saying that the United States should get its own house in order for a start.

I will now say a few words about water-tables as they are affected in the United States. As yet, pesticides have not got into water-tables in Australia. An article in the *Christian Science Monitor* of 1987 states—

> "But new pesticides have brought new problems. For example, water-soluble chemicals that break down in days or weeks when exposed to air and sunlight are washed into the soil by rain and find their way into underground water. Once in ground water, the chemicals degrade very slowly, if they break down at all.

> In Iowa, state officials figure 27 per cent of the population is exposed to pesticide-laced drinking water at some point during the year. In a Federal study released in 1985, the Environmental Protection Agency reported finding 17 types of pesticide residues in ground-water samples from 23 states."

As I have said, that country has the problem.

In relation to the production of chemicals, the article states—

> "The last DDT-producing factory in the United States was dismantled four years ago. But instead of being junked, it was sold to Indonesia, where it continues to produce the pesticide."

Sales are made to Brazil, India and Mexico. They are amongst the largest pesticide markets in the world.

I am saying that I am quite happy for Australia to get its house in order. However, at tremendous cost to it, Australia has to take instructions from the United States. I think that that country should give more attention to getting its own act together. But why is that country doing this? Why does it bung these things on, as it did in the sixties, the seventies and the eighties? In this instance I believe the United States has a tremendous desire to get more beef into Japan, certainly at the expense of Australia. The United States has a balance of payments problem and it is certainly using no-holds-barred tactics in order to do that. The Australian beef industry has to comply with America's regulations otherwise it will lose its market. We know that.

I am getting the wind-up. I would like to allow the Leader of the Liberal Party a few minutes to speak in this debate. I will conclude by saying that I believe this legislation is very necessary—in fact, absolutely vital—if our markets are to be protected. I realise also that early in the piece, officers of the Department of Primary Industries worked long hours and a tremendous amount of overtime trying to ensure that the emergency was handled in the best possible way. They did a really good job. I offer them my commendations.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah—Leader of the Liberal Party) (12.23 p.m.): The Liberal Party supports this legislation. It is very important legislation which has enormous ramifications for this State's economy and, indeed, its politics as well. The question of the control of pesticide residue has been a very delicate matter. I understand that more than 70 properties have been in quarantine. That has been a severe economic burden on a number of people. The authorities have worked very hard to ensure that the matter was handled as sensitively as possible so that no further problems occur either within or outside the country.

As the subject is so important, I am surprised that the Government gagged the debate. In fact, it gagged it in such a manner as to prevent four of its own members from speaking. That is an illustration of a case when it is so stupid to prevent debate on a matter. I am sure the Minister is embarrassed that there is not enough debate on it. It is very important legislation, probably more significant and more important than any of the other Bills on the business paper.

Even though they support the legislation, members of Parliament want to reflect in this place the views of, and possibly the problems associated with, their electorates. The honourable member for Roma has just spoken about problems facing his electorate in the disposal of pesticides. Other members wish to express their views on that subject. The failure to allow members to do so means that the debate is not complete, that the public does not know what the issues are and the Minister is not aware of the problems that may be faced in any part of the State. Under privilege a member of Parliament can raise those matters in an open debate in such a manner that the Minister can take them up if he feels they should be followed through. So it is regrettable that debate on a matter as important as this should have been curtailed to the extent that it has. As I pointed out, Government members themselves have been prevented from speaking. That is stupid. So much for the open government that has been so extensively vaunted in recent weeks.

The international politics of this subject have been canvassed publicly and in this place. One hopes that the nation does not see any more evidence of problems associated with the export of meat. I agree with the member for Roma that there is a bit of international politics in this. While we might complain about it, we cannot do very much about it. I can remember when the United States issued rules over hygiene in our abattoirs. As a result, because I had responsibilities at the time over abattoirs, not as the Minister for Primary Industries but as the Minister involved in the financing of abattoirs and the transport of cattle to and from abattoirs, I did a tour of the abattoirs of Queensland, which revealed that the health restrictions imposed on Queensland abattoirs were far more severe than those then imposed on abattoirs in the United States. That was a few years ago. I saw abattoirs in the United States with conditions of hygiene that were nowhere near the high standard that the abattoirs of this State had at that time.

Obviously there is politics. There are matters over which the State has no control because they come from other parts of the world. However, if the State has to meet these standards and conditions that make things difficult, even though there could be discussions elsewhere to try to ameliorate some of those restrictions, it should try its best to meet them. As far as is possible, the community should co-operate. Unfortunately there are people—the smart alecs in the system—who, for some reason or another, will do something to destroy it. That occurred not so long ago with the substitution of meat, which was very, very prejudicial to this country's export of meat. Politics cannot be blamed for that; that was just a smart alec operation by somebody who cheated the system and virtually destroyed Australia's reputation throughout the world. I hope that the testing processes that did not exist then are now available in the country and in this State to test that the meat exported in cartons is in fact not some type of substitute so that that problem caused by people on this side of the Pacific who tried to cheat the system never occurs again.

The legislation is desirable. Because of the policing provisions that are required, I am sure that it has been difficult for the Minister to frame it. Complaints have been made about the places at which it is planned to dispose of these pesticides. Perhaps some of the disposal arrangements have been made in a hurry, but I am quite sure that that will be corrected.

Many of the pesticides about which people are concerned are not as harmful as some claim. However, if they are to be proscribed in meat to be consumed by people in other parts of the world, let them be clearly identified and let this House seek the co-operation of all the people involved so that, while the regulation is there, there is a minimum of policing required and the risk of the nation's exporting reputation being at stake is minimised.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! As the time is now 12.30 p.m., the question is that the Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. N. J. Harper (Auburn—Minister for Primary Industries) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—

Mr LEE (12.31 p.m.): Clause 1 refers to the principal Act as amended by this Bill. As has been said, the legislation is supported by the Liberal Party. However, I want to pose a question to the Minister.

I cite the example of a grazier who owns his own property and who has a herd proven clean from pesticides. He breeds from that herd and therefore he has clean cattle, which he sells to a feedlot. It buys grain that is contaminated and the cattle become residue positive. Who is quarantined?

I cite another example in which the same set of circumstances apply but a feedlot buys contaminated stores from somebody else. Who is quarantined in that instance?

Mr HARPER: In the first example cited by the honourable member, the feedlot would be quarantined and a trace-back system would be implemented to establish the cause of the contamination. The same situation would prevail in the second instance. In all cases in which a residue level above the MRL is established, a trace-back operation is begun immediately. The place from which the livestock originated is placed under quarantine until the source of contamination can be established. If necessary a further property or properties may then be placed in quarantine and recommendations may be made for the lifting of the quarantine on the original property.

Mr LEE: Would the Minister give consideration to a system of certification? Could grain be certified if it is in fact residue-free and also possibly cattle put up for sale?

Mr HARPER: As commendable as the intent of the honourable member is, there are great difficulties associated with any such suggestion. What is being put in place is an arrangement whereby the vendor and purchaser of grain may take advantage of a system to take samples of that grain for later testing if a pesticide residue problem is established. This will be a voluntary scheme and is in the process of implementation.

Mr ELLIOTT: I agree with the Minister and I disagree with the previous speaker. Quite frankly, although it sounds very nice—and there are many feedlots in my electorate that would want just what the honourable member for Yeronga is asking for—it is not practical.

A farmer who purchased a property, say, in the last five years may find that the previous owner had in some way contaminated the ground. Then the trace-back system has to be implemented because there is a residue problem, which is not of that farmer's making at all. He is not even aware of it. He could say, "I have put nothing on there.", and give a guarantee, thinking that he is doing the right thing. Quite frankly, that farmer is leaving himself open to litigation. He is putting himself in a dreadful position. That situation should not be encouraged at all. The best method is the one that has been outlined by the Minister. It is very important for feedlotters that samples are obtained and tested quickly so that they know what they are doing and their input of grain can be controlled. It is a very big problem, particularly in my area and in the electorate of the honourable member for Condamine.

Mr Lee: Once a property is proven clean, surely that person can then get a certificate?

Mr ELLIOTT: That sounds reasonable as well, but a particular property—for example, my property—could be set up on the basis of strip-cropping on a rotational basis. In some instances a grower may not grow sorghum again on a particular strip of land for another eight years, but more often it would be four to five years. He could have a problem with one of those strips of land that he is unaware of because the contamination goes way back into history. He may not grow a crop in that area and discover the problem for another five or six years. The contaminated land could be sitting there like a time-bomb waiting for the grower to produce grain from it. The problem is not quite as simple as it seems.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—

Mr HARPER (12.36 p.m.): I have taken note of the comments made by the Opposition spokesman regarding the transportation of horses. I will have the matters on which he expressed concern investigated. I am concerned that these matters be verified. I mention that the welfare of animals comes under the Animals Protection Act, which is under the control of the Police Department.

On a broader note, I mention that an officer of my department has devoted a lot of effort to the transportation conditions of cattle by road. He is an officer of the beef cattle husbandry branch and he is including the transportation of horses in his observations. I move the following amendment to clause 3—

"At page 4, line 33, after 'prescribed by him' insert—

', whether or not it would constitute a disease apart from this Act'."

I do not believe that the Opposition will have any difficulty with that amendment.

Mr De LACY: The Opposition has no objection to the amendment as outlined.

Mr LEE: The Liberal Party has no objection to the amendment to clause 3.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 4 and 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—

Mr HARPER (12.39 p.m.): For the sake of clarity in the Committee and to give credit where credit is due—and I am not claiming credit because this matter had begun before I assumed responsibility for this portfolio—clause 6 relates to quarantine. There are three areas of quarantine. Since 25 May the department has taken part in an intensive survey of pesticide residues and 169 properties have been quarantined. There was a normal general survey in force. In fact, it has been in force for the last 10 or 12 years. Under that general survey, 26 properties have been placed in quarantine. Apart from those two areas of the intensive survey and the general survey, we have been conducting trace-back operations to establish contamination and residue levels in other areas. In that particular section, 32 properties have been placed in quarantine. Overall, 227 properties have been placed in quarantine. Of those, up till yesterday, 28 had been released from quarantine.

Clause 6, as read, agreed to.

Clause 7—

Mr CAMPBELL (12.40 p.m.): I refer to the requirement of stock-proof fences in the quarantine area. That leads to the subject of enforcement. If something is going to be done, it is important that it be enforced. In the past, despite the existence of power under that Act, in many cases enforcements have not occurred, especially with dips. It has been known that some dips have contained dangerous and incorrect liquids and chemicals. Although the department was advised about that, nothing was done. I ask: how long will it take to ensure that the owner of the property provides the required fencing? If a boundary fence is involved, will the neighbours be expected to contribute a portion of the costs? In other words, if the boundary fence is in a very poor condition, could it be expected, as is the case with common boundaries, that both parties would be required to contribute funds towards the construction of a new boundary fence? If a fence is on the boundary, and if a person is not responsible for the property's being quarantined, will he have to pick up the whole tab, or will the cost of construction be shared between neighbours?

Under the circumstances that I have outlined, is it possible that the owner may also be required to implement some type of internal fencing? In other words, is it possible that the department could ask the owner to provide fencing within his property, especially in cane-growing areas? Some canelands are contaminated with dieldrin, BHC and other chemicals. Is there a possibility that the department could ask for not only boundary fences but also internal fences to be built? Will the owner have to meet all the costs of that fencing?

Mr HARPER: I believe that the legal ramifications of boundary fencing are well enunciated in legislation that is the responsibility of my colleague the Honourable the

Minister for Justice and Attorney-General. As to the responsibility of an owner to provide stock-proof fencing—that will be considered in recommendations to me for the release of a particular property from quarantine. Unless my officers are satisfied with the efforts being undertaken or those undertaken by the land-holder concerned so as to ensure that any contaminated areas are no longer accessible to livestock, the honourable member may be assured, firstly, that they would not make a recommendation to me, and certainly I would not release a property from quarantine unless my officers were satisfied that there was no further risk of the contaminated area causing a residue problem in livestock.

Mr LEE: I have a further question on clause 7. Whilst I appreciate all the things that the Minister said, I do not see where the Minister and the department have the power to make an owner maintain a fence so that it is stock-proof. They may make him put up the fence. However, I do not see where the Minister has the right under the legislation to make the owner maintain it. The legislation is no good if the Minister does not have that power. As the Minister said, the matter may have to go back to the Justice Department. However, that may take too long and result in further damage. Maybe the Minister should be given the power to instruct somebody to maintain such fences in this instance.

Mr HARPER: The term "erect" covers maintenance as well. It is a question of erect, repair and maintain.

To further reassure the honourable member—if a situation develops in which the fencing of a contaminated area deteriorates, I would have no hesitation—and I am quite sure that my officers would have no hesitation—in reimposing a quarantine. I have delegated the authority to impose a quarantine to the senior officers at the divisional veterinary officer level. The responsibility for the release of a property from quarantine has not been delegated by me.

Clause 7, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 8 to 11, as read, agreed to.

Clause 12—

Mr HARPER (12.46 p.m.): Because of comments that have been made, I record my appreciation for the assistance that has been given by local authorities and, particularly, by the Minister for Mines and Energy and the Queensland Electricity Commissioner, the Minister for Transport and the Commissioner for Railways in regard to the residue recall program that has been implemented within my department.

The chemicals that are returned will be stored. The movement of the chemicals from local authority storage areas into a central storage facility in the Brisbane area has already begun. Those chemicals will be moved out of local authority storages as quickly as possible when sufficient quantities of them have been collected at those depots. Because of the co-operation between my department and the other departments that have been involved in providing temporary storage facilities for those chemicals, the problems of some of the local authorities that were hesitant to join the scheme have been overcome.

Returned chemicals will be able to be held for long periods until the Commonwealth Government makes a decision on the site for the establishment of a super high temperature furnace. From comments that have been made by the famous Senator Richardson and others, I infer that the Commonwealth has accepted the responsibility for providing such a furnace. It is now a case of deciding where that furnace will be situated. All States except South Australia and Victoria have indicated that they would be prepared to co-operate.

In regard to a survey that was undertaken by a departmental officer in the Bundaberg area—this Government acted upon that departmental report. As a result of that survey, a low-key extension service to affected producers was provided, which led to a clean-up of residues that were identified as a problem. The proof of the success of that service can be seen in the results of the present intensive testing program. Very few instances of dip residues have been detected. The service led also to changed practices in the

dairying industry in cane-growing areas and to the development of alternative chemicals. As an example, I cite the development of sustained release chlorpyrofos as a replacement for dieldrin, except in cases of soldier fly infestation, where dieldrin is continuing to be used—as was mentioned by Mr De Lacy. The use of that chemical is very strictly controlled.

The spokesmen for both the Liberal Party and the Labor Party failed to comment on the fact in regard to clause 12 that at the time of the original drafting, I had some misgivings. I have given further consideration to it. My decision to seek an amendment was aided through representations and comment made to me by the cattle industry and also by the president of the Queensland Graingrowers Association. Although it was not raised by members of the Opposition, I believe that the amendment that I am proposing will be accepted by them and be seen to be a further safeguard. It is being introduced to ensure that the spirit or the intent of the Bill as it stands is clearly spelt out in the legislation.

I move the following amendment—

"Omit all words comprising lines 27 to 43 on page 11 and all words comprising lines 1 to 7 on page 12 and substitute—

'**34. Restricted entry into dwelling house.** (1) Before an inspector enters a dwelling house for the purpose of exercising any powers under this Act, save where he has the permission of the occupier to his entry, he shall make an application to a justice who is a Stipendiary Magistrate and obtain from him a warrant to enter.

(2) A justice who is satisfied upon an application made under this section that there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe—

(a) that in any place an offence against this Act has been or is being committed;

or

(b) that there is in any place any matter or thing with respect to which an offence against this Act has been or is being committed, or with respect to which an inspector may exercise a power under this Act,

may issue his warrant directed to an inspector to enter the place specified in the warrant for the purpose of exercising therein the powers conferred upon him by this Act.

(3) The justice shall specify in the warrant the powers the inspector may exercise and shall note thereon the basis upon which the warrant is issued.

(4) An application to a justice for the issue of a warrant under this section—

(a) may be heard in any place, and subject to subsections (5) and (6), in such manner as the justice thinks fit;

(b) may be made in person or by telephone, radio or by means of any other form of distant communication.

(5) Except where a warrant is issued upon an application made by telephone, radio or by means of any other form of distant communication, in determining whether or not he should issue a warrant, the justice shall not rely on any statement of facts unless it is provided by means of an oral or written statement given under oath, affirmation or declaration or under some other sanction authorized by law.

(6) If an application is made by means of telephone, radio or any other form of distant communication the following provisions shall apply:—

(a) the justice shall not issue the warrant unless he informs the applicant of the facts upon which he relies in issuing the warrant and obtains from the applicant an undertaking that he shall

deliver to the justice as directed by him as soon as practicable a statement in writing given under oath, affirmation or declaration or under some other sanction authorized by law, that verifies those facts;

(b) if the justice issues the warrant he shall inform the applicant that he has done so and shall send the warrant to the Minister within 7 days of its issue;

(c) on and from the issue of the warrant, a form of warrant completed by the applicant substantially in the terms of the warrant issued by the justice and stating the name of the justice and date on which and the place at which he issued it shall for all purposes be deemed to be a warrant issued under this section;

(d) as soon as practicable after the issue of a warrant, the applicant shall deliver to the justice a statement in writing in compliance with the undertaking obtained from him pursuant to paragraph (a) and if he fails to do so the warrant on and from such failure shall be deemed to be cancelled.

The failure of a justice to send a warrant to the Minister in compliance with paragraph (b) shall not affect the validity of the warrant.

(7) A warrant issued under this section shall be, for a period of 21 days from the date of its issue, sufficient authority for the inspector and all persons acting in aid of him—

(a) to enter the place specified in the warrant;

and

(b) subject to the terms of the warrant, to exercise the powers conferred upon an inspector under this Act.' "

Mr CAMPBELL: The proposed amendment raises some conflict. The proposed new section 33 states—

". . . an inspector may—

(a) enter, remain in, and search any place . . ."

However, proposed new section 34 is titled "Restricted entry into dwelling house." Can the Minister inform me if some conflict may arise? People are being given power to enter almost any place they wish. However, in relation to a dwelling-house, the Bill states that entry is restricted. Because of that, is there a conflict in clause 12? In other words, should the new section be saying "may enter, remain in, and search any place other than a dwelling-house"? I believe there is some conflict.

My other point is that this gives very broad powers to the inspectors. Honourable members should remember what happened with the Barley Marketing Board. Inspectors were coming in——

Mr Harper: Commonwealth inspectors.

Mr CAMPBELL: I accept that they were Commonwealth inspectors, but they could easily be State inspectors. Under this clause the Minister is giving more powers to State inspectors than are provided in any other Act. The inspectors are able to enter, remain in, and search any place. Not only that, their powers include "breaking into any enclosed place or receptacle or taking any sample of fodder, soil or other matter or thing". Those powers are very broad and very strong. In some ways, they affect the civil liberties of the farmers and the graziers themselves. If the Minister is prepared to give those powers, that is fair enough.

Mr Lee: If they've got the residue, they deserve it.

Mr CAMPBELL: That comment was very ill-founded. Many cases of residue problems have not been caused by the graziers and farmers. Some have been inherited

from neighbours. Some could be problems that have been inherited because they have bought fodder that they believed was all right. I reject the honourable member's suggestion. Most farmers are trying to do the right thing.

I ask the Minister whether there is any conflict within that clause. It states that an inspector can search any place; yet, later on, entry into a dwelling-house is restricted. I bring to the attention of the Committee that this clause deals with very broad civil liberties issues.

Mr HARPER: I suggest that the honourable member has someone do some research for him. In fact, other Acts and the original Bill are less restrictive than this legislation. That does not appear to have caused any problems during past years. What I am doing, by the amendment I have proposed, is ensuring that a warrant can only be issued by a stipendiary magistrate and not merely by a justice of the peace, which is the case in many other instances in which warrants are issued.

I do appreciate the sensitivity of issues relating to one's home. In the English-speaking world—and certainly in Australia—a person's home is regarded as his castle and he should not have any intrusion into it. The situation in rural dwellings is that, in most instances, the office is situated in the home. Access to the office area is needed. In many cases, that involves access to the dwelling or the home.

For that reason, the Government proposes a restricted entry into a dwelling-house. Access is restricted and I suggest that the honourable member for Bundaberg should read the provisions of the Bill, which are protective in any case. The amendment that I am proposing to the Committee is even more protective. I believe that it meets the requirement to ensure that civil liberties of people who live in rural communities are protected.

Mr LEE: The Liberal Party supports whole-heartedly the amendment. I congratulate the Minister, officers of the department and the National Party on proposing the amendment. I believe that the clause was too wide.

As the Minister said, a person's home is his castle. I believe that his amendment is very wise. I congratulate him on bringing forward the amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 12, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 13 to 19, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

Third Reading

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

Sitting suspended from 12.59 to 2.30 p.m.

EDUCATION ACT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 11 November (see p. 4061).

Mr UNDERWOOD (Ipswich West) (2.30 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak to the amendments to the Education Act. For quite some time now this State has needed to reform the structures of the education service. It is pleasing to see that some attempts have been made to do that. However, the final result, and the way in which it has been achieved, leaves a lot to be desired. That opinion has been expressed by all sectors of the education system, particularly the private sector.

This need for reform has been long recognised by this side of the House. One has only to review Labor Party education documents of recent times and those that were

prepared at the time of the last election campaign. Contained in such documents are the Labor Party's initiatives in one form or another. However, no change can occur and be successful without the concurrence and acceptance of the great body of the education industry. I am talking about parents, students, professionals, Parliament and the community in general. I am afraid that this piece of legislation does not meet those demands or those criteria.

Over a period, the Minister has tried to make major changes. Of course, the first really big exercise he took on was the reform known as Education 2000. That was an exercise by the Minister, in a vain effort as it turned out, to promote himself in the Premiership race. The Minister used the tactic of going around the countryside talking to teachers, parents and other interested people about his proposal for Education 2000. I specifically say that he talked to them, not with them, because the technique of talking to and over people was used at every meeting. People, particularly those who knew a little bit about the problems involved in the Education 2000 project and its proposals, were encouraged not to express their views. In other words, the Minister tried to bulldoze through his Education 2000 proposals.

However, he ran up against hard times. He ran into total opposition, or very strong opposition, throughout the State, so much so that he had to back away from his proposals at a tremendous rate. He met opposition from within his own ranks in the Parliament, from within his own party and from within his own education committee. The stage was reached at which the Government and the Minister were saying to the people who raised what they saw as problems, "Look, don't worry about Education 2000, it is only a discussion paper. It is only a proposal for a discussion." We know quite well that it was not a proposal for discussion; it was, as the Government's own document said, a blueprint for change—and a blueprint it was. Of course, the Minister was not able to put it into operation.

A similar operation is now seen to be taking place with these amendments to the Education Act. When the Minister was asked from where he got the concepts for these particular amendments and the earlier amendments that were withdrawn, he said they were his own ideas. I challenge his statement that they were his own ideas. In fact, they were not his own ideas. A number of the concepts that he is trying to tackle—and I would say he is tackling them very poorly and very badly—are not new ideas. In some cases they have been around for some time; in other cases they are new.

For example, accountability of private schools is one of the concepts involved. That is not a new idea; it has been around. However, it is a new idea for this Government and a new idea which this Minister handled very badly, so much so that he has successfully put offside the great bulk of conservatives within the private school system. Not even the Catholic education system, which represents something like 75 per cent of the non-Government school sector, will give the Minister total support. I received from the Parliamentary Library a copy of an article that appeared in this week's publication of the *Catholic Leader*. That article contains the view of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission as stated in its submission to the State Government on the proposed Education Act amendments. The article states that the QCEC is seriously concerned at the possibility of reduced membership on the committees set up under new arrangements—that is, these amendments which are being debated today—and that it is uneasy about the possible funding arrangements of the proposed teacher education council and believes that endowment funding should be available to it from the Government in addition to income from teacher registration fees.

The commission claimed that it should retain its teacher education review role, the cost of which could be met from the endowment. The spokesman for the commission said that the endowment would be a small price to pay for the acquiescence and co-operation of 50 000 teachers registered under the new council. The QCEC also wants a clear and unequivocal statement that the new structures will have an adequate budget and will be staffed by public servants answerable to the chairmen of the committees. The submission also accepted the upgrading of the Advisory Council on Education for

Economic Development to a statutory body with its functions and powers remaining intact. It proposed a committee of Ministers to oversee the council, which was something contained in the original amendments that were proposed.

Although the QCEC was prepared to accept that pre-school to Year 10 would be handled by a ministerial committee for curriculum development, its preferred position was a free-standing statutory body to handle it. The reason for that was that it wants to see such a body at arm's length from the Minister or the Government of the day, which would provide for continuity and stability and people would be able to know where they are going. It would not be subject to the whims of political decisions on a day-to-day basis.

Mr Sherrin: Are you going to be consistent and read the last column where it says that the Catholic education system supports this?

Mr UNDERWOOD: Comrade, I have have not finished yet.

Mr Prest: He should not be impatient. We know he is only new.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Yes, we know that he is only new. However, he wants to be the next Minister for Education and he will do his best in this debate to help him achieve that. Of course, he is Bob Sparkes' protege down here. The Minister is always looking over his shoulder at Bob Sparkes' protege. All members know that the Minister is in the Bjelke-Petersen camp and that the member for Mansfield is in the Sparkes camp. I can see the Minister nodding his head in agreement.

The Catholic commission says that there is teacher concern about curriculum development at the post-compulsory level, and in its submission to the Government it appeals to the Government to answer its concerns about money and other things. The spokesman, Mr Druery, states that by and large his organisation is well disposed to the proposed amendments and that it believes that the acceptance of the Catholic Education Office proposals will help education to be better served and less restricted if it can be adjusted as is proposed in the submission.

I do not see anything in the legislation or in the Minister's second-reading speech that accepts those proposals from the Catholic Education Office. That is the best acceptance from any part of the non-Government school sector that the Government has. I would say that that is not an acceptance at all; it is a willingness to go along with it and give it a try. Basically that is what the council is saying. Obviously it is concerned about the ramifications of the changes being proposed by the Government today.

An important factor is that the House is being asked to make major changes to something that is, in the true sense of the word, conservative—that is, education. The bruising, brutalising affair that the Minister has put education through over the last six months and longer will not be successful. The old crash tactics that the Minister has become noted for will not be successful at all. In fact, he has taken upon himself a very dangerous exercise.

This week the teaching community and their representatives have spent quite significant amounts of their memberships' funds to buy advertising space in the major metropolitan Queensland newspaper. An advertisement from the Queensland Teachers Union headed "Stop it, Mr Powell! Don't make another mistake!" urges that the amendments now before the House be not supported by teachers or the public. An advertisement placed on behalf of the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools, Union of Employees, is headed "The National Party Conference Doesn't Like It! Teachers don't want it! Parents don't want it! Schools don't want it!" The advertisement states that these changes will centralise control, destroy tried and tested boards of education, lead to lower standards and politicise education in the State. So, quite clearly, the representatives of the teachers in this State, including TAFE teachers, who are represented by the POA and others, have expressed their concern. The teaching body, the deliverers of the service of education at the workface, are not happy and they are concerned about these amendments.

One group of people who have been missing out on being allowed to participate in this debate—in contrast to the Education 2000 debate—is the actual students. During the Education 2000 debate the Minister went to great pains to involve students, particularly senior secondary school students. Seminars were conducted for which the Government paid. It was a great idea. Students were able to express their concerns and desires about the direction in which they see education going in this State. That exercise has not occurred in regard to this legislation.

This highlights further the rushed aspect, the higgledy-piggledy patchwork aspect of the way in which the Minister has tried to tackle this issue. The original amendments that the Minister introduced in this Parliament gave him virtually total control over everything in the education system. Of course, there was automatic reaction to that. The Government was very concerned about that reaction and it established a committee of review.

I give due credit to the members of the committee of review for drawing up the amendments as they stand now. The committee has done a marvellous job in eliminating, to a large degree, the immediate and authoritarian control that the Minister had in the Bill that has been withdrawn. However, some aspects of this Bill are still of concern to everyone involved in education. That is why the Opposition says that this particular piece of legislation should be reviewed and not passed today.

The Bill should be left on the table. There should be a longer period for discussion. People need a reasonable time to analyse this legislation. A week is not long enough, yet a week is all that the members of this Parliament and the people of Queensland have had in which to discuss this very serious and very major piece of legislation, which will affect Queensland for years and years to come—not just our schools, not just our tertiary institutions, but our life-style, the future of our people and the way in which they live, our culture and our economic development. Education is tied up with all of those things.

Education is not just about learning how to read and write and the various activities that take place in schools. Education is about our life-style, our future and our economic development. Of course, one of the problems is that this State does not have a Government that believes in the worth of and the necessity for the best-possible education system. Of course, one need only make a very quick and direct comparison with our major trading partners, the Japanese, to see that. Several decades ago, Australia was one of the richest countries on earth, one of the most prosperous, and Japan one of the least prosperous.

Mr Sherrin: Then we had 10 years of hard "Labor".

Mr UNDERWOOD: It goes back further than that. Thank God for the Whitlam Government, the Schools Commission and the Karmel report! I have digressed momentarily, but I must say that our schools, our universities and our colleges of advanced education, both State and non-Government, would be in one hell of a mess if it were not for the Whitlam Government.

Mr Powell: Do you remember that Queensland had the highest participation rate when Whitlam came in, and now it has the lowest?

Mr UNDERWOOD: What was that rate?

Mr Powell: The rate in Queensland was the highest, and now it is the lowest.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I ask the Minister to tell me the rate. The rates right around the country were poor. No one disagrees with that. That was the age in which we lived.

That is the problem that I am about to address. Australia still believed that it was living in the prosperous days of the British Empire when we were the lords of the world. However, the Japanese were using the profits that they made from our cheap coal and

resources to fund their education system. The Japanese concentrated very seriously on upgrading their education system. Now the Japanese have the knowledge, and the technology that goes with the knowledge, to tell us how to live. The Government needs to take stock of what it is doing in Queensland's schools.

Mr Powell: Am I wrong in believing that your party said that we are charging too much royalty on coal now?

Mr UNDERWOOD: This State receives the price of one tomato per tonne of coal from the Japanese. That is why Queensland has the cheapest schooling, hospital, welfare and prison systems in this country, and it shows. That is why this State is having such difficulty with its schools. During the heady days of the sixties and seventies, when the Japanese were providing such prosperity, this Government and its Liberal Party colleagues in Queensland and in Canberra were responsible for not receiving a proper return for those goods. At that time the opportunity was there; the money was there for the taking. Now times have changed. Today, those sources of revenue are not available to the degree that they were in those days and this Government is responsible for the shortfall in funds and the shortage of resources and staff, etc., within Queensland's schools and general Government services. The Minister should not come out with smart alec interjections because they rebound on him every time he tries to make them.

Mr Eaton: Mr Whitlam put a $3 a tonne surcharge tax on that and took $1 for himself and they whinged about it.

Mr UNDERWOOD: That is right. The Government complained most bitterly about it. The imposition of that tax by the Whitlam Government resulted in a major influx of funds into the education system of Queensland during the seventies, and the Minister knows all about that as well.

I am fast running out of time. This is a major piece of legislation, but I will try to be brief. One of a major concerns that people have about the amendments to the Act is the abolition of the Board of Secondary School Studies. One of the corner-stones of any education system is the development and maintenance of curriculum standards, and that is the role of the Board of Secondary School Studies. As everyone in this House and those who have followed this debate and the issue of education generally know, the people involved in the Board of Secondary School Studies have done a lot of work on that board on a voluntary and very professional basis. When the Minister cuts back fees and funding for the subcommittees of the Board of Secondary School Studies, that shows the Government's attitude towards education in general. It is a parliamentary saving of funds by the Minister, and it is pathetic when it is compared with the role and the input of people involved in the board and its various committees. People are concerned about what will happen to the development of post-compulsory curriculums and courses. The abolition of the Board of Secondary School Studies means that that role has been taken away from the board and will come under the umbrella of the major accreditation council.

One assumes that schools will be asked to develop their own new courses. Where will the funds come from for this operation? It has been estimated that the best part of half a million dollars will be required and should be available and indexed for schools to draw on to help them with the development of new courses under the new arrangement. None of this has been spoken about; it is all ifs, buts and maybes from the Government. This is one of the problems that occurs with the rushing-through or crashing-through mentality of the Minister and the Government on this whole issue. I do not see the need for the rush. A couple of years ago, education in Queensland had the upheaval with Education 2000. Therefore, one more year will not make any difference to the problems and the disruption that are being caused by the Government's ineptitude and mismanagement of this whole aspect of reform. In fact, one more year would sort out many of those problems so that reforms could be put in place properly and proper discussions could take place. Everyone would have an input on a proper, broad basis and would be satisfied that all the nuts and bolts and the finances had been worked out.

But no, the Minister has to crash this legislation through. Maybe he is concerned about not being in the Ministry this time next year, and he wants to make his mark in this State in this portfolio. Maybe he will make his mark, but it will be to the detriment of Queensland because not enough time has been given for this piece of legislation to be properly discussed and for the problems to be properly dealt with.

This shows the nature of the Government and the Minister and how they are creating problems for themselves. I am talking specifically about the Queensland Teacher Registration Council which is responsible for registering about 50 000 teachers in this State. That body will now be a self-funding organisation with no research capacity—that has been taken away—and a figure of approximately $100,000 has been estimated as being the amount of money required. That is $100,000 out of a Budget that is estimated to be $1.33 billion; it is nothing. The department would waste that on photocopying paper every year in the Minister's office.

Mr Innes: But no photocopying paper for schools.

Mr UNDERWOOD: No, it is not necessary in schools, or so the Minister tells us. That shows how out of touch the Minister is about what his department demands and what happens in the schools regarding curriculums, etc.

The Minister could make peace with the teachers of this State—I have already highlighted the problems raised by teachers—by providing the funds necessary to maintain the role of this council. However, he will not do that. Because of his penny-pinching, he has caused more trouble and strife. Morale in the teaching service in this State is already low. Teachers at the workface struggle very hard in their profession to deliver a proper education to their students. Every obstacle that can be placed in their way, as far as morale, the environment and job satisfaction are concerned, is dragged out by the Government.

One other matter is the non-State council and refers directly to the Labor Party's policy during the last State election campaign. The Opposition supports that aspect of the legislation. Recognition is now being given to the role being played by the non-Government sector. A formal channel is being set up within the ministerial structure.

The other matter that has been taken from Labor Party policy is the role of industry in education, which is a major Federal initiative. It relates to what I said earlier about Australia versus Japan and the different approaches to education that are for our own economic benefit.

Debate interrupted.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, I welcome Deputy Speaker Veikune and a delegation of honourable members from the Tongan Parliament who are visiting Queensland.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

EDUCATION ACT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed.

Mr UNDERWOOD (Ipswich West) (2.51 p.m.): Mr Speaker, I was a member of a Queensland parliamentary delegation to Tonga a couple of years ago. I must say that the people of Tonga, the members of Parliament and the Speaker of the Tongan Parliament welcomed us on that occasion. We were very pleased and delighted with our trip under the leadership of former Minister Claude Wharton. I personally welcome the Tongan delegation to Queensland.

The Opposition supports the concept contained in the legislation. Because of time limitations, I will not repeat the reasons for that. It all comes back to the problems that the Minister and the Government have had with the way in which the legislation has been put in place. I have a ream of press clippings and headlines about the mess and the mismanagement. I will quote a couple of them. They refer to the process to which the education system has been subjected. The headlines state, "Uni panel condemns plans to axe boards"; "School group pulls out over rush order"; "Independent schools pull out of advisory committee"; "Powell caned over changes to education"; "Minister to assume total control of State's education"; and "All parties get say in new Education Act—Powell". He is the only bloke who speaks up for himself. Other headlines state, "Education Bill to be rushed through" and "Parents push for school commission". That is something that is not contained in the Bill.

Under the headline "Battle of the Bill" appears the subheading "Groups oppose education plan". Other headlines include "Powell's committee a sham, says educator"; "Schools study group named"; "Teachers on attack—School role queried"; and "Sack Powell call by Liberals". Well, well, well! Other headlines state, "School changes to be scrapped" and "MP told to alter new Bill". The list of the headlines goes on and on. The only person speaking in support of the Bill is Mr Powell himself. Even the National Party conference told him to hold back and to have proper discussion about it and not rush it through. I have given the history. I have also shown the litany of the whole mismanagement that the Minister and the Government have created.

Let us not hear any hypocrisy from the members of the Liberal Party. Let us have a look at their position on this legislation and the background to it. Let us have a look at their position. Of course, we are going to hear sanctimonious words from them about the role and independence of the independent school system, and so on. They will make great, mighty democratic statements.

Mr Innes: Dawkins has just done that.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Maybe the honourable member was not in the Chamber earlier when I pointed out that it is because of the Whitlam Labor Government and the Hawke Labor Government that independent schools and the Catholic school system are surviving—because of the funds that the Labor Government has provided to them. The members of the Liberal Party did the opposite; they took the funds away from the independent schools. When the party of the honourable member for Sherwood held office before 1972, he did nothing about it. While the members of the Liberal Party occupied the Government benches, he did a minimum amount for independent schools. That is why Queensland has the worst education system in the country.

Let us have a look at one of the statements made by the Liberal Party spokesman on Education in November 1983. Admittedly, at that time he was not a Liberal member of Parliament. At that time he was president of the Queensland Teachers Union. I refer to Mr Lyle Schuntner. An article in the press stated—

> "Government aid to non-government schools was creating educational apartheid in Australia . . . "

That was a statement by the Liberal Party spokesman, who, unfortunately, I believe is sick and will not be attending this Chamber today.

Mr Schuntner said—

> ". . . the union's policy favoured the gradual phasing out and ultimate elimination of state aid to non-government schools. State aid is being provided to scores of sectional groups to foster their separate development and growth.
>
> Such policies were dividing the nation on religious, racial, cultural and economic grounds. Apart from providing for government school systems, taxpayers are providing major funding subsidies for schools"—

these are the sectional groups that the Liberal Party spokesman referred to—

> "for Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Union Baptists, Separate Baptists, Lutherans, Seventh Day Adventists, Christian Scientists, Charismatics, Fundamentalists, Uniting Church children and Assembly of God children."

I turn now to a little bit of conflict that is interesting to note. The newspaper article to which I refer stated—

> "Mr Schuntner's view was rejected by the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools general secretary, Mr Peter O'Brien.
>
> He said 25 percent of Australian children attended non-government schools, and all children were entitled to a share of government money."

The spokesman for the Liberal Party cannot claim, "I am innocent. I was the leader of the teachers' union. I had to make these statements. I didn't really believe in them at the time, but I had to make them because that was my job—that was my brief." I do not believe one word of that statement that Mr Schuntner made, because his actions in matters such as this speak louder than words.

When I was a class room teacher at the East Ipswich State School, I remember that the teachers' union was in dispute with the Liberal/National Government of the day over the double penalties issue, which I do not intend to canvass today. Mr Schuntner was a member of the Queensland Teachers Union executive. What did he do? Because he was part of it and he was part of the democratic decision-making process of the Queensland Teachers Union, he did not remain on the executive of the Queensland Teachers Union. He did not remain on that executive because he accepted the majority vote of the Queensland Teachers Union. What did he do? He resigned in a great media flurry because he was a man of upstanding character and he was not going to say things in which he did not believe. Mr Schuntner will no doubt at some stage claim that he did not mean to say all of those things about closing down private schools unless they funded themselves. I do not believe Mr Schuntner, and neither do many people in the community. He made many statements along those lines.

When the new Federal Government came to power and provided additional funding for both State and non-Government school sectors, a newspaper reported as follows—

> "Queensland Teachers' Union president Mr Lyle Schuntner last night strongly attacked the new school funding guidelines released yesterday by Federal Education Minister Senator Ryan.
>
> Under the guidelines, the State's 350 private schools have been guaranteed increased federal grants for the next eight years."

Senator Ryan was announcing that there would be no freeze on private school grants, which was demanded by a Government schoolteacher union, namely, the Queensland Teachers Union. The article quoted Senator Ryan as follows—

> "Over the next eight years we will be increasing funds to government schools by about 50 per cent and increasing funds to the non-government sector by 17.2 per cent."

There we have the Liberal Party's position. If the members of the Liberal Party do not want to wear that and do not agree with it, they should disown their spokesman, disown his statements and sack him from the Education portfolio.

I turn now to the aspect relating to the trust of the Minister. The Queensland Catholic Education Office has asked for a number of things that are not contained in the legislation which, if not acted upon by the Minister, will create serious problems for the various schools and education systems in this State. People do not trust the Minister to introduce those necessities that the people on the review committee have asked for. Because of the way in which on many occasions he has politically involved himself and his own narrow views directly with the education of children in our schools, people do not trust the Minister.

Some further headlines read: "Powell rejects policy for girls", "Peace movement a communist front: MP", "Queensland Government bans new book on Constitution" and "Bribe claim on federal teaching kit". He accuses one of his own conservative people, Dame Roma Mitchell, of bribing teachers. Further headlines read: "Bishop slams Powell over peace course", "Powell rejects call for racial harmony courses in schools", "Mixed

sport not wanted in schools—Powell" and "Magazine politically censored: teachers". The headlines continue. I will not go through them all. Honourable members are all aware of the interfering political role in education by the Minister.

My time has run out. I have agreed to speak only for half an hour so that other members may speak in the debate, which the Government is gagging. The Opposition is very concerned about the long-term ramifications of the legislation. It is time to reform the education structure to meet the demands of today's modern age and the education system with which we live. However, the Opposition is concerned at the way that this legislation was introduced initially, the authoritarian powers that it gave the Minister and the way it was drafted and placed before us. Then the Minister and the Government were forced to set up a review committee to get themselves out of hot water. Even since all that process has taken place, they still cannot find agreement with the education sector of this State and the community. There are people of goodwill in all of those sectors. They have tried to reach agreement on the legislation, but they cannot. The best that they can do is ask the Minister for assurances. They then say, "Okay, if the Minister will give us those assurances, we will give it a go." However, there is no point in giving it a go. It is very dangerous just to give it a go. We are not dealing with a new railway line, a new bridge or perhaps a couple of traffic signals or some other physical machinery matter; we are dealing with the futures and lives of people. Once a person loses time in his life, he can never bring it back. If a mistake is made in a person's education, it can never be brought back and started again. A new road can be rebuilt or redirected, but that cannot be done with a person's life.

The economic times in which we live demand that proper consultation be held. This reform of the education system should be carried out properly, with much thought and without rushing. The Minister should not be worrying about where he will be next year and whether he will still be the Minister for Education so that he can still make his mark on the future education of this State.

The Labor Party opposes the Bill.

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Condamine) (3.02 p.m.): I am pleased to join in this debate. Initially, I make the comment that the Minister's second-reading speech was excellent in the way that it outlined the rationale behind the legislation.

First of all, I wish to comment on the remarks made by the Opposition spokesman on Education. He made the assertion that private schools are in fact offside with the Government and offside with the Minister. I dispute that. As recently as Monday of this week, and certainly during last week, I sat with various members of private schools; I also met the members of the consultative committee and talked about the Bill. In fact, the honourable member for Ipswich West even made the statement that there was a general agreement by all the people in education that the provisions brought forward in the amendment of the Education Act are needed. Then he confused himself and confused us, because he went on to relate some advertisements placed in the newspaper by various bodies. It was not surprising that he mentioned the Queensland Teachers Union and QATIS. Those people said that they were definitely against the Bill. However, when the honourable member started his speech, he said that there was general agreement. I concur with him that there is general agreement. He proceeded to destroy his own argument.

The honourable member for Ipswich West said that the funding for course accreditation is not clear. Some time ago, I raised that matter with the Minister. I can inform the honourable member that funding for the course accreditation council will be the same as for the Board of Secondary School Studies; it will come from the department, so there is no worry there.

The honourable member also asked, "Why the rush?" I say, "What rush?" This Bill was first tabled in April this year inviting comment. In about May, a consultative committee was formed under Dr Robertson. That committee sat for approximately 50 hours. As well as that, members of the general public were asked to make submissions. After that long consultation, an amended Bill has been presented.

It must be realised that no matter how long the Government waited or said, "Give them ample time," people who have political interests would perceive amendment to the Act as a chance to score political points and would keep coming up with issues in an attempt to muddy the water. The Government has reached the stage at which general agreement has been arrived at. It is high time that that general agreement was put into practice. At some future time, these provisions can be fine tuned.

Having listened to the Opposition spokesman, I inform the House that, from the Government's point of view, there seems to be total agreement that provisions relating to education at a higher level than secondary school are in need of amendment. There seems to be total agreement that an increase in TAFE education opportunities ought to be provided in Queensland. There seems to be total agreement about the need for greater co-operation among secondary schools, TAFE colleges, colleges of advanced education and the university. There seems to be a great deal of total agreement.

Who are the people who have arrived at this consensus of opinion? They are: the Professional Officers Association of Queensland; the Queensland Teachers Union; the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools; the Queensland Association of Academic Staff in Colleges of Advanced Education; the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland; the Independent Parents and Friends Association; the Association of Heads in Independent Schools of Australia; the Department of Education; and the National Party itself. Why have these people reached agreement? Agreement has been reached because these people realise the necessity of change.

At present, the education system has problems. Children in higher levels of secondary education are not being well served as they go into further education. The nature of the courses offered seems to be too narrow. The scope of the courses must be broadened and more co-operation should take place between the various bodies that are interested in children's education at that particular level. On the one hand, I suppose it could be said that most secondary school courses at present are oriented towards training children who will go on to undertake an academic course at a university or an institute of technology. At the bottom end of the spectrum, children who wish to undertake transitional education must be catered for. Unfortunately, some kind of stigma seems to be attached to transitional education.

This Bill addresses the fact that people should realise that not all children have the ability to achieve academically, but that that does not make them lesser persons. At present, students leaving schools who are academically successful are given a TE score which is highly acceptable to the public in general. It is not generally meant to be something used for job placement at large, but that is the way that it has been perceived. If a student has a high TE score, people tend to give him a higher ranking. If a student has a low TE score, there is a stigma attached. What needs to be put in place are courses that cater for those people who have trade skills. When they finish school, they also need some kind of specific and official certification so that they can leave school with the same degree of honour and standing as those people who are now judged on the criterion of a TE score, which is very closely related to academic ability.

A need also exists in the post-secondary school field of education, as I mentioned earlier, for co-operation between various institutions. It is possible now for young people who aspire to attend a university to start their course but, when they are half-way through the first year, they find that the course is beyond them. They might struggle on till the end of the year and face the reality of failure. Then they must make a great decision: should they drop their studies altogether, or should they try to slot in somewhere further down the track and attend an institute of technology or a TAFE college? The problem facing those people at present is that, from one level of education to another, there does not seem to be enough recognition of the work carried out and the achievements accomplished by students of those colleges.

By creation of the Course Accreditation Council, the Government proposes to make sure that work that is successfully completed in one institution will be accredited in another institution. People who have trouble will be able to scale down their course of

education and will be given credit for work that they have completed in a higher educational institution, which may serve to help them along the way. The Government also has to accommodate the converse situation, in which people who have obtained qualifications at a lower level wish to upgrade their qualifications. The qualifications they already hold will receive better recognition than at present when they enrol in a course at a higher educational institution.

Amendment to the Education Act also introduces two new terms, "compulsory education" and "post-compulsory education". Previously the categories were primary school, secondary school and, beyond that, TAFE, CAE and other tertiary education institutions were boxed together. The term "compulsory education" refers to children up to the age of 15 years, which is the age for compulsory attendance. Any education undertaken after that would be included in the terminology "post-compulsory education". Compulsory education introduces the term "P-10", which seems to have created a bone of contention in the determination of its validity.

I remember one of the maxims that were given to me in my days of training as a teacher. The maxim of learning was that one goes from the known to the unknown. When educationists draw up a curriculum, they work on the principle that a child coming into school in Year 1 knows very little. What he does know is worked on, and that knowledge is gradually expanded so that he can be taught some more. Consequently, from year to year what the child already knows is built on, and the final result is an inverted cone. His knowledge starts at next to nothing and keeps growing wider and wider, and his horizons are widened.

That system has been in operation for many many years, up to P-7. That will now be extended to P-10. People might ask why. The answer is that Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 are associated with secondary school education. For quite some time educators have been worried that there has been a drop, a hump or a pause in the learning process between Year 7 and Year 8. I can probably best illustrate what happens in that regard by referring to reading programs.

For quite a number of years now, the practice in primary schools has been to use very carefully structured reading schemes with very carefully structured vocabulary, sentence structure, comprehension skills and that sort of material. Allied to that is an ability to be able to test children for their reading age, which test can determine whether a child aged 12 has a reading age of 14 or 10. When a child reaches the end of Year 7, it is only natural that the next year's program should be geared so that the child can continue at the level that it is able to cope with.

It would appear to me that, in more recent years, secondary schools have not accurately picked up the threads of the stage at which children are. The reason is that secondary school curriculums are formulated by starting not at the point at which a child knows nothing but rather at the entrance requirement for a tertiary institution. That is then broken down each year level to come back to Year 8 level, which it is thought almost equates with the stage that a child should have reached when he has finished Year 7 at primary school. It is not a very clever match.

Hence, the concept of P-10 has been arrived at. It is educationally sound. Next year it will be trialled throughout Queensland in mathematics. It will be a pilot program. By the middle of the 1990s, P-10 should be right across the full education system.

Mr Underwood interjected.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I do not have time to respond to the honourable member, as I, too, have only 30 minutes.

P-10 splits up secondary schools. Years 8, 9 and 10 will come within the P-10 curriculum development and Years 11 and 12 will be out on their own. Criticism has been received from some quarters that the Board of Secondary School Studies will be disbanded. It will be someone doing the same thing under another name.

Mr Underwood: Why disband it?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: There will still be curriculum development. Let me explain.

Mr Hamill: Are you saying this Bill is cosmetic?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I did not say that. I was talking about curriculum development. Let me explain. That seems to be the only bone of contention from educators at large throughout the State. Representations have been received from various groups, especially the independent schools, which are fearful that their place in curriculum development will be in jeopardy once the Board of Secondary School Studies is disbanded. The Minister has gone to pains to make sure that he sets up special committees for curriculum review and development. It would be my recommendation to the Minister, as well as the recommendation of many of my colleagues, that those committees of curriculum development be made answerable to the Course Accredition Council. If that is done, it will be what many people want. I know that the independent schools want it.

I was interested to hear the member for Ipswich West say that the Catholic Education Commission, in one of its publications, mentioned that it would accept the situation in which curriculum development was answerable to the Course Accreditation Council. Of course, that statutory authority will operate within set parameters—a little bit like a marketing board for primary industries and various other boards and statutory organisations that the Government sets up.

Once set up, so long as it operates within the parameters as laid down in the statutes, that council will be quite free from interference by the Minister, even though the Minister has the overall responsibility for education in Queensland. The independent schools—the Catholic schools—have indicated privately and collectively to the Government that they quite understand that the Minister has every right to maintain overall control and responsibility for education in Queensland. They have expressed a desire that that responsibility be at arm's length so that the chance of political interference is more remote than it may be under other set-ups.

Mr Elliott: It is not that they do not trust this Minister.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: No, it is certainly not that they have a lack of confidence in the National Party. They are looking down the track and thinking up all sorts of hypothetical instances that may occur when there may be a change of Government. They want something enshrined in the legislation to prevent education from becoming a political plaything of a political party.

I wish to turn to another aspect of education that is related to the amendments before the House, that is, the provision of TAFE facilities in small centres throughout Queensland. It can be said that towns with a population up to 10 000 do not warrant the establishment of all sectors of higher education as separate entities. However, under the legislation before the House, it is possible to combine all the sectors under one administration. A good example of that would be the new senior College of the South West, which is based at Roma. The regional director of that college, who has a long experience in TAFE, outlined to me that the intention for Years 11 and 12 is that children with the academic ability will proceed with the traditional course and take the subjects that fit them for tertiary entrance. Those who are remaining at school longer simply to gain the skills that are now demanded in life, will take vocationally oriented courses. The new College of the South West will have a TAFE characteristic to it so that these young people can undertake pre-vocational training in whatever fields are available at Roma. I would hope that quite a wide range of courses will be available.

In addition to that, Mr Burroughs has expressed the wish and the desire to create some sort of liaison between the College of the South West and the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education so that some of the early course work associated with the DDIAE may be done at the college. I commend him for that aim.

Roma is one of the first cities to get this sort of facility off the ground. However, the legislation gives the opportunity to provide this sort of education on a wider spectrum through most parts of Queensland, especially in those parts of Queensland that are not

big enough to warrant the establishment of a TAFE college in its own right. By combining that facility with high schools, that situation could be overcome.

I now move to a somewhat related point, that is, that the Minister and his Cabinet colleagues might consider a change in the criteria that determine how decisions are made on the timing and placement of educational facilities throughout the State. It is an accepted practice that primary and secondary school education facilities are placed wherever there is a need. That was not always the case. Back in the pre-National/Liberal Party Government days, only primary schools were established across Queensland, and even then there were lots of gaps. It was our Government back in the 1950s that recognised the need for secondary schools. The Government established secondary departments, high tops and built high schools. Now children right throughout Queensland are able to obtain a secondary school education.

For education higher than secondary school the norm seems to be that the facilities are placed wherever there is the greatest need. The problem is that the Government is short of funds, but, because of the changing demands in life, the time will come when not only will primary and secondary schools be placed wherever there is a need, but also higher-education facilities will be provided wherever there is a need. I put it to the House that there is such a need right throughout Queensland. All of our children deserve an equal chance.

In this House we hear lots of ranting and raving from people opposite about one vote, one value and equal opportunities for people in cities. Members opposite should take a look at the other side of the coin and recognise that the people whom country members represent should have an equal chance to receive higher education. It is only through representation from people such as us, who represent the large, sparsely populated areas of the State and who can come here and voice very strongly our points of view, that the right sort of philosophies can be found. The Government has provided secondary school education for all Queenslanders, and I contend that now is the time when education should be extended further. After all, it is just a natural progression of life that there is a need for higher education everywhere in the State.

Over the years, each section within the Education Department has tended to become a little empire of its own. There was the primary school sector, the secondary school sector and TAFE. There was not enough co-ordination. As a result of these amendments to the Education Act, they will be blended together. I am not saying that they fought against one another. However, there was not enough co-ordination. They will be blended together so that there is in fact a total education management with greater flexibility and a greater acceptance of the things that are needed. Then the stage will be reached at which the Government will be able to provide these colleges.

I will be a bit parochial and mention Dalby. Dalby is a town of 10 000 people. The high school has 800 children who are in desperate need. I find it very difficult to refute the argument that is put forward when that town calls for a TAFE college. Dalby has had a primary school for 127 years. It has been a sizeable town for many years. It has had its own town council since 1863. It has been closely settled since the 1850s. The people of that town say to me, "If you only stick to the criterion of putting these higher education facilities where the most people are, we will never get a TAFE college."

Is there not some validity in that argument? The residents have been settled in Dalby for a long time. It is an established community. Does that town not have a right to the same facilities as other parts of the State have?

I do not want to upset some of my colleagues. However, places such as Tieri and Middlemount were nothing but brigalow scrub 20 years ago. In the course of those 20 years, they have received better facilities than Dalby has received in 127 years. The people of the Dalby region say that many of the people in Tieri and Middlemount were transferred from populated coal-fields in New South Wales, Ipswich or Brisbane. They have gone up there, squealed a bit and said, "We are used to having these sorts of facilities. We are entitled to them." The people of Dalby certainly have a valid case also. They have been waiting for a long time.

An Opposition member: Wait till people read a copy of your speech.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I spent quite some time on it——

Mr Underwood: What you have said is not true, either. You should see some of our schools in the cities, mate.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I have been around the city but the honourable member has not been around the country very much.

I want to make some comment about the Robertson committee, the consultative committee. I congratulate that committee on the work that it has done. That committee, of course, was set up at the direction of the Minister. It was very representative of all those people who have a vested interest in education. Departmental officers, the Catholic Schools Commission, the independent schools and, of course, the various teachers' unions were represented on the committee.

It would be understandable that a body such as that, with such diverse views, would not be able to get complete agreement on all of the proposals. However, it was to the credit of the members of that committee that they came to an understanding. The members of the committee recognised the need and realised that it would take understanding, give and take and co-operation on their part to come up with a package that was needed.

Debate will be heard in this Chamber today about differences of opinion. I want to put that into perspective. The differences are extremely small. There is general agreement that the way in which the Government is going is correct. There are some minor concerns about representation. There are some minor concerns about curriculum development. I hope that honourable members debating this Bill realise just where we are at. We are at a stage of fine tuning something that will lead our children and prepare them for the future to the year 2000 and beyond.

Finally, I appeal to the Minister once again to take on board the suggestions of myself and many of my colleagues that when the Minister uses the regulations pertaining to this Bill, he use proposed new section 37, which deals with the role and functions of the accreditation council. Proposed new section 37 states that the role of the accrediation council is—

> "(i) to appoint such other committees and sub-committees as it considers necessary to assist in the performance of its functions;".

Of course, we can then interpret that one of the functions is not only to accredit courses but also to oversee the formulation and development of curriculum.

I am very pleased to support the Bill. Once again, I impress upon honourable members that the differences of opinion are very minute when compared with the great strides taken to reach general agreement.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): I call the honourable member for Mount Isa.

Mr Milliner: What does he know about it?

Mr BEARD (Mount Isa) (3.25 p.m.): I have had 10 years of secondary teaching, and I throw the question back to the honourable member: what does he know about teaching?

At the outset, I state that the honourable member for Mount Coot-tha, Mr Schuntner, is in hospital—he has not had the bone pointed at him—and I acknowledge his support for my remarks in this House today. However, I am not speaking as Mr Schuntner, but as the member for Mount Isa, who, in his own right, has done a lot of thinking and work in education over the last 32 years. I do acknowledge Mr Schuntner's input and I only wish that he were here today to debate this Bill as it deserves to be debated.

I begin by asking, as everyone else must ask, "Why the rush?" Earlier this week an advertisement was placed in the *Courier-Mail* by teachers which set out the matter beautifully. It stated—

> "The National Party conference does not like it: Sir Robert Sparkes does not like it."

I have a copy of Sir Robert Sparkes' private and confidential letter to the Minister in September this year which, inter alia, stated the following—

> "Your public announcement of the proposal prior to the completion of consultation with interested parties, including your own party, is particularly deplorable and politically detrimental."

He asked Mr Powell to defer the implementation of his proposals because it has such serious implications for the future of Queensland's educational system, and he further added—

> "Unfortunately, this type of proposal causes the public to perceive the National Party as being totally cynical and hypocritical, in as much as we are constantly preaching less Government intervention, whereas in fact we are insidiously increasing it (or at least the potential for it!)."

Thank you, Sir Robert; I could not have put it better myself.

In addition, there have been advertisements and feedback from the whole community which indicate that teachers do not want it; parents do not want it; the schools do not want it. I often wonder who, besides the Minister and one or two of the sycophants in his party, want it. There needs to be further discussion and consultation.

I wish to read a couple of paragraphs from a release put out recently by my colleague Mr Schuntner.

Mr FitzGerald: You disagree with him on a lot of things.

Mr BEARD: I will read it. The honourable member has his brief prepared.

One of the things that I will do during my 30 minutes is read what many people in the public are saying about this legislation. This is not only my personal opinion of this Bill. I am doing the best I can to reflect the general repugnance to this Bill that is felt around Queensland. The document states—

> "Only a handful of people 'in the know' are aware of what's going on and it is imperative that the public be given the opportunity and time to study this next version of the ministerial plans for controlling education.
>
> A Green Paper must be produced and the public must have some months to respond to it.
>
> . . .
>
> After the fiascos of the ill-considered school holiday decisions, the spectacle of the Government disarray over AIDS Education and the grab for control with the earlier Education Bill, the Government should realise the wisdom of producing a Green Paper to air its latest plans."

Mr FitzGerald: What do you think about AIDS education?

Mr BEARD: The honourable member for Lockyer is like some kids I used to teach years ago who thought that by shouting they were learning.

Further, there is an indication of what was said once before when one of the most highly respected educationists in Queensland, Mr Cec Munns, withdrew from the consultative committee on the following grounds. He said that he had taken his decision partly because it was impossible for the committee to make recommendations in the time set by Mr Powell. Mr Munns said—

> "The minimum time required would be a few months."

The article continues—

"But Mr Powell had decided that the final committee meeting would be October 5.

The committee had only scratched the surface of the main issue—the control of primary and secondary school curriculum design and development.

Mr Munns said the association wanted an independent statutory body to act as a buffer between the Minister and those who designed and developed the main curriculum areas."

Mr Littleproud: Did you know that not all of his colleagues agreed with what Mr Munns did?

Mr BEARD: Most of them did. I will say this to the honourable member: a sufficiently large number of people in Queensland, as well as professional educationists, did agree and gave this Government cause for great concern about the legislation it is rushing through the House today.

A letter to Sir Robert Sparkes from the Coalition for Education dated 30 September——

Mr Sherrin interjected.

Mr BEARD: I will deal with that matter in a moment. The honourable member for Mansfield has been shouting out for Mr Powell for so long that I wonder he does not tire of it.

The letter states—

"I wish to advise you that the following motion was discussed and carried by the Education Act Coalition at a meeting on 23rd September at Queensland Teachers' Union headquarters:

'That in view of the range of concerns that have arisen from the deliberations of the consultative process this coalition calls on the Minister for Education to undertake the following strategy:—' "—

here it comes again—

" '(1.) The consultative committee should continue to produce its option paper(s);

(2.) Those options should then be published as a Green Paper or draft legislation;

(3.) The Minister should set up an independent, widely representative committee of inquiry to call for, and consult on submissions and produce recommendations for the future. The Committee of Inquiry should have adequate time to consult widely.'

The meeting was attended by representatives from:

Queensland Teachers' Union

Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools

Independent Parents and Friends Council

Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens Association

Association of Independent Schools in Queensland

Queensland Catholic Education Office

Catholic Parents and Friends

Association of Heads of Independent School of Australia

Queensland Association of Academic Staff in Colleges of Advanced Education."

They sought an interview with the Minister, and they had that interview. A letter was written to Sir Robert Sparkes, who replied to the convenor, Mr G. Young, on 26 October in the following terms—

> "Thank you for your letter dated 30 September, 1987 forwarded to this office by facsimile and regarding the Education Act Coalition.
>
> I substantially agree with the proposed procedure for handling the new legislation which is suggested in your letter.
>
> You may rest assured that I will convey your suggestion to the Minister with the hope that he will adopt it."

Finally, a letter written to the Education Minister on 2 November on behalf of this education coalition rebutted the idea that this was, as Mr Sherrin called out, a Liberal Party front. They all signed it. They said—

> "The Education Act Coalition is not a political organisation in any other than the broad sense that it seeks changes to particular government legislation. It is not, as we believe you said, a political ploy, nor was it conceived by the Liberal Party. We cannot understand how you came to this conclusion given the broad non-political membership of the coalition."

Mr Sherrin: Will you take an interjection?

Mr BEARD: Yes.

Mr Sherrin: Where was the first meeting of this so-called coalition held?

Mr BEARD: I do not know. I am reading the correspondence. It is irrelevant where it was held. What we have here are the results of the deliberations of that coalition. The chairman of the member's own party has thrown it back in the honourable member's face.

Three years ago, Education 2000 was generated, and discussions at political and senior departmental levels produced a document with a series of so-called options. However, preceding the word "options" with the phrase "it is proposed" made many people rightly suspicious of this Government's real intentions, and expressions of concern from the community at large led to the establishment of the Bassett committee. A total of 987 submissions were made to that committee, and the recommendations it made were well received. But they were ignored by the Government.

Then on April Fool's Day this year the Education Act and Another Act Amendment Bill was presented to the House. The Minister has said, subsequently—

> "At that time I called for public comment and submissions to be made on the basis that, if changes were justified, they would be made, even to the extent of withdrawing and rewriting the Bill."

That statement is contained in the Minister's second-reading speech on 11 November. *Hansard* of 1 April does not record that, nor do I recall his ever saying that. What I can remember is such a united public outcry against the Bill that the Minister was dragged most unwillingly back to the drafting table. After his earlier back-down on school holidays, his reluctance was understandable.

A headline in the *Sunday Mail* of 31 May proclaimed that the Bill was to be scrapped, and within 12 hours of that, the Minister had established a consultative committee and commenced rewriting the Bill. That consultative committee has reported that it spent more than half the 45 hours its members put in together to try to establish a rationale—that is, a philosophy: where are we now; where do we want to be—a declaration of what the game is all about. That is a most necessary prerequisite to determining how the game should be played and, particularly, who will hold the referee's whistle.

A major fault of Education 2000 was that it did not have a rationale, and it was justifiably very trenchantly criticised for that. Now what we see in the Bill before the House is a first-class example of post-hoc rationale.

Mr Powell has laid down a structure and game plan that he did not want any rationale to interfere with, and the result can be clearly seen in his second-reading speech of 11 November. It is a speech in two parts—a rationale setting down pretty well for the most part what education should be all about, although some portions are arguable—but it is not bad—followed by a detailed list of machinery provisions that have no connection with the rationale.

It leads one to believe that the rationale is merely window-dressing, a sop to those people in the community who have the audacity to demand to know what our education system should be all about. Surely, procedures are set up to implement the philosophy—not the philosophy invented to justify a practice. There are some very sad examples in history of what happens when someone tries to invent a philosophy to fit or justify things that are being done. That is the biggest reason for delaying this legislation—or preferably scrapping it and starting again.

This is not a rational Bill that will lead Queensland education into the twenty-first century. This is a structure—a reshuffling of the old deck of cards to set up control of the educational process firmly in the hands of the Minister, with an attachment of a disconnected rationale in an attempt to disguise what is really being done.

When the Minister repeatedly referred to trust and goodwill in his second-reading speech, it was a farcical Orwellian use of the English language. How can the public—not just the members on this side of the House—trust the Minister when he keeps trying to rush through legislation by using gags, guillotines or whatever device that he considers necessary? Far from using trust and goodwill, this Minister is the ultimate pragmatist—"do whatever you can get away with and get away with whatever you can do."

I intend to cite a couple of examples to demonstrate the sorts of things about which I am talking. One major criticism of *Education 2000* was that, despite the fact that it was styled as a discussion paper and presented options, those options appeared more as decisions that had already been taken than as points for discussion. That impression was reinforced by the fact that no mechanism was established for community input. The language in that document was often impenetrably dense, and institutions embodied in the options were to be established prior to any public discussion. That is yet another example of how the Minister can be trusted.

The Bassett committee considered that there was significant concern in the community about the possible effects of the *Education 2000* recommendations and, in particular, about the proposed restructuring of the education system into P-3, 4 to 10 and 11 to 12 plus TAFE organisational units. Despite the committee's reservations, the Education Department has established schools that are organised on that basis. It has also implemented curriculum changes that complement such structures. The well-publicised removal of the fence at the Childers Pre-school in 1987 is one example of the Minister's determination to proceed with that sort of organisational arrangement. So much for trust.

Finally, the Robertson committee—the concerns that were felt about the lack of a consultative process were to dog the committee throughout its existence and were further exacerbated by events such as the premature appointment of Dr Botsman as the head of the Course Accreditation Council before the position existed. So much for trust. If they ever hang Mr Powell for generating trust and goodwill, they will be hanging an innocent man.

I turn now to some extracts from the minority report of the consultative committee that was compiled by the Queensland Teachers Union, the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools, the Professional Officers Association and the Queensland Association of Academic Staff in Colleges of Advanced Education. Surely, that is not an insignificant group in the educational world. The report states—

> "The recommendations of the Robertson Consultative Group are a marginal improvement on the original bill in that,

(a) The unnecessary high-powered Councils on Non-government Education and Economic Developments have been knocked down to committee status.

(b) Teacher registration will remain independent.

(c) Many of the clauses and phrases which gave the Minister direct authority over bodies have been removed.

(d) Reasonable representativeness and some degree of independence have been achieved."

It states further—

"The problems with the Robertson Committee recommendations stem from inadequate nature of the consultative process under which they were generated. Given the time restrictions and the limited nature of the Committee's terms of reference, the Group could do little more than accept as non-negotiable the broad changes proposed by the Minister and confine themselves to addressing in an ad hoc manner various specific complaints.

The Rationale produced by the Group is an example of the unsatisfactory nature of its deliberations. Far from providing a sound basis for educational reform, it fails to make an adequate link between the philosophical stance which it expresses and any complementary structures. It could, in fact, be used to justify almost any organisational set-up.

Among the changes which the Robertson Group has proposed which have serious drawbacks for education in Queensland are:

The Queensland Post-Compulsory Course Accreditation Council will not have the same degree of independence as the Board of Secondary School Studies presently has."

Mr FitzGerald: That is rubbish, and you know it.

Mr BEARD: It is not rubbish. It would be brought straight to the Minister. The Board of Secondary School Studies was a buffer between subject advisory committees and the Government. The report continued—

"Course accreditation will be split from curriculum development.

The traditional primary/secondary curriculum organisation will be replaced by a compulsory/post compulsory split which is artificial and unnecessary."

The minority report of the Robertson committee is a document that deserves very careful study indeed by the members of the Government.

It is disgraceful that, in view of those reservations and concerns from people whose business is education, this Bill should be going through the House now, let alone going through the way that it is going through. It is unbelievably cynical and outrageous in the extreme that it should be passing through this four-hour sausage-machine. In its effect it is one of the most significant and most far-reaching Bills that this House has seen this year, yet it is being debated in three and a-half hours and being taken through Committee in half an hour. It is incredible. Having debated the Bill for four hours, how can the Minister hold his head up in the community after this and claim that he has put something through this House that was agreeable not only to the House but to the people of Queensland? He will have only himself to blame for any opprobrium he gets in the community after this.

I can tell him now, if he has not guessed already, that the Liberal Party will be opposing the legislation. One of the aspects of this Bill that we in the Liberal Party find sinister—and I do not choose that word carelessly—is the control it places in the hands of the Minister. In this respect, it is very similar to what Mr Dawkins is doing in the Federal sphere.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! There are too many persistent interjections. The honourable member for Mount Isa will continue.

Mr BEARD: In this respect, once again to demonstrate that I am reflecting the feeling of a broad range of professional educationists and not just my personal opinion, let me read from a recent address at a speech-night by Mr Cec Munns, the principal of the John Paul College, and one of the most highly respected educationists in this State. It draws a parallel between what is happening in Brisbane and what is happening in Canberra. He said—

> "Given the vision of education which we espouse, a vision which demands a liberal, general education for life for all our students, an education that caters for the enrichment of the mind and the spirit, as opposed to the mere training of the young in a set skill which could be rendered obsolete within the student's lifetime, we view with deep concern the attitudes to education which are espoused by both our Queensland National Party Government and our Commonwealth Labor Party Government in Canberra.
>
> During the decades of the 1960's and the 1970's, all of us who had a deep interest in education rejoiced as both the State and Federal Governments moved to set up statutory, independent educational bodies to serve decisively as buffers between them and those people who would give advice and make recommendations about the development of primary, secondary and tertiary education within our State and nation."

He went on to talk about buffers between Governments and educational institutions at both tertiary and secondary levels. We must have buffers between Governments and educational institutions at both tertiary and secondary levels. We must have buffers between the political power of the State and those who give advice and make education decisions, particularly in the curriculum area. Otherwise, what turns up in the curriculum turns out to be the pet hobby-horse or the pet idiosyncrasy of whatever politician is calling the shots at the time.

Mr Munns continues—

> "After this fine work by both the Commonwealth and the State Governments during the decades of the 60's and 70's in protecting education from political interference, it is unfortunate that, at the end of the 80's, both the Commonwealth and the State Governments are now moving decisively to destroy the independence of our education system from political control.
>
> Here, in our State of Queensland, despite wide-ranging opposition to the move, the Minister for Education, Mr Powell, is about to introduce legislation into Parliament which will place curriculum design and development (that is, what our young Queenslanders are taught) in the hands of his own ministerial committees."

Come on, creation science!

Mr Munns' statement continues—

> "To establish these ministerial committees, Mr. Powell will destroy the Board of Secondary School Studies, which is currently a representative, independent statutory body acting as a buffer between his ministerial authority, and those who design and develop secondary curriculum within this State."

I ask all honourable members to note particularly the word "independent" in that passage. The statement goes on—

> "Because of Mr. Powell's determination to place curriculum directly under his ministerial control, one can only conclude that the Minister wishes to impose his own philosophies and his standards on all education in Queensland."

In a nutshell, that is why the Liberal Party must oppose this Bill.

It is ironic that Mr Powell—the very model of a modern National Party major-general—is moving in the same direction and, presumably, for the same reasons, as his socialist counterpart in the Federal sphere, Mr Dawkins.

I can only conclude my speech with a further quote from Mr Munns, which reads—

> "When we have Governments, when we have Ministers and when we have ordinary members sitting on the back bench"—

and I am now looking at members of the National Party who are present in the Chamber—

> "who will use education in order to achieve such political and economic ends, the reality is that Mr. Dawkins and Mr. Powell have both the power and the political support to carry out their reforms. And when they have such power and political support, educational research, educational logic, educational expertise, the overall good of the young within our State and nation, will certainly play second fiddle to the forced production of the political and the economic outcomes of education which are required by the Governments in power."

I point out to the House that Mr Littleproud is a former schoolteacher, yet he has spoken in support of this Bill. Mr Powell is a former schoolteacher and educationist, and has proposed the Bill. Mr Sherrin, who will speak after me in this debate, is a former high-ranking educationist in the State Education Department. Mr Henderson is present in the Chamber and is also a former schoolteacher. People whose former profession was education sit on the Government side of the House. I do not say this lightly. These people—including Mrs Harvey and a few others besides the ones I have already mentioned—are prostituting the profession of teaching when they allow legislation of this type to be pushed through the House after 3½ hours' debate. Presumably all 60-odd clauses will go through en bloc. These people will stand up before the people of Queensland and claim that they have the good, the welfare, and the benefit of the young people of this State at heart.

If they are so confident about how right they are, this legislation should lay on the table of the House until at least next March. The Minister should remain open to input. He should listen to what professional educationists are saying.

Mr Powell: He's been doing it since last March.

Mr BEARD: I point out to the Minister that he did not call for input last April. He presented legislation to the House that he thought would be passed. It was only when the public rose up——

Mr Sherrin: Read his second-reading speech.

Mr BEARD: The Minister's second-reading speech states that he presented the legislation and that he would not deal with it until the second half of the year. He did not say anything about consultation.

Let this legislation be on the heads of members of this Government. What they have done is introduce a degree of political control and input into curriculum development in this State which I am sure will come back and haunt them. I want every former teacher on the Government side of the House to think very carefully about that when, later on—as I am sure it will—the House will divide, and they sit on one side of the Chamber while we sit on the other.

Mr SHERRIN (Mansfield) (3.49 p.m.): I rise to speak in support of the Bill. I wish to make a few comments about the Bill and related issues before I direct my attention to two topics of specific interest that I wish to address this afternoon, namely, the constitution of the Advisory Council on Education for Economic Development, which is an area of particular interest to me, and the Advisory Committee on Non-State Schools in Queensland.

Before I address those topics, I take this opportunity to comment generally on the legislation. I will endeavour to rebut some of the comments made by two previous Opposition speakers—the major Opposition spokesman and the spokesman for the rump party that is part of the Opposition.

The member for Ipswich West and the member for Mount Isa have made capital about the time provided for debating the legislation and have paid scant attention to the fact that the legislation has laid on the table of this House since 1 April. If my maths is correct, approximately eight months have been available for all interested people in the education community to make a contribution to the formulation of the legislation that is presently before the House.

I cannot recall too many pieces of legislation that, during my time in Parliament and my association with it, have sat on the table of the House for as lengthy a period as this legislation has and have attracted such a considerable input. I take the point that there has been considerable input into education. If there is one thing that the Minister should be commended on, it is that during his tenure of office he has raised education from the forgotten area of Government activity to a level at which it is debated throughout the community. I am sure that many honourable members will recall going to p. and c. meetings that were attended by about only three, four or five people. That was a reflection on the poor community attitude towards education. It was an attitude of, "Oh well, the professionals can look after it. I don't need to have an involvement."

Mr Gygar: They're turning up at meetings to protest about the Minister.

Mr SHERRIN: That is good. People are talking about education; that is the point. Through the process of Education 2000 and during the consultation period that has been set aside for the past eight months, people have been talking about education. That is a positive benefit. That is something good. Parents, teachers and students are now involved in discussing what is going on in our schools, in relation to the type of education that we want for our children as we head towards the turn of the century. They are positive viewpoints. What is being seen in this House is a difference in attitude between the Government and the Opposition parties. The Government tends to look at the positive outcome of things. Unfortunately, honourable members opposite, some of whom belong to a party that has been in opposition for more than 30 years and others to a party that is looking down the barrel at 30 years in opposition, look at the negative side of things. We in Government look at the positive side. That is why we are in Government, and will continue to be on the Government benches for many years to come.

Be that as it may, I wish to take up the point that Mr Beard raised.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr SHERRIN: Mr Davis looks like an astute young gentleman.

Mr Davis: Do you really mean what you said then?

Mr SHERRIN: I most definitely do.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr SHERRIN: That is not very nice.

Following that frivolous interjection from the member for Brisbane Central, I wish to take up the point that Mr Beard raised. Over the last two days I have discussed with members of the so-called coalition against the Bill some of the issues associated with the legislation. They contacted me. Without mentioning their names or embarrassing them, I can assure honourable members that they can take my word that two separate members of that coalition—rather prominent people—asked me, "Mr Sherrin, where did we go wrong?" I replied, "You have to have a look at your involvement." They asked, "Do you mean the fact that we got ourselves involved with the Liberal Party?" I replied, "I think your credibility suffered greatly."

The Liberal Party has been seen to be playing cheap politics, trying to ferment an issue, when instead it should be encouraging constructive consultation. I was told by the two members of the coalition that the first meeting of the coalition was held at Liberal Party headquarters. The Liberal Party has been playing cheap politics and trying to get some mileage out of an issue, when it should have been encouraging constructive

consultation and constructive debate rather than trying to undermine a process of consultation about the future of our children. The Liberal Party must stand condemned for its action, which militated against the overall interests of our children.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr SHERRIN: I most certainly was not.

Mr Littleproud: You would have heard that Mr Schuntner has a pinched nerve. That is something akin to loss of nerve, is it?

Mr SHERRIN: I could not say that, no.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! The honourable member on his feet is not accepting the interjections.

Mr SHERRIN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank you kindly for your protection.

The legislation now before the House is far superior to that which was introduced on 1 April, and this is a reflection of the integrity of the consultative process and the hard work of the working party that reviewed the original legislation. For people to stand here and say there has been no input is quite wrong. They only have to compare the original Bill with that now before the House to see that it is a significant improvement. That is a reflection of community input into the legislation.

Mr Underwood: Isn't it a fact that you were on the committee or the chairman of the committee that designed the original legislation?

Mr SHERRIN: Absolutely not. I had no input at all into the original legislation.

Mr Underwood: So you are not on the committee of the Minister for Education?

Mr SHERRIN: No, I am not on the departmental committee at all.

Mr Underwood: I am talking of the Minister's committee.

Mr SHERRIN: The honourable member's party has been out of Government for so long that I am afraid he does not understand the processes of government. The legislation is drafted in the department by senior departmental officers; it is taken to the Minister for his concurrence and possible amendment; it goes to Cabinet, to the Minister's parliamentary committee and to the party room. Only then is it introduced into the House.

Mr Underwood: And you approved it at that committee stage, didn't you? You were on the committee that approved it initially, weren't you?

Mr SHERRIN: The honourable member will have to talk to the Minister. He is the chairman of the parliamentary committee.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SHERRIN: Yes, the committee approved it and, yes, the party room approved it.

I have made the point that the Bill is far superior to the original legislation because of the extensive consultation that occurred with the working party. It should be remembered that the working party comprised representatives of non-Government schools, the Department of Education, the union movement, parent bodies and so on.

The other point I wish to make about the legislation—the Minister may correct me on this in his reply—is that I understand it is totally consistent with the recommendations of the working party. It is my understanding that it is not at variance with any of the recommendations of the working party. That brings credit to the Minister in that he has been prepared to accept totally the recommendations of the working party.

I wish to make one very important point about education in Queensland, that is that the Queensland education system stands apart from those in other States because of the excellent and close working relationship that exists between the non-Government school and the Government school educational communities. I believe that it is vital that this close co-operation be maintained and further developed. When I was a teacher in the State system, my own role as a review panel chairman for the Board of Secondary School Studies in science in the north Queensland area provided me with a number of opportunities to foster and experience the close co-operation that existed between teachers and professional educators in the State and non-State systems in curriculum development and assessment.

Mr Innes: Are you a creationist or an evolutionist?

Mr SHERRIN: That has nothing to do with the legislation.

These opportunities allowed for a free exchange of ideas, of viewpoints, and of assessment techniques. I believe that it is the opportunities that have been provided through the workings of these curriculum committees and review panels that have brought the State and non-State systems very close together.

When the review panels meet there is no indication that one person is representing a State school and another person is representing a non-State school. All of the participants are educators and they are treated as such. They have fostered a great professionalism within the Queensland education community. I believe that this legislation will encourage the professional development of teachers, especially in the area of curriculum development.

I urge all members of the Queensland education community to acknowledge that the time for debate about this particular legislation has ended today. I call on them to work conscientiously to ensure that the legislative proposals now under consideration will work, that they will operate, and to do so in the spirit of co-operation that has been a feature of Queensland education over the years. I firmly believe—it is my earnest belief—that with goodwill, patience and tolerance on all sides, Queensland students will benefit greatly from this legislation.

I turn to proposed new section 6B of the Bill. It relates to something with which I had some small involvement during my time in head office in the Department of Education. As honourable members will recall, proposed new section 6B relates to the production and scale of educational materials. In the original draft of the Bill this caused some concern, which was totally misplaced. The Minister has amended the Bill to allow him to be authorised to produce and sell educational materials and services and to enter into an agreement with any person for those purposes, and it is declared that he has always had those powers.

The point I want to make is that in these times of very stringent economies and tight Budgets, it is refreshing to see that the Education Department, which tends to be non-revenue generating but revenue-using—and, as honourable members will be aware, the Education Department consumes something like $1.35 billion annually in providing educational services to half a million students throughout the State—is taking the attitude that, with the excellent work that it performs, opportunities exist for earning income.

Honourable members should take the opportunity to read some of the excellent material that is provided by the Education Department. The material that the department provides through its production and publishing services section is truly of world standard. That material, particularly videos such as the Start Sport series, has resulted in the Queensland Education Department being recognised throughout the world as being a world leader in that area. It is great to see the department taking the initiative and marketing this material overseas.

Recently one of the senior officers of the Education Department, Mr Norm Alford, led a deputation to Singapore to promote those materials. They have been very, very well received by south-east Asian authorities. I have made the point on many occasions in this Chamber that many of our industries, and many of our Government bodies, can

be criticised for continually looking inwards at a market of 15 million people instead of outwards at a market of 1.5 billion people on the Pacific rim.

As I said, it is great to see the Queensland Education Department taking the initiative and recognising that it is capable of producing, and does produce, world-standard video materials and other publishing material, then marketing them aggressively throughout south-east Asia and having them recognised throughout the world as being of a very high standard.

Mr Underwood: Is it true that the budgetary cut-backs have virtually destroyed that software section and AD section that is designing and marketing those materials by sending 50 per cent of the seconded teachers back to the class room?

Mr SHERRIN: No, absolutely not.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Alison): Order! The House will come to order.

Mr SHERRIN: The Liberal Party, through its opposition to this legislation, has been shown up for what it is. It is not interested in education or promoting education for the betterment of Queensland's children. It is solely interested in scoring cheap political points, and it stands condemned. The reason for the aggression from honourable members of the Liberal Party is that they have been found out and they stand condemned in the sight of this House.

I move on to look at the establishment of the Advisory Council on Education for Economic Development. The Minister expressed this very capably in his second-reading speech when he made the point that, although education is not primarily concerned with job training, it has a very important role to play in this changing world in re-equipping students for the world of work. I, as a former practising teacher, would not argue for the total abrogation of the educational community's reponsibility for preparing students with a broad background. I feel that the time has come for the educational system to give greater recognition to the needs of commerce and industry in the preparation of Queensland's students in Queensland's schools. Nowhere is this more important than in the area of changing technology. The old ways are no longer good enough, and the fact should not be lost sight of that there is a great need to prepare students with a broad background and basic skills across the board. In addition, there is a changing need for them to be more attuned to the needs of commerce and industry, etc.

Much has been made about the appropriateness of the existing structures to facilitate the needs of industry and commerce. I have had some practical involvement in the area of curriculum development in the Board of Secondary School Studies. The preparation of a course concerning information processing and technology was in the hands of the Board of Secondary School Studies and, after a period in the region of six years, it was still at the trial stage. This course could not be introduced across all schools in the State for years to come, yet it related to an area of very rapid change. It was taking the existing board many years to prepare the course. The Department of Education was called upon by the Minister to prepare a similar course. Within a matter of months it was able to prepare a course and introduce it into approximately 40 State high schools. That is the kind of response that is needed in order to cater for a rapidly changing world with changing needs of commerce and industry.

It is necessary that there be an increased opportunity for industry and commerce to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the work of educators. The Minister has made the point that it is a two-way street. It is not only an opportunity for industry and commerce to come to education and say that students or young people are needed who are versed in the required skills; it is also an opportunity for educators to meet people from industry and commerce and outline their expectations of the educational process. I am confident that the Advisory Council on Education for Economic Development will provide that opportunity for this State's educators, businessmen and industry people.

In a previous speech to this House I drew the attention of honourable members to the fact that, in many of the States of the United States of America, bodies of this type are already in place. I have given examples from an article in the magazine *High Technology*, under the heading "High Tech Sweepstakes", that many States which are vying for a slice of the technology industry pie have set up bodies of this type to promote a much closer interaction between industry—particularly high-technology industries—and educational bodies. Those states include Michigan, Ohio, Georgia and Arizona. They set up programs and bodies such as this Advisory Council on Education for Economic Development to assist the States to attract high-technology industries.

In particular, I think that the area of the United States that sets the greatest example is Silicon Valley in California. That is one of the great areas of technological development, along with the Massachusetts corridor where technology industries have been attracted by a promise by the educational leaders in the United States that their educational system will become more in tune with the needs of high technology and become more responsive. The article mentions many examples where the educational bodies of those States have given commitments to high-tech industries that if they locate their industries in their States they will be able to generate or produce students or graduates from their schools, colleges and universities who are attuned to the needs of industry. Not all the attention of the States is given to higher education. Considerable development has also taken place in high school education in particular to upgrade the teaching of technology and the sciences. I understand that Florida has a significant program that is very much in tune with what the Minister has proposed in the legislation.

In the remaining minutes of my address, I wish to devote some of my time to the proposal in the legislation to establish an advisory committee on non-State education. Whilst I worked in the Minister's office I was very fortunate to be involved in the establishment of the ad hoc committee that the Minister established about three years ago on non-State school education. That was certainly a first in Queensland. The Minister should be commended for that initiative because it gave non-State schools the opportunity to have direct access to the Minister so that he could be made aware of their needs, aspirations and particular problems.

Honourable members will probably recall that the establishment of that committee was, in some ways, in response to the Commonwealth Labor Government's intrusion into non-State school education in Queensland. That committee, which has operated over the last three or four years, has been highly successful and may well have led to the establishment of this statutory advisory council on non-State school education. It acknowledges in legislation our Government's feelings about non-State schools and their importance in the overall education system in Queensland. It also cements in place the rights of all Queensland parents to select a school that they believe is appropriate for their children. This policy, of course, stands in stark contrast to the Labor Government's policy on new non-Government schools, which is to stamp out non-Government school education in this State.

In closing, I suggest to the Minister that, in line with the suggestion made by my colleague the member for Condamine, he give consideration to bringing the P-10 curriculum review development committee under the responsibility of the Queensland Post-Compulsory Course Accreditation Council under proposed section 37 (2) (i). It is my belief that that course of action would find widespread agreement and support amongst the non-Government school sector in this State.

The legislation is obviously pioneering legislation as it leads the field in educational legislation in the country. I understand that the Minister has given an undertaking to review the legislation in the light of experience that will be gained and then make any modifications or fine tunings that are required.

I repeat my plea to all members of the Queensland educational community to acknowledge that the time for debate will end with the passing of this legislation. I call upon them to work conscientiously to ensure that these legislative proposals do work and do operate in the spirit of co-operation that has always been a feature of Queensland

education between the two sectors, namely, State education and non-State education. I firmly believe that with goodwill, patience and tolerance on all sides, Queensland's students will benefit from this legislation.

Mr HAMILL (Ipswich) (4.15 p.m.): I do not know on how many occasions the honourable member for Mansfield said that the time for debating the proposed amendments to the Education Act was at an end. It must be recognised that the only reason why this debate is at an end is that the Minister has moved a guillotine on this debate.

This legislation is probably one of the most controversial elements of this Government's legislative program, coming as it does in a very important sphere of Government endeavour.

Mr FitzGerald: The Parliament moved.

Mr HAMILL: I am sure that, as an honourable member of this Parliament, the Government Whip would have been as surprised as I was that the Minister moved the guillotine when on 31 May of this year—only a few months ago—it was reported in the *Sunday Mail* that the very same Minister for Education, in referring to the proposed amendments to the Education Act, said—

> "I'm one of the old-fashioned politicians who regard Parliament as a forum where such matters as this legislation can be discussed in full before being enacted in law."

This Minister said that. However, once again the guillotine has been applied. This legislation, which in common with so much other legislation has taxed the minds of the education committee of this State and the public, is going to be pushed through the parliamentary sausage-machine.

Mr Underwood: One week after its introduction.

Mr HAMILL: As my colleague the honourable member for Ipswich West rightly points out, one week after its production in this House.

All honourable members are aware of the controversy surrounding this legislation that has been tearing away within the Government ranks. We have all heard the honourable member for Mansfield describe this legislation as a hot potato. He is a very keen participant in education policy-making in this State. He is typical of many Government members who are onside with the Minister one minute, then offside with him and then back onside with him again.

Mr Davis: He's always been onside.

Mr HAMILL: No. Like Pontius Pilate, the honourable member has tried to wash his hands of the amendments on the way through. He took the Bob Sparkes' line.

The honourable member is now trying to come back onside with the Minister. He is trying to make up with the Minister. I was fascinated to listen to the honourable member trying to re-establish himself in the ministerial good books. He heaped praise upon the Minister and said that the Minister has put education in this State on the map. That was a very foolish reflection by the honourable member for Mansfield. I am aware that he has ambitions, but in one fell swoop he cast a totally sad reflection on the role that was played by this Minister's predecessor, Mr Gunn—the Deputy Premier and a former Minister for Education—when he dismissed the role that Mr Gunn played in the Education portfolio. It is significant that the Deputy Premier, Mr Gunn, is this Minister's mentor. During the controversy surrounding the Education Act, when this Minister did not know quite what to do with this political hot potato, he raced up to Laidley, which is a well known centre of education excellence, and visited the Laidley property of Mr Gunn, the former Minister for Education, to seek his advice.

The article to which I have referred stated—

> "Mr Powell said his trip to Laidley and request for advice could be interpreted as underlining his support for Mr Gunn to replace Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen as Premier."

Recognising the support that was coming from his student, if you like——

Mr Eaton interjected.

Mr HAMILL: The honourable member for Mourilyan should not be unkind.

The article continued—

> "Mr Gunn said: 'I was pleased young Powell sought some advice and, as an old Education Minister, I advised him to act accordingly.' "

Mr Gunn went so far as to say that Mr Powell was a very intelligent person.

When Mr Gunn was Minister for Education, he experienced a similar situation. He said that he had served a term as Education Minister and had rewritten the Act after public opposition to the proposals of his predecessor. However, he went on to become Deputy Premier, so I suppose that there is still hope for this Minister in his aspirations of climbing the political ladder.

The proposed amendments are controversial—so controversial that the deputy spokesman for the Liberal Party delivered a vehement speech condemning this legislation from go to whoa. I can only assume that after such a condemnation we can expect the Liberal Party to abstain en masse when the vote is taken later this afternoon.

The disarray that is both inside and outside the National Party and the Liberal Party makes a mockery of the Minister's claim in his second-reading speech that the legislation was designed, inter alia, to "promote trust and goodwill" within the community and to "facilitate partnership and balance among the Parliament, through the Minister for Education, parents, education authorities, Government and non-Government sectors of education within the State".

It all sounds very nice. It is the same sort of fairy floss as we have become accustomed to in this Government's outpourings in a whole range of policy matters. For example, it is very similar to the platitudes that I recall that the Government indulged in when describing its relationship with non-Government agencies in the welfare sector in what the welfare area called the new direction. I describe it as a one-way relationship. In this instance, education is similarly a one-way relationship. But the Government will dictate policy to the community—sometimes withdrawing and amending aspects at the margin, but basically it is a one-way relationship with the power vested in the Minister's hands and, through this legislation, more power being vested in the Minister's hands.

If we want to look at the validity of that statement, we need only to look at the Queensland Government's record in providing for the financial and material resources upon which our State's education system can be founded.

Mr Sherrin: Six minutes into the Bill and you're sliding off somewhere else.

Mr HAMILL: That is all right. Does the honourable member want some more? He was certainly well and truly caught out by my colleague the member for Ipswich West, who exposed the honourable member's duplicity in changing sides during the development of this controversial legislation. It is time for the honourable member for Mansfield to hang his head in shame and retire hurt from the field, and hopefully lick his wounds and maybe come again on another day.

As I was saying, we can look at the Government's performance in relation to the resourcing of education to measure the veracity of this one-way relationship that I have described. We have long-suffering parents and citizens' associations who effectively are having to raise funds—a sort of closet education tax which this Government levies by its omitting to provide adequate financing for school facilities. We have inadequate class rooms and other facilities. One only has to look at schools throughout Queensland—I can nominate quite a number in my own electorate—to see the parlous state of the education infrastructure of this State.

Earlier this year, the Queensland Teachers Union conducted its physical condition survey, calling upon schools to respond to a questionnaire about the quality of the education environments in which our young people are endeavouring to obtain their education.

Mr FitzGerald: I challenge you to debate the Bill, not other matters in education.

Mr HAMILL: I take the honourable member's interjection. He may not have been here to hear the Minister's second-reading speech. If he was not here, it is unfortunate that he did not take the opportunity to read it. If he had, he would realise that this Education Act Amendment Bill has within its purview the whole education system of this State. In fact, the Minister, in delivering that speech, referred not only to primary and secondary education, but also to tertiary education and TAFE. In fact, the whole philosophy and policy in relation to education is encompassed within the Minister's speech and this Bill. If the honourable member is suggesting that the physical environment of the school has no bearing whatsoever on the quality of outputs of the schools, he would probably be in disagreement with the Minister himself.

As I was saying, the lack of support for our schools illustrates the hollowness of the Minister's statements about this legislation endeavouring to foster goodwill and so on. The survey to which I referred showed that some 13.4 per cent of class rooms included in that survey were demountable or transportable class rooms. There are schools in my electorate that have had those sort of inadequate facilities now for almost a quarter of a century. That is an indictment of the Government's lack of support for education. This piece of legislation obviously will not do anything to improve the quality of educational output and the quality of educational environments in this State.

I turn now to examine other aspects of this Government's inadequate support for education. Government members have already referred to the lack of funds for education. In fact the honourable member for Condamine spoke about the Education Department being short of funds. In the absence of an Estimates debate on Education, I think it is only fair to consider the actual payments that have been made in respect of education for this State and to look at the level of responsibility that ought to be taken by the members on the opposite side of the Chamber in relation to education.

The Budget papers indicate that Commonwealth payments to Queensland for primary and secondary education were increased by 9.5 per cent this year to amount to $103.7m and that funding for the Participation and Equity Program increased by 26 per cent and amounted to $9.2m.

Mr Powell: This hasn't got much to do with the Bill.

Mr HAMILL: It has a lot to do with the Bill. I am endeavouring to analyse whether the member for Condamine can justifiably say that the funds have not been provided.

I suggest to the Minister that if the Budget papers indicate that the funds are not available, it is not the fault of the Commonwealth Government. The reason for it is the abysmal lack of priority that the Queensland Government gives to education and the future of young people.

I turn now to examine the financial assistance grants from which so many of the services in this State are provided. Commonwealth payments to the State increased by 8.5 per cent. The total Commonwealth payments to the State from which the education budget has to be funded were increased by 7.7 per cent. However, when one refers to the State Budget and notices the priority that this Government accords education in this State, it can be seen that in spite of significant increases in funding to Queensland from the Commonwealth Government, the increase is very slight. I instance the amount set aside for salaries in State schools, which, according to the figures attributed to the education budget for this State, was $740.8m. That amount represents an increase of 1.75 per cent.

It is little wonder that student teachers are marching this afternoon. They are concerned about their job prospects, yet the Minister refers in his second-reading speech

to trying to ensure that the education system is geared to the needs of the community and to the needs of industry. The Minister is busily producing teachers for whom he is not producing jobs. If the Minister cannot give effect to his own rhetoric and propaganda in his own speech, how can the public take the Minister seriously when he talks about greater consultation with industry and commerce in ensuring that the education system is relevant to the labour market, and so on? Those statements can be compared with a pack of cards—one puff and it all falls down!

The other facet of this legislation relates to staffing and wages for ancillary staff. In spite of all the additional funding that has been provided by the Commonwealth Government for the education budget for this State, what happens? Not only does the Minister cut the wages bill for ancillary staff in money terms but he also inflicts a cut in real terms. It is little wonder that teacher aides have been put off and that hours have been cut in schools in which teacher aides are necessary. If the Minister does not think that that move affects the quality of educational output, I suggest that he should think again. He should talk to some of the p. and c. associations, to the teachers and to the parents in the community and hear what they have to say about that sort of action.

The Minister cannot have it both ways. He cannot talk about improving the education system in this State unless adequate financial resource back-up is provided. It is little wonder, therefore, that little goodwill and little trust exists between the community at large and this Government's position in relation to education. It is just not good enough.

Mr Elliott: I think you should do more homework next time.

Mr HAMILL: The honourable member should not get me wrong. I think that a number of very good elements are contained in this legislation. I think, however, that it is important for the Government to accept the criticism along with the praise.

In common with the Government, the Opposition recognises the importance of education and the relationship that education has to training and employment. I have already said that the Minister should correct some of the dysfunctions that occur in relation to the education system and the turning out of prospective young teachers who will be unable to obtain jobs. Unlike the Queensland Government, which has not developed a comprehensive youth, education and employment policy, the Labor Party has endeavoured to integrate the educational components within a range of policy initiatives that are designed not only to enhance the quality of education in this State but in turn to enhance the employment prospects of young Queenslanders. That seems to be a quantum leap which this Government is not prepared to take.

We in the Labor Party welcome dialogue between education and industry. We welcome an education system that is flexible. Like the Minister, I think it is important that there is flexibility in our education system. That flexibility includes the system's capacity to respond to the changing needs of society, the changing labour market conditions in society and, indeed, the changing demands that the students themselves are placing upon the education system. Students have rights in this matter, too. They look to the education system to give them a decent start in life and to equip them adequately to join the labour force. The education system does indeed need to be flexible to meet those changing conditions. In that context, the Opposition welcomes procedures that will enhance the capacity of students to transfer courses, to receive credit for courses in which they are already engaged and to be able to go to other institutions without penalties being imposed on them. That is very important.

I sound a note of warning. It should not be forgotten that education is not simply about learning to become a component of industry. There is much more to education than simply vocational skills.

Mr Littleproud: We acknowledge that.

Mr HAMILL: I am pleased that the Government does. Just gearing the education system to the existing labour market, which is in fact what is being done, is not educating people: it is really de-skilling them. People will become so specialised that they can fit only into those little areas within the economy for which they somehow can be predestined. Of course, that is so much nonsense.

It is important that our education system turns out good generalists. People with a good grounding in a range of useful skills which makes them adaptable and flexible in what is in fact a very fast-changing labour market where new technologies and new jobs come on stream at all times are needed. It is important that people are able to adapt to learn the new, more vocationally oriented skills upon that firm foundation which our education system is supposed to provide.

One aspect of this legislation which causes greatest difficulty to the Opposition, and which is of particular concern to the independent schools sector, relates to what the community sees as the Government's tendency towards unwarranted political interference in the curriculum. A very fine line has to be recognised in the formulation and administration of education policy, that is, that whilst the Government of the day has a responsibility to the community to give effect to community aspirations and desires and reflect those in the education system, it should not overstep the mark to what could then be construed as unwarranted political interference in curriculum development and the administration of education.

Mr Newton: That doesn't happen on your side of politics, does it?

Mr HAMILL: I suggest to the honourable member that it has happened in Queensland. Narrow-mindedness, fundamentalism and prejudice have all been manifested in various political decisions which this Government has made over a period about what and what may not be taught and talked about in our State school system. For many years an extraordinary situation has existed, namely, that the State school system has not had an adequate human relationships course whereas the independent school system has. That has occurred because a succession of Ministers took their political riding instructions from a Government which has had in its pocket the sort of fundamentalist lobby which has wrought so much detriment to the State's education system.

Over a number of years a series of controversies have occurred. If I go back far enough I can remember SEMP and MACOS, the human relationships courses, the AIDS education courses, sex education for women and the campaign to put creationism on an equal footing with the theory of evolution in science courses. It goes on and on and on. It is a sad indictment of the fact that particular ideological positions of individuals within this Government have been allowed to be imprinted upon the administration of the education system outside. I refer also to the lack of tolerance in the education prescriptions of the Rona Joyners who have repeatedly demonstrated, for example, that they have an undue influence over this Government's education policies and have had, in the past, an undue influence over the Premier, who has not been above interfering in education policy-making.

It is the independent schools in particular that are most apprehensive about those parts of this legislation that in effect give the Minister greater power in relation to curriculums right across the board. Their concern is that this Bill formalises that intervention that over a number of years has occurred in curriculum matters. As I say, it is a question of degree, but no-one can blame some people in the community for viewing this Bill with considerable concern. They have seen this Government's record in the past and have seen that on too many occasions it has overstepped the mark. They do not have that confidence, trust and goodwill of which the Minister spoke in his second-reading speech to believe the Government when it says that things will be okay and all right and that it does not intend to take unto itself too much power for intervention in curriculums. It is a legitimate concern that is supported by the Opposition.

Before I close I wish to make some remarks about tertiary education, which the Minister mentioned in his speech when he spoke about the need for additional tertiary

places in the State. That is unquestionably the case. My colleague the member for Ipswich West endeavoured to shed considerable light on the truth of the allocation of tertiary places within Australia. I wish to pose a question to the Minister. I will take at face value the fact that in this place there has often been concern expressed about the relative paucity of tertiary places in this State. Certainly, when compared with the demand for tertiary places each year, that is the case. Why does the Queensland Government not take a leaf out of the Victorian Government's book? Why does the Queensland Government not put a bit of money where its mouth is? The Victorian Government has not been above making funds available to establish tertiary places over and above those that have been provided by the Commonwealth in that State. I do not see why the Queensland Government cannot do likewise. Why can't it establish additional tertiary places from its own resources? Why does it not try to assist?

Mr Powell: Do you want to hear the answer?

Mr HAMILL: The Minister will have an opportunity to reply to the debate and I will be attentive when he does so.

Why does the Minister not follow that example and fund some additional places out of the State's own resources and augment the Commonwealth's contribution to increase Queensland's share of the cake in the tertiary places?

There have been some welcome developments in relation to additional tertiary places. One example of those occurred at the Bundamba TAFE college in my electorate. In conjunction with CAEs, tertiary places have been established at Bundamba for the new year. That is a very sensible move. Throughout the State there are some very useful educational resources in the form of TAFE colleges, CAEs and so on, but establishing additional tertiary places at the TAFE college contributes not only to additional tertiary places but also to the decentralisation of tertiary places, which ought to be a priority in Queensland.

Mr FitzGerald: Too right.

Mr HAMILL: I knew I would win the honourable member for Lockyer when he listened to my speech in toto. I knew he was being a little too brash or impulsive earlier on when he was making those foolish interjections, but I am pleased that I have won the argument with him today.

Not only does it contribute to the decentralisation of tertiary places but also it contributes to greater participation in tertiary education, which of itself is a good thing. All honourable members should be genuinely concerned about the whole of the education system in the State and about the accessibility of tertiary education. I commend such moves as have occurred in that area. They are co-operative moves and they ought to continue. I suggest that there is scope to improve the performance by the Government's digging into its own pockets and providing some additional tertiary places.

Members of the Opposition find that the legislation has a number of good points and a number of not-so-good points, but we are concerned that it gives the Minister carte blanche to interfere or meddle in curriculums in an unwarranted and political way.

I trust that when the Government does use its numbers in this Chamber tonight, the Minister will take on board the concerns expressed not only by the Opposition but also by many people in the community, particularly those involved in the independent school sector, who feel quite threatened by the passage of this legislation.

Mr GILMORE (Tablelands) (4.40 p.m.): What I have to say about the Bill will be neither profound nor lengthy. I want to make a few brief comments.

I am very pleased to have an opportunity to speak in this debate. I will begin with a very short lesson for the Opposition. I note that the member for Ipswich West has left the Chamber, but I am glad to see that the member for Ipswich has chosen to remain in the Chamber. I presume that the member for Ipswich West is sitting in a corner somewhere with his dunce's cap on.

Contrary to the assertions by the member for Ipswich West about this Bill and the method by which it came to be introduced in this House, the Minister should be commended for his handling of the Bill. The principles that apply under the Westminster system for the introduction of legislation into a Parliament allow for legislation to be introduced and laid on the table for comment and discussion by the community and for later adjustment or re-evaluation one way or another.

In this case, contrary to the suggestion of the Opposition, the Minister introduced the Bill not in its final form. The Bill was introduced and laid on the table. Quite considerable discussion arose within the parliamentary committee, within the Parliament and within the community at large, particularly the education community.

Mr Sherlock: The parliamentary committee or the Government?

Mr GILMORE: The Government's Education committee.

Members of the Government have found those discussions to be interesting and constructive. As a result of those discussions, the Minister has now introduced a very, very good Bill.

Members of the Opposition have chosen to denigrate the Minister at some length for his democratic approach to this matter simply because they misunderstand the democratic system of introducing Bills into the Parliament for discussion.

Mr Hamill: In May the Minister said that there would be full debate, yet today the debate was gagged.

Mr GILMORE: There has been considerable debate on this matter. I am glad that the honourable member raised that point, because I happened to listen to the honourable member's lecture on the shortage of time for debate on this Bill. It took the honourable member six minutes to actually come to the substance of the Bill. He discussed everything but the Bill. I had to assume from that——

Mr Hamill: I was disputing the nonsense that your colleague was going on with when he was trying to cover up his duplicity in relation to his attitude to the Bill.

Mr GILMORE: Not at all. The honourable member discussed Budget matters, the Minister's toe-nails and anything that came to his mind other than the substance of the Bill. I can only presume from that that the honourable member does not know what he is talking about and has not studied the Bill.

Mr Hamill: Did you read the Minister's speech?

Mr GILMORE: Yes. The Minister's second-reading speech was excellent.

Mr Prest: Where are you up to in your brief?

Mr GILMORE: I am referring to comprehensive notes, as was the member for Southport the other day.

The discussion that has taken place in the community at large has resulted in almost uniform agreement on the substance of this Bill. The Bill was designed to provide the framework for education to take us into the year 2000 and beyond.

I wish to give the House details of my attidude towards education. Of necessity, education must be a flexible mechanism and must undergo change on a continuing basis to reflect the changing nature and needs of our society. No longer can we live with a system that was appropriate 20 years ago, and this Government must be ever vigilant to ensure that the education that is provided for Queensland students adequately prepares them for the challenges of the next century. To do otherwise would be to fail those students and society, and to lay poor foundations for this nation's future.

Mr Smyth: Does that mean you believe we should have sex education in schools?

Mr GILMORE: The honourable member will find, if he discusses the matter with his local p. and c. association and high school principal, that those thrusts are available in education in Queensland and there is no problem at all.

It is typical of the Opposition that it refuses to accept the necessity for change. It proclaims its commitment to education, but it lives in the past. But that is not unusual for members on the other side of the House. Members of the Opposition cannot bring themselves to contemplate the need for innovation and improvement, and I suspect that they do not understand the thrust of the Bill.

In post-compulsory education, the situation has developed in which the Federal Government has chosen to make decisions that will have a profound effect on education in this State and will concern those students who are 16 or 17 years of age. Because of a decision in the last Federal Budget, those students are no longer able to qualify for unemployment benefits when they leave school. As a result of that, many of those students are forced back into the class rooms. Many of them would have left school at Year 10 or during subsequent years; however, because of reasons that are either financial—their families cannot afford to keep them at school—or intellectual, they are forced to return to the class room, and many of them are very bitter about it. That is a place where they do not want to be, but they are forced back to the class room because they cannot receive unemployment benefits. Those students can reasonably be expected to be disruptive in the class room, especially if they are studying courses for which they are ill-equipped or which could be seen to be inappropriate.

Mr Ardill: It is about time you got appropriate ones.

Mr GILMORE: I am about to discuss the matter of appropriate courses and accreditation of those courses for such students. If the honourable member had read the Bill and studied the matter, he would have known what I am about to say.

Those students may not be able to cope with maths II or physics and, if pressed into those subjects, may feel inadequate. Therefore, they will not have their minds on the job of education. To avoid this situation, this Government is putting forward in this legislation a very important thrust which will recognise that these young people exist and that they are a vastly important part of our community. The Government is embarking upon a course of drawing out the best possible from those young people. This Government wishes to put in place courses which are appropriate to their level of intellect or desire to learn and to uniformly accredit these courses.

Mr Innes: Don't you do it now?

Mr GILMORE: These young people are not in school rooms at the present time, but are the ones coming back into the class room.

Mr Innes: There are other courses available for them.

Mr GILMORE: Courses are available for these people, but this Government is expanding that area and is accrediting those courses. That is an important thrust of the Bill. By the time those young people leave the courses and finally go into the workplace, they have taken part in appropriate uniform and accredited courses which are respected and accepted by the employers in the community. Through this legislation, the Government is going in a new direction on behalf of the young people of Queensland. And what an important new direction it is.

As Mr Hamill raised the matter, I would like to comment on some other areas in which the Federal Government has caused some concern for the Queensland education budget. Some considerable reductions have been made in the recurrent grants to the States. The Federal Budget papers state—

> "The estimates for 1987-88 and calendar year 1988 reflect real growth in general recurrent (per capita) grants, offset by reductions mainly in the level of funding for specific purpose programs due to the termination at the end of 1987 of the Basic Learning in Primary Schools Program and the Participation and Equity Programs."

Those are the sorts of thrusts that the Federal Government is using to cause disruption to the education process in Queensland. There are also in the Bill important innovations in areas of curriculum development and accreditation in TAFE colleges and CAEs. This will ensure the independent development of innovative and futuristic curriculum. The Bill is excellent and is well prepared, following long deliberation and consultation, and I am sure that it will soon be seen as a model for similar legislation in other States.

I congratulate the Minister and support the Bill.

Mr WELLS (Murrumba) (4.51 p.m.): Some time ago I attended a forum at an Indooroopilly school in the company of the Honourable the Minister. The Minister put his point of view to the assembled multitude and I put my view, so the Minister will not be surprised by anything that I say in the debate today. My view has not changed; nor has the Minister's. The drafting may have altered slightly; nevertheless, his view has not changed, and the ideology and the tendency of the Bill have not changed. I might mention to the House that on that occasion I was rather disappointed because when the Minister finished speaking, the television cameras were turned off and were left off throughout my speech. I thought that that was unfortunate, because it occurred to me that it would be desirable for the media to have both sides of the story. I really thought about it and realised that by the time the Minister had sat down the media already had.

Mr FitzGerald: That would be an egotistical point of view on your part, wouldn't it?

Mr WELLS: I think that the honourable member has missed the joke. I am not going to explain it. It will be very clear in *Hansard*. If the honourable member reads *Hansard* and studies it closely, he will eventually get the point.

I would like to refer directly to the Bill.

Mr Sherrin: That will be a change.

Mr WELLS: I thank the honourable member for Mansfield. It would also be a change from any remarks that he previously made.

The first section of the Bill to which I draw the attention of the House is the proposed sections 6A and 6B. Proposed section 6A states—

> "Power of Minister to be member of corporations etc. (1) The Minister or a person authorized by him for that purpose, may—
>
> (a) become and be a member of any corporation, whether incorporated within or outside the State, or any committee, council group or body, whether incorported or not. . ."

In other words, what that means is that under the legislation the Minister is giving himself power to become——

Mr FitzGerald: The word "may" you read.

Mr WELLS: What is the honourable member telling me, that when the legislation says "may", the Minister is not going to? Under the legislation, the Minister is giving himself power to become a member of any school committee. I do not imagine that he is going to become a member of a school committee in order to help with a lamington drive. I think that it is very likely that if the Minister becomes a member of a school committee, whatever that school committee might be——

Mr FitzGerald: There is a difference between "may" and "shall".

Mr WELLS: I take the honourable member's interjection. There is a difference between "may" and "shall". If the legislation had stated "shall", the Minister would have had to become a member of every independent school committee. The legislation states that he "may", and therefore he may become a member of any school committee.

As I was saying to the House, the reason he would be doing that would be in order to centralise the construction of curriculums in those schools.

A little further on, the proposed subsection (2) states—

> "Nothing in subsection (1) (a) shall be construed as conferring authority on the Minister to undertake such membership other than by prior invitation from or agreement with the particular corporation, committee, council, group or body concerned."

In other words, the Minister cannot become a member of such school committee unless he receives an invitation. However, the absolutely crucial point, which the legislation fails to mention, is how a school committee can remove the Minister from that committee once he has become a member of it. This legislation makes no mention of how a school committee can remove the Minister once he has become a member of that committee. Once the Minister has become a member of a school committee, he is there for good.

Mr Elliott: This has overtones of your $1.3 billion story, and we might have to get Sir William Knox to put you right again. He seems to be able to sort you out on this.

Mr WELLS: I thank the honourable member for Cunningham for his useful interjection. His remarks might be relevant to some other debate, but they are not relevant to the debate on the Education Act.

The honourable member was complaining some time ago that speakers were not addressing the Bill. The Bill is now being addressed, and the honourable member wants to talk about the missing $1.3 billion.

I wish to speak to the proposed new section 6A(2). The point that I am making is that, before the Minister can become a member of a school committee, he must receive an invitation. However, once that invitation is issued—and it may be issued for a specific purpose; for example, a gullible school committee might invite the Minister to join that committee in order to involve the Minister in a fund-raising project for that school——

Mr Powell: The Minister will not be involved in that sort of thing.

Mr WELLS: Perhaps that committee will want the Minister to open a new class room block.

While the Minister was absent from this House, I mentioned that I did not expect that the proposed new section 6A(2) would require the Minister to become involved in lamington drives. However, if the Minister did become involved for such a purpose, he would become a member of that school committee and would therefore be able to centralise control of that school's curriculum to an extent that he would not be able to do had he not been a member of that committee.

Mr Littleproud: Read the clause—"by prior invitation". You have selectively read the clause.

Mr WELLS: I thank the honourable member for his incredibly foolish interjection. I have just read that clause into *Hansard.* If the honourable member had been half-awake, he would be aware of that fact.

Mr Littleproud: You refused to mention "by prior invitation" at first.

Mr WELLS: I am sorry that the honourable member failed to grasp the fact that, when I read the exact words of the proposed new section 6A(2), I did in fact make that point.

Yesterday, the honourable member proved himself to be a very slow learner. That state of affairs does not appear to have altered. For the benefit of the honourable member, I emphasise that the fault that I am pointing out in this legislation is that, once the Minister is a member of a school committee, the legislation does not provide the mechanism by which that school committee can remove him.

Mr Littleproud: Withdraw the invitation. It is as simple as that.

Mr WELLS: By that stage the Minister has already become a member of that school committee. The honourable member should read the Bill.

Another aspect of the legislation that I regard as extremely important involves the abolition of the Board of Secondary School Studies and the Board of Advanced Education and their replacement by the Queensland Post-Compulsory Course Accreditation Council.

The problem with that development is that it means a centralisation of control in the hands of the Minister with respect to the curriculum. As the boards existed previously, they had considerable independent statutory powers. However, the course accreditation council exists as an advisory body to advise the Minister.

Although that is the way that I read the legislation, if I have misunderstood the role of that council I would be very grateful if the Minister could correct me at the appropriate time. A statement by the Minister to the effect that that council will not have less independent powers than the previous boards had would be a great comfort to the education community.

Mr Powell: It is still a statutory authority.

Mr WELLS: I recognise that it is still a statutory authority.

I ask the Minister to correct me if I am wrong, but as I read the legislation it entrenches the council as an advisory body to the Minister with less independent powers than the previous boards had.

Mr Powell: They are all advisory as well.

Mr WELLS: Part of the function of those boards was to advise. However, not all of their functions related to the giving of advice.

The Bill states—

> "The functions of the Board of Secondary School Studies shall be—
>
> (a) to advise the Minister...
>
> (b) to issue Junior Certificates and Senior Certificates...
>
> (c) to approve syllabuses ...
>
> (d) to determine procedures ... "

A tremendous amount of independent discretion is vested in those boards. The council, however, is purely an advisory body, which therefore enables the Minister to centralise control and power over school syllabuses. The danger of that is that the Government has a track record of having interfered in school curriculums.

Mr Elliott: What about your former colleague, Senator Susan Ryan? How does it balance with her thoughts? You say that we tend to interfere. Surely, she is the arch-interferer.

Mr WELLS: The honourable member asked how I would balance Susan Ryan's thoughts with their thoughts. The scale would go completely out of kilter and probably break if I put one on each side. There is absolutely no balance. I am not sure what the honourable member is referring to.

Mr Elliott: You are saying what some of our friends in the independent school area would think of Senator Susan Ryan's approach to independent schools.

Mr WELLS: I think that they would be very glad of the Participation and Equity Program and various other programs that were introduced by Senator Ryan.

I wish now to talk about the Government's track record of interference in school curriculums. I refer specifically to the courses MACOS and SEMP, which were banned some time ago by this very Government.

Mr Powell: If the independent school sectors want to use them, they are free to do so.

Mr WELLS: I understand that the independent school sector was able to use those courses, and some of the independent schools did. In this State we had the bizarre situation in which a number of the independent schools were using courses that had been banned by the Premier and his Government on quite ridiculous grounds.

In this more-enlightened age, it might amuse honourable members of this House some years further on from when that banning occurred to recall exactly what was offensive in those courses. One of those courses showed video pictures of seagulls in the act of mating, and another one of them provided the information that Eskimos practised euthanasia. For those two offences, those courses were banned throughout Queensland Government schools.

Mr Powell: That is not correct. You are talking about MACOS, which was aimed at Grades 4 and 5, nine and 10-year-old children.

Mr WELLS: I am also talking about SEMP, the Social Education Materials Project, as well as Man: A Course of Study. The Minister will be very interested to hear that my sister was a member of the curriculum development centre that made up the Social Education Materials Project course. When the Premier spoke about banning that course, I was right onto it. I was well aware at that time of just what inanity he was perpetrating. The Government has a record of having banned courses. It has a record of having interfered in curriculums.

Mr Powell: It has a record of being re-elected, too.

Mr WELLS: Yes, but never of having won an election. The Government has often been re-elected, but never has it obtained 50 per cent of the vote, and never will it obtain 50 per cent of the vote.

I make it clear to the Minister that I do not imagine that he would embark on such a program of banning courses or of control of curriculums. However, I believe that he has some colleagues whom he would not trust as far as he could throw them. If one of those colleagues got into the position in which the Minister is now sitting, it might become a very dangerous weapon for him to wield. If a Government which has shown its colours and preparedness to ban a course is subsequently in a position to actually stipulate that certain things may be taught, we may find ourselves in a situation in which we are experiencing indoctrination rather than education. The difference between the two, of course, is that education is the development of the capability to think constructively and find solutions to problems on an individual basis, whereas indoctrination is merely the instilling of information which may subsequently be regurgitated.

One may find that the capacity for original thought and the capacity for full development referred to by the Minister during his second-reading speech are undermined by the reforms instituted by the Minister and that, in hands less reliable than those of the Minister, those reforms may well be used to subvert the very ideals he premised in his second-reading speech.

Mr Littleproud: Critical thinking and comprehensive skills are all part and parcel of education qualities. How does that compare with what you are insinuating?

Mr WELLS: I thank the honourable member. His ideas on critical thinking are of great value to the House. This is the first occasion upon which I have seen any evidence of it. The last two interjections made by the honourable member related either to a previous speech I had made or to something I was saying 10 minutes ago.

Diversity of ideas, diversity of opinions and diversity of approaches constitute the very stuff of which advances in knowledge are made. It is those things that tend to be undermined by this Bill. It is the clash of ideas and the diversity of ideas that may very well be undermined by the provisions of this Bill. This Bill gives the Minister power to

undermine those things. For those reasons, I oppose the Bill, as I opposed it at the time when the Minister and I spoke at the Indooroopilly school.

I wish to draw the attention of the Minister to one or two other related educational matters. The first is the question of teacher aides. The cut-backs in teacher aides in the area of Brisbane that I am familiar with, namely, the north side of Brisbane, is causing great hardship in a number of schools. The so-called rationalisation that has occurred means that several schools on the north side of Brisbane are suffering considerable disadvantages and that many students are suffering hardship as a result of restraints that affect their schools. I have heard from many teacher aides who have had their hours cut back and from many parents who are concerned that their children will no longer get the degree of attention that they previously received. I see in the Chamber honourable members from whose electorates I have heard identical complaints. I ask the Minister to reconsider the policy and look to reviewing it with a view to alleviating the hardship that has been caused on at least the northern side of Brisbane.

I wish to draw the attention of the Minister to another matter that affects the north side of Brisbane. I hope that the Minister will correct me if I am under a misapprehension with respect to this particular matter. I raise the issue of new teachers and the provision of new jobs for teachers on the north side of Brisbane. My understanding is that this year there will not be any graduates from colleges of advanced education who will be employed in the education system, at least on the north side of Brisbane.

Mrs Nelson: Your understanding is wrong.

Mr WELLS: I would be grateful if the Minister would correct me if I am wrong. I have already acknowledged that I may be under a misapprehension with respect to this matter, but I have been advised that no new appointments will be made to schools on the north side of Brisbane.

I understand that any secondary school teachers who retire from schools located on the north side of Brisbane will be replaced, but not by recent graduates from colleges of advanced education. They will be replaced by primary school teachers who are regarded by the department as surplus to operational standards. If that is incorrect, I would be very grateful if the Minister would advise me. I am not putting this as an accusation; I mention it as something that I have heard. I stand to be corrected on that matter.

I revert now to the matter that I was discussing before I raised those two matters briefly with the Minister, namely, the merits of the Bill. I summarise my objections to the Bill as follows. The Bill centralises power over the curriculum and puts it into the hands of the Minister in a way that is unacceptable to an open society and in a way that is unacceptable in an education system that has been built on the generation of diversity of ideas.

Mrs Nelson: Have you read Mr Dawkins' Bill?

Mr WELLS: I have certainly read Mr Dawkins' Bill—and an excellent Bill it is.

If honourable members take the time to familiarise themselves with the Japanese education system—and I am sure that very many of them will—they will be aware that that system is based on the dissemination not of a diversity of information but of a unitary track of skills. The Japanese students are forced to cram; they are made to work long hours; and they produce the goods in terms of the technocracy which manifests itself in Japan. But what always surprises them is the degree of capacity for original thought, inventiveness and natural curiosity that Australians have.

The surprise which Japanese educators express when somebody pursues knowledge for its own sake—learning for its own sake—is a reflection of an education system that is not based on the dissemination of a diversity of ideas, that is not based on the conflict of opinions, that is not based on the teaching of acquisitive skills in respect of learning, but rather is based on the obtaining of skills for the reproduction of tasks which have already been set.

The sort of education system that we on this side of the House support is a free education system, the sort of education system that does encourage that diversity. For that reason, we on this side of the House will be opposing the Bill.

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (5.11 p.m.): Unlike many of the other members on the Minister's Education committee, who have been teachers or who have been actively involved, as it might be said, in the processes of education in this State, I take a layman's point of view. I appreciate the standard of education that I was afforded by my parents. Many members on both sides of the House, particularly those on our side, I suppose, have a wide knowledge and understanding of the education system and a background in it.

This afternoon I listened with great interest to this debate. In many ways, this legislation is quite unusual in as much as it has generated a tremendous amount of interest. In many instances, it has generated a lot of heat in the community.

I was interested to hear the comments made by the honourable member for Mount Isa. To be fair to him, I must say that I understand he was given someone else's speech. Furthermore, he, like some of his colleagues, was not here in the 1970s when there was a tremendous amount of aggravation and numerous problems in respect of the Board of Secondary School Studies. If he spoke to some of his party's present leaders, he would understand that people such as David Byrne, Dennis Young and the honourable member for the silent majority out in Everton had great concerns about the Board of Secondary School Studies.

Mr White: Who was the honourable member for the silent majority?

Mr ELLIOTT: The former member for Everton, Brian Lindsay.

Mr White: We have to forgive you, seeing you went to the Southport School.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is right. Not all of us have had that superior Catholic education that other people have had.

In all seriousness—there is perhaps a lack of understanding on the part of the honourable member for Mount Isa. Education went through a real problem period. Those people whom I have just mentioned were very, very antagonistic towards and very critical of the Board of Secondary School Studies. They felt that they were being snowed. Many of them were former teachers. They were on the then Minister's Education committee. That background needs to be understood before the history of this legislation is looked at.

At that stage the members of the Education committee would come to the joint party meetings and tell us of the horrendous problems they were having with these technocrats, if I can call them that. They felt that in some respects those who were involved in the formation of curriculums and so on were academic snobs. Many of us did not believe the members of the Education committee—we thought that they were exaggerating—so they asked us to attend one of the meetings. I was certainly one of those who went along. I was quite amazed to hear the sort of jargon that was used. I said to some of these people that they were doing their level best to snow that Education committee. They were talking gobbledegook. I am trying to get across to the House the message that these people did not use plain, everyday, reasonable English when talking to the members of the Education committee. These people were not trying to understand the point of view of the members of the committee but were trying to snow them and convince them of the educators' point of view.

That point was probably the embryonic stage of the problems that we in this House have had with the Board of Secondary School Studies. The Minister entered this place in 1974 and was a member of that Education committee. He knows only too well what I am talking about. The philosophy behind the Minister's thinking really has its genesis back in that time, when the system was trying to push square pegs into round holes, if I can use that analogy. It is quite incredible that the system tried to push children in

the direction of academic excellence when, quite frankly, they were not attuned to that; they were not interested in it. In many cases even their parents were not pushing them in that direction.

Whether honourable members like this Bill, the first draft of the Bill or neither of them has nothing to do with the fact that the new thrust and direction that education will take under this legislation will be a great improvement on the old system. I have four children, one of whom is in Year 2. Another will commence Year 1 next year. So I have a very real interest in education. No-one should suggest that, because many of us on this side of the Chamber come from the country or are laymen, we are not interested in education. My wife, who was a teacher, every now and then gives the Minister for Education a hard time. On occasions she has been known to give him a few pointers. Everyone must be vitally interested in education.

The Board of Secondary School Studies assumed a mantle of power that it was not entitled to. Its members created an image and position for themselves and went about doing things that they were never intended to do. All the new structures that are being put into place are far more relevant. As such, the thrust of the legislation is very much to the liking of most people.

Many people have spoken about a lack of consultation on this Bill. I refute that. I would have to agree that the Government copped some flak over the first Bill. That is not necessarily a bad thing. If a person working in a democracy cannot cop a bit of criticism, he should not be in his job. If he is not prepared to listen to people, he is going about the whole thing the wrong way.

That people will have contrary viewpoints is not unreasonable. When any idea is first floated, it attracts a lot of criticism, particularly when it is something as controversial as a total change in the attitude and approach towards education in this State. So I do not think the criticism of the first Bill was a bad thing at all. As one who attended an independent school, I was worried about one aspect.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: Some people might say "snob".

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: The honourable member did not say anything? I should have known better than to think that he would say something like that.

Some people use books and learning to build a wall around themselves. Other people use them as a means of furthering their careers and learning how to get on better with other people. Education can be a double-edged sword. It can be used——

Mr Davis: Very profound thoughts.

Mr ELLIOTT: Yes, I am usually not so profound, but we are waxing lyrical this afternoon.

I attended a function with many people with whom I went to school and I found that they were very, very concerned about the original Bill and the direction in which the Government was heading. As a result of that, I took a keener interest in the Bill.

This Parliament has to operate with a committee system. No-one can be an expert on everything. Quite frankly, it is not good enough for honourable members to tell their colleagues how to suck eggs all the time. If members of Parliament do not know how to do their job, there is no hope for the system. I am a member of various committees. I have expertise in certain areas. Therefore, I should in the main try to stick to the areas of my own personal experience or ability when matters are being dealt with by committees of which I am a member.

Because of the feedback that members of the Government were receiving, many of those who were not on the committee took a keener interest in this Bill than they would

in the normal course. I am speaking this afternoon as a person who has four young children and is vitally interested in education.

Mr Davis: I'll give you 3 out of 10.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is a pretty good score from the honourable member.

I have spoken about this Bill with a number of people who, like myself, come from the country. The people of my electorate have relative ease of access to good schools. My colleagues the member for Roma and the member for Warrego and members who represent northern electorates would experience greater problems of access to schools. Of course, the independent schools are far more important in country areas because, quite frankly, the people have no option but to send their children to independent schools. Most of those people make immense sacrifices to do so.

The attitude and the influence of those people who run independent education in this State has a very profound effect on country people. They know just how important it is that their children receive a good education. If their children are to have any chance of succeeding in life, in society and in business, they have to receive a good education, which so many people take for granted because they are able to send their children down the road to an excellent high school to receive education as a matter of course.

Mr Davis: Brisbane State High School.

Mr ELLIOTT: Brisbane State High School is an excellent school. Is the honourable member an old boy?

Mr Davis: No.

Mr ELLIOTT: From the "intelligent" way in which the honourable member speaks, I thought that he must have been an old boy.

On a more serious note—it is most important that it be understood that people out in the bush are very concerned about education. They listen very carefully to the people who run independent schools. After all, it is the only opportunity for many of them to provide their children with a good education.

I thank the members of the Education committee, the Minister and all of those people on the various advisory committees that were set up around the State, not just in this Parliament or in the party. The work that has been done on this Bill over a long period is very much appreciated. I think it is important to put on record that the Government believes that that process has been very useful. It took the Government to the stage at which it drafted the new Bill that is now being debated. Some concerns are still held but there are fewer problems with this Bill than there were with the original Bill. This Government wants to take a look at the way those committees are structured and, as put by my colleague the honourable member for Condamine when he led for the Government in this debate, we ask that the Minister in clause 37 (2) (i) put those committees——

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: I do not have a photographic memory like the honourable member for Brisbane Central and I had to refer to notes to see which clause I was talking about. It is nice that the honourable member has such a high intellect that he is able to lift the standard of debate to such a great degree by his interjections. That is why he has the nickname that he has.

It is important to realise that this matter is something that people in independent schools are concerned about. I have had discussions with a few headmasters of independent schools, and with Mr Munns, head of the independent schools association. Many of them are not concerned that this Minister will use his authority in a heavy-handed way. What does concern them is that at some time in the future Queensland may have another Education Minister who may have a totally different view and attitude;

who may be overbearing, dogmatic and dictatorial. As my colleague has suggested to the Minister, we ask that he consider those comments.

It is very important to realise that, although this legislation is under debate tonight, the actual constitution of the committees is provided for by regulation. Therefore, there is nothing to stop continuing consultation with those people.

Mr Powell: That will continue to be done.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is very good.

Mr Powell: Of necessity, that has to be.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is very good, and I thank the Minister. Basically what everyone wants to know is that that consultation process is not cut off at the knees and that we are still in a position to work our way through this. There are many different points of view. There is not only the point of view of independent schools, whose point of view I represent on behalf of those from country areas——

Mr Davis: That's only because you come from the country.

Mr ELLIOTT: I will be quite honest; that is part of it. Obviously one is always interested in one's own background and problems. Many people in the country have similar problems to one's own, and other people's points of view and attitudes need to be respected.

The State school system is absolutely fantastic and I see the terrific work that is being done in my own electorate. In many of the towns in my electorate there are people who went to private schools—possibly their fathers before them attended private schools—yet they have sent their children to a State school in that town because the standard is so high. They have not bothered to send their kids away to private schools.

Mr Littleproud: Thanks to the National Party.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is right. It shows the standard of these schools. I am referring to people in my electorate who are veterinarians and other high income-earners within the community. It is not as though they would not be able to afford to send their children away.

Mr Powell: That is because we have raised the standard and reputation of State schools.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is right and we should continue to strive for this. It is important to realise that those independent schools could pull the pin and pull out of educating so many denominational children, either in the Catholic system—right down to the convents; primary school level—or the other denominations. It is not good enough to worry solely about that area. One has to be interested and concerned about the State school system because it has a role to play—all of us appreciate that fact—as do many of the fully independent schools which are not allied to——

Mr Davis: You are starting to be boring now.

Mr ELLIOTT: It is not nice to talk like that.

Mr Sherrin interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: It is like some pills a person sometimes has to take—they are sugar-coated and they seem very nice on the outside. When I take an interjection from the honourable member for Brisbane Central, he says nasty things about me.

It is important for honourable members to understand the attitudes to various schools. Senator Susan Ryan was responsible for the development of many of the attitudes towards schools over the last few years. The independent schools have a tremendous fear of Senator Susan Ryan. If it were not for the fact that Dawkins, perhaps

Bob Hawke to a lesser degree, and some of those people had not attended independent schools, Senator Susan Ryan would have had her way and she would have absolutely annihilated some of those schools.

Mr Littleproud: She was off the track, wasn't she?

Mr ELLIOTT: The honourable member is right. If the philosophies and approach of Senator Susan Ryan were allowed to run rampant in the Government, a situation would develop in which there would be no independent thought. We would have a State school system that would be absolutely rigid. There would be no variation in that system. The attitude adopted by Senator Susan Ryan is unreasonable.

I support the basic thrust of the Bill. I think that many of us have had some misgivings in the past. We appreciate that the consultation process will continue. I commend the Minister for having been prepared to continue to take on board all the problems that we kept raising with him. I am sure that at times it might have been a bit of a bore to listen to us. I think that the effort has been worth while and that the end result will be something of which we can all be proud.

Ms WARNER (South Brisbane) (5.33 p.m.): Again it is distressing to have to draw to the attention of the House a number of concerns that have been expressed by the public. The changes proposed by the Bill have very little educational rationale behind them, as have a number of the other determinations by the present Minister for Education. In fact, on many occasions over a number of years, educationalists and people within the educational community have been exceedingly confused about what the Minister has intended, particularly with Education 2000, which never seemed to make any sense to anybody. We are still wondering how that proposal will be implemented and what its eventual impact on education will be.

What Queensland is sure of in respect of the Education Minister's performance is that at no stage has he ever managed to provide the State education system with adequate funding. That, of course, is a matter for severe condemnation. I think that the critical factor about the changes that are proposed is that there is no clear argument or reason for them. Despite the so-called consultation process that has gone on, a whole range of educationalists and members of the community in Queensland are seriously worried about the future of education. It does not just stop with this legislation. The major problem that I find with this legislation is not so much the fact that it exists or that there has been so much furore or argument about it, but that it does not address the major problems facing Queensland's education system.

It would not be an overexaggeration to say that, because of funding shortages, Queensland's education system is experiencing a severe crisis. Anybody with any knowledge of what the p. and c. associations and the teachers in schools are saying would understand that they are finding it extremely difficult to do the same job this year as they were doing last year.

Mr Gately: Who created the shortages in education funding?

Ms WARNER: It certainly was not the Federal Government. In fact, the Federal Government has increased funding for education in this State. The decrease in funding has occurred at the State level.

For the benefit of the honourable member for Currumbin, I reiterate that funding cuts have been made at the State level, not at the Federal level. I wish that the honourable member for Currumbin would understand and inwardly digest that very simple fact.

Mr Hamill: Mr Gately might like to know that there has been a 9.5 per cent increase in Commonwealth funding for primary and secondary schooling.

Ms WARNER: I think that those points have been made time and time again.

The controversy surrounding the proposed amendment to the Education Act relates to the role of the Minister. Let us look at the role of the Minister in terms of the manner

in which he has conducted his portfolio over a number of issues. How can people have confidence in a Minister who, in this day and age, seriously considers that the question of so-called creation science is a priority in State schools and that it should be taught? That is clearly absurd. It flies in the face of probably a 99 per cent majority of science teachers and scientists who would understand that creation science is not a science at all.

Creationism is a story that appears at the beginning of the Bible. It is a mythological story about how people might have been created. How can people have faith in this Minister when he espouses views of that nature?

Not only in relation to creation science does the Minister appear to be a little cranky; he appears to be cranky on a whole range of other subjects. Despite the fact that a large number of reports have been conducted into education and the nature of sexism that exists in schools——

Mr Gately: Has this got anything to do with affirmative action?

Ms WARNER: It has a lot to do with affirmative action. It also has a lot to do with discrimination.

Mr Gately: What about what is happening in the New South Wales education system?

Ms WARNER: I wish that the honourable member for Currumbin would think before he opens his mouth, because he makes very little sense.

Mr Gately: Tell us what you think should happen with the teaching staff in Queensland.

Ms WARNER: The honourable member for Currumbin, who sits behind me, is taking advantage of the fact that his voice is very much louder than mine. I am sorry about that. However, the fact that his voice is louder than mine does not necessarily mean that he makes any more sense.

Mr Gately interjected.

Ms WARNER: The honourable member is like an empty vessel. He tends to make a lot of noise but absolutely no sense.

If we are looking for sense and rational attitudes in education, I will return to the issue, namely, the fact that the Minister has time and time again completely denied the quite objective research that has been undertaken into the education of girls. Four years ago in the House I raised this matter with the Minister. Four years ago he was blind and deaf on the subject; and four years later he is just as blind, just as deaf and just as stupid on the subject of education for girls. One of the Minister's major quips in the House at the time was that, if we were looking at non-sexist sport education in schools and looking towards such a terrible thing as the prospect of girls playing football, there was absolutely no way that he was going to address inequalities in sport in school and, furthermore, that he had three daughters and none of them wanted to play football. That is a particularly narrow-minded view. I have not heard his daughters' views on the subject, but they may very well have liked the opportunity to express a view. One would not know. The fact of life is that sexism in school is a very subtle thing. It is not obvious or overt. It is not something that someone with a simple mind can understand. However, if honourable members look under the seeming reality, they can see that it exists, and that girls do not perform as well as boys at a whole range of levels in education. They do not have the same opportunities.

Mr Randell interjected.

Ms WARNER: The member for Mirani is suggesting that girls actually want to have fewer educational facilities than boys do. He says that girls want it that way. Those were the words that he used.

Mr Randell: I just said that some girls in this civilisation mightn't be feminine.

Ms WARNER: So the honourable member thinks that educated girls are not feminine. Now we get down to the real prejudices and the real biases. He is condemned by the words out of his mouth. We do not really need to explain what sexist attitudes are when we have the honourable member for Mirani interjecting and adequately demonstrating for everybody—the public of Queensland—what National Party thinking is on education for girls. He said that it makes them unfeminine. Of course, we would not want such a thing, would we? No.

Mr Gately: That is not what he said.

Ms WARNER: It is exactly what he said. He said that they might not want those facilities because they might want to be feminine. That is exactly what he said. I do not need to go much further than that comment to accurately and clearly demonstrate the sort of prejudice that I am talking about.

I can see Madam Deputy Speaker smiling knowingly in the chair because she knows what I am talking about. She knows what the attitudes are on the Government side of the House; and I dare say, if I were to look harder, they are on this side of the House, too. We have a hard job.

We have had the first lesson, and everybody protests too much. I am only really talking about a little issue in education. I am only talking about the education of 50 per cent of the school population. It is only a minor issue, isn't it? It is the sort of thing that gets tagged on at the end. Susan Ryan has to beg for money from the Federal Government to implement an equality program within schools. She has to do that at the Federal level. At the Federal level, which is doing better than the State level, the Government is still not quite there. It still has not grasped the nettle properly. An allocation of $1m was made to attack the very serious problem of achieving equality of education for girls.

We have the problem. We have enormous acres of print and an enormous number of reports pointing out the problem to us. However, the Minister continues to be blind and deaf on the subject. Even though the Federal Minister has allocated money to Queensland schools to achieve equality of education——

Mr Powell: If you are mentioning something about inequalities in Parliament, which side of Parliament has the most female members?

Ms WARNER: I grant the Minister that that is the case, but because of the gerrymander, the Government also has more seats. The headlines state "No new deal for schoolgirls", "School sex policy not needed, says the Government", "Powell rejects policy for girls" and "Sexist schools are out except in Queensland". We have a complete denial, just as we had a denial a moment ago from some Government members that discrimination does not exist in schools. Honourable members should look at the material, the facts and the statistics, particularly in the areas of maths and science, which are the hard subjects that enable students to obtain jobs that pay good money in the end. Those are the areas in which girls are discriminated against in schools.

Mr Gately: How are they discriminated against?

Ms WARNER: If the honourable member were to look at the way in which teachers approach the education of girls in schools——

Mr Gately: How are they discriminated against?

Ms WARNER: I am telling the honourable member how it happens, if he would only listen. He should note the way in which girls are treated and the whole social structure that operates in the schools. He should look at the choice of books and the curriculum, and note the way in which they are slanted. He should look also at the attitude of staff in terms of the kind of attention that is given to individual students.

Mr Randell: Oh, that is not true.

Ms WARNER: The teachers do not even know that they are doing it half the time. It is simply the case that that is what happens.

Mr Henderson: You do not send your children to a GPS school, do you?

Ms WARNER: I am sorry, but it is what happens.

In my field—and the honourable members on the Government side of the Chamber may correct me if they think differently on this subject—gender does not affect capacity to learn. I believe that girls can learn—and do learn—to the same degree and have the same capacity as boys. Furthermore, I believe that girls' schooling should be equally valued with boys' schooling. In many cases, the equality of opportunity in education may require some different approaches being adopted because of inequalities that exist within our society. That is what Government members find hard to grasp. They would actually have to make different arrangements.

Schooling for girls and boys should reflect the entitlement of all people to personal respect, economic security and participation in decisions that affect their lives. Schools should educate girls and boys for satisfying, responsible and productive living. High-quality education for girls is a mainstream responsibility for all educators. Schools should provide a curriculum that meets the educational needs and entitlements of girls. That is where the education policy of this Government falls down.

I do not wish to be personal, but I have two daughters who are pretty good at maths. That was the case throughout their school years until they reached puberty. When they reached puberty, every other girl in their class suddenly said, "Oh, maths! It's really boring. It's really dull. We shouldn't be doing that. There are much more interesting things to do."

Mr Gately: That is by choice, isn't it?

Ms WARNER: Yes, I know that. It happens because it is a societal attitude. Maths is fine all the way throughout their school years but suddenly, for some reason, it becomes almost unladylike and not the acceptable thing to do.

Unfortunately, I made the mistake in the case of my eldest daughter of allowing her to give up maths. She is not doing it now. Actually, when she was younger she won a prize in that GPS school maths competition. I cannot even remember which year it was.

Mr Randell: Which school was that?

Ms WARNER: Brisbane State High School—the local school in my electorate. Despite the fact that she won a prize for maths, two years later she was saying that she could not do maths; but she could. My second daughter is still struggling along with maths and is doing very well, even though she says, "I can't do it".

Most other girls in my daughters' classes give up maths and do something else. They suffer enormous pressure to give up a very valuable subject—a subject which, if taken and passed at Year 12 level, will result in a higher TE score than the TE score for English or other soft subjects. That is a fact of life.

I say that there is not enough encouragement or counselling going on in the schools. There is not enough understanding of the phenomenon I have described in schools to overcome the problem. As a result, girls drop maths and science and are not given a high TE score. Fewer girls reach the level of tertiary education and obtain jobs that are highly remunerated in our society. Those are the true facts of life.

The Minister has consistently refused to accept all the arguments raised with him by educators and others. Officers of his own department are outraged by what the Minister has been doing and they have left the department in droves. The woman that compiled the Q program for equal opportunity left the department. She could not cope

any more with the rather ridiculous and hypocritical attitudes of the Department of Education. She left Queensland and went to a southern State. Large numbers of Queensland educators do that because they cannot cope—yes, they cannot cope—with what is going on in the Department of Education, not only at the secondary level but also at every other level. In fact, everybody knows that, unless a person within the Education Department has some "in" in the National Party, he is really not going to get very far. That is the fact of life within the Education Department in this State.

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order. I cannot let that remark go unchallenged. It is totally untrue and is an absolute insult to senior officers of the Education Department who get where they are by merit.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Harvey): Order! There is no point of order.

Ms WARNER: I am glad that the Minister protests that that is not the case. I am afraid that his claim is not the understanding of a whole range of people within Queensland. It is not the understanding of a large number of people who know what is going on within the Education Department and within schools.

Because of the level of fear and intimidation that exists not only within the Education Department but also within every other Government department, that assertion cannot be nailed home. It is something that will be cleaned out; it is something that will be changed. When the Labor Party gets into Government, it will start listening to the professionals within those departments.

Mr COOPER (Roma) (5.51 p.m.): It certainly gives me a great deal of pleasure to take part in this debate and to bring, I guess, another dimension to it. Having listened to the debate, I find it disappointing that, despite all the complaining and so on about the gagging of the debate and the opportunities that have been given to honourable members to allow them to speak, the Opposition really has not applied itself to the actual Bill. Opposition members have spent most of their time personally attacking the Minister. Their arguments could have easily contained more depth and they could have made a hell of a lot better contribution to the debate. However, I am afraid there has not been very much substance in their arguments.

I am quite prepared to say that the Bill certainly had a difficult birth. We all know that. However, it needs to be remembered that the Bill was introduced back in April, at which time the Minister gave assurances that it would be amended in part or in full, or withdrawn. The Minister has complied with those assurances. The Bill has been on the table for a long time.

I believe it is time to commend the work of the consultative committee—the working party. The members of that committee really applied themselves to their task. They put 48 hours of intense work into it. The only disappointing part of it was that the AISQ representative, Mr Munns, attended 30 hours of discussions and then withdrew from them. He was probably acting under instructions. In the past, unions have been attacked for withdrawing from discussions when they should have continued in them and put forward their point of view. To withdraw is self-defeating. It is the bat-and-ball syndrome. The only real reason that Mr Munns gave for withdrawing was that he required more time. I do not believe that that was really an adequate excuse, especially from a very intelligent person.

I believe that this legislation will work. The changes are necessary.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I rise to a point of order. It is clear that the member for Roma has taken over the Minister's speech notes and is actually delivering the Minister's reply speech.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr COOPER: If it is absolute lies, is the honourable member going to get up and make a speech in reply?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member for Roma to continue.

Mr COOPER: If only the honourable member knew. It is pathetic. It epitomises the depth of the Opposition's contribution. It is really pathetic.

I do believe that this legislation will work. All that is required is the right attitude. I am certain that that will come about.

It is realised that at present the education system caters for many students. In particular, I would say that it caters for the top 30 per cent who do have academic ability.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Windsor will defer to the Chair when entering the Chamber.

Mr COOPER: The education system does not cater for 70 per cent of its students in the way that the community would really like to see. The Bill is a genuine attempt to see that those students get every consideration. These children are the backbone of society. Not everyone can be an academic. Society needs tradesmen and people to operate in essential services, commerce, business, the rural sector and to do menial tasks, if I can use that term. It does not really matter what the task is or how menial it is; it is how well a person does it. Over many, many years the Government has received complaints from industry and business that the education system does not prepare kids for the jobs that are available in the community. I was very pleased to note the following part of a press release from the Metal Trades Industry Association—

> "The Education sector appears not to have been sufficiently aware of, nor responsive to, the requirements of industry for a well educated, adaptable workforce as it attempts to compete in the international marketplace.
>
> . . .
>
> The Metal Trades Industry Association has welcomed the decision of the Minister for Education, Lin Powell, to proceed with controversial changes to the Education Act.
>
> . . .
>
> The Advisory Council on Education for Economic Development will provide industry and commerce with its first real opportunity to contribute directly to the development of education initiatives which may be beneficial to the economic development of the State.
>
> The action of the Minister also needed to be applauded because it would put Queensland in an ideal position to negotiate with the Commonwealth Government on education matters following the recent creation of the new Federal Ministry of Employment, Education and Training."

There is nothing wrong with the fact that more students are staying at school longer and continuing through to Years 11 and 12. In fact, that is a very good thing. I believe that the age of 15 is too young for young people to leave school. There is a very long time to live after the age of 15. The Roma area has the College of the South West, which will commence in 1988. It is the third college of its type in the State and the first rural college. It will cater for Years 11 and 12, TAFE, trade courses and agricultural combined skills courses, but tertiary entrance will still be available. It will be a flexible system so that students can swap courses as they see fit. It will also cater for those who may be termed late developers. It will adopt a commonsense and pragmatic approach. The college has a considerable amount of agricultural land available to it and will adopt a rural flavour by having courses to suit. A consultative committee that is now being formed—I am having an input into that—will ensure district involvement. There will

be very good co-operation with local farmers and graziers, who will work in tandem with the college. The college will become far more operational in 1989.

An earlier request was for a pastoral college, but the establishment of the College of the South West is a compromise that will cater for everyone in the community. Much will depend on whether the college works—but that is a question of attitude; a question of making it work. I believe that it will work. It will certainly cater for a wide cross-section of that community and will deal with matters both economic and rural in the Roma area.

The college will also cater for the outlying districts of Surat, Mitchell, Injune and Wallumbilla. That is in hand. Buses are being organised to make sure that all those regional districts can take advantage of the college. That will provide an at-home education system that is adapted to the region and provides suitable courses. I will certainly be watching its progress very closely to determine its success and will try to help wherever I possibly can.

The P-10 is being tested at the Roma middle school, which is absolutely brilliantly designed. The school appears to be running very well. Of course, it is very hard to say that until it has operated for a few years. Certainly it is a case of so far, so good. As a complete layman on the education side of things, I really cannot see why so many people fear the P-10 system.

The past 12 years have seen many changes, but it is only right that the education system adapts to, and meets, changing needs. That is as it should be.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! As the time is now 6 p.m., in compliance with the terms of the resolution adopted by the House earlier today, I will now put the question.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 43	
Ahern	Lane
Alison	Lester
Berghofer	McKechnie
Bjelke-Petersen	McPhie
Booth	Menzel
Borbidge	Muntz
Burreket	Neal
Chapman	Nelson
Clauson	Newton
Cooper	Powell
Elliott	Randell
Fraser	Sherrin
Gately	Simpson
Gibbs, I. J.	Slack
Gilmore	Stephan
Glasson	Stoneman
Gunn	Tenni
Harper	Veivers
Henderson	
Hinton	
Hinze	*Tellers:*
Hobbs	Littleproud
Hynd	FitzGerald

NOES, 38	
Ardill	Palaszczuk
Beanland	Scott
Beard	Shaw
Braddy	Sherlock
Burns	Smith
Campbell	Smyth
Casey	Underwood
D'Arcy	Vaughan
De Lacy	Warburton
Eaton	Warner
Gibbs, R. J.	Wells
Goss	White
Gygar	Yewdale
Hamill	
Hayward	
Innes	
Knox	
Lee	
Lickiss	
McElligott	
Mackenroth	*Tellers:*
McLean	Davis
Milliner	Prest

Resolved in the affirmative.

Sitting suspended from 6.06 to 7.30 p.m.

Committee

Hon. L. W. Powell (Isis—Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5—

Mr UNDERWOOD (7.30 p.m.): Clause 5 is headed, "Repeal of and new s. 2. Parts and Divisions." What I am concerned about—and I tried to raise it at the second-reading stage during the contribution by the member for Roma—is that there has not

been a reply by the Minister. Honourable members have gone to a great deal of trouble to prepare their contributions and the debate has been limited to three and a half hours. Not one word of reply was heard from the Minister during the second-reading stage of the debate. Of course, the second-reading stage of the debate concluded with the division prior to the dinner recess.

I think that it behoves the Minister to make a reply. Of course, the problem that the Minister faces is that the Government has moved the gag on what I stressed during my contribution at the second-reading stage is one of the most important pieces of legislation to come before this Parliament for some time.

Mr Elliott: You guys say that every night.

Mr UNDERWOOD: The Government does it every night. That is the problem in this place—lack of democracy and the adoption of a democratic process.

Mr Elliott: Do you say the same thing to your Federal colleagues with their cognate debates?

Mr UNDERWOOD: Is the honourable member now telling me that what the Labor Party does in Canberra is right? On every other occasion he says that it is wrong.

Mr Elliott: We do it very rarely, and generally when you people have filibustered and carried on.

Mr UNDERWOOD: So the honourable member would say that honourable members have been filibustering and carrying on during this debate?

Mr Elliott: When someone gets up and talks for 60 or 70 minutes or even 40 minutes.

Mr UNDERWOOD: It is obvious that the honourable member was not in the Chamber during the debate this afternoon because no-one spoke for more than 30 minutes. Quite clearly, the honourable member is right off the planet.

Mr Elliott: I have been here for the whole duration of this debate.

Mr UNDERWOOD: The honourable member was not even present. He is paid to appear in this Chamber and make contributions. Now he is trying to make a contribution by way of interjection. This morning the honourable member voted to cut off this debate, so he really does not have a leg to stand on in trying to express a point of view now.

In any debate, regardless of whether it has been gagged, the Minister has an obligation to respond to the contributions by honourable members on both sides of the Chamber. That is particularly so in this instance in light of the fact that the Bill has only lain on the table for seven days. It is a major piece of legislation.

It is all very well for one or two members on the Government benches to say that the legislation has been before the Parliament for months. It has not been before the Parliament for months. This is a radically different piece of legislation from the original legislation that was proposed. That has been admitted by Government members, including the member for Mansfield.

I want to comment on a couple of points that have been raised in the debate so far. One matter is in regard to the section that deals with the manufacture of software. Honourable members heard from the member for Mansfield that this particular section of the department is doing a wonderful job, that very good audio-visual materials are being produced by various sections of the department, that delegations have gone overseas to sell those videos and that there will be many sales and a large income from those sales.

As I pointed out by way of interjection during the contribution by the member for Mansfield, this program will come to a rapid halt because of the Government's Budget policy and its removal of up to 50 per cent of seconded teachers from these areas of work and putting them back into the class room.

In fact, people who have been working on, for example, educational software have been seriously thinking about not returning to the class room but moving out and setting up their own company, using the knowledge that they have acquired through their own skills and hard work, often without pay and out of hours. They are considering setting up their own businesses and selling the software themselves. Of course, not only will their talents be lost to the department and the children of Queensland but also the income from the sale of that software. The Minister will say that it has had no effect on the current program. That is so, because the current program has been developed to such a stage that it will continue even in the absence of the people who devised it.

Another serious flaw in the legislation, particularly when one looks at the composition of the accreditation council, is the absence of representatives of the students themselves. I am referring not to primary school students but to mature people who are of an age and reasoning to be able to stand up, think and speak for themselves. Most organisations or groups interested in education have a guernsey or someone who represents them, but the students—who are the consumers of eduction—do not have representatives on the council. This is a serious flaw in the legislation. In the CAEs and universities there are student representatives on the main councils and the academic or school boards of the institutions, but provision is not made for such a thing in this legislation. I have looked at many public and private briefs that have been sent to me from all interested parties, and not one of those submissions contains any provision for or any thought of student representation and what the students really think. That omission should be rectified.

The Government should have realised during the debate on Education 2000 the value of the students' opinions and giving them a chance to organise and express these opinions. This has not occurred in the debate on this legislation, because there was not enough time. Obviously this was not wanted and was thought to be unnecessary. I appeal to the Minister to amend this legislation in the near future, as I am sure that a number of amendments will be required to fix up the problems that will soon become apparent. Some of those problems have been addressed this evening by members in this debate and by other people outside.

Only this afternoon, a group of young adults who have been training in Queensland's tertiary institutions and who are seriously concerned—and justifiably so—about their future and the future of education in this state were outside this building. Those people are graduate teachers and people studying at CAEs who have been working hard for three or four years towards taking up positions in Queensland's class rooms and working with the young people of this State. Today, those young people clearly demonstrated that people in the community are concerned. The students need support by having a voice on the council. Quite often, students can contribute very significantly to the role and functions of councils of this kind.

I turn now to the subject of TAFE colleges and a disciplinary feature in regard to the handling of young people in this post-compulsory sector. I refer to an incident some time ago at the TAFE college at Hervey Bay when a young student at that college appeared in court charged with an offence. After the authorities had found out about that offence and his conviction, he was expelled—for want of a better word—from the TAFE college at Hervey Bay.

When listening to the speeches made by the Minister, I have always thought that TAFE colleges were something akin to a university. The people in TAFE regard themselves as a proper tertiary institution, and therefore believe that the students attending tertiary institutions have similar rights and privileges to those of students at other tertiary institutions. One of those rights is the right not to be treated like a secondary or primary school student. Why should a student who has been convicted of an offence in a court of law and already penalised be penalised again by the authorities in the TAFE institution?

Mr Powell: There is no TAFE college at Hervey Bay.

Mr UNDERWOOD: One likes to think of it as being a TAFE college.

Mr Beard: This is trivial compared with the political control of the curriculum. The big mistake is the political control of the curriculum; you know that.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I would have thought that the double penalising of a student at the Hervey Bay college would be political. If the honourable member for Mount Isa does not think that it is political, there is something wrong with his judgment. If the honourable member knew what the offence was that the young person had been convicted of, he would agree with me that it was a political decision. This can be compared with some instances of the Minister's political interference in the school system. The honourable member may have enjoyed his tea, but I would like him to allow me to finish.

If the honourable member does not think that the shutting-down of support services of audio-visual and software production and film libraries, etc., is not political, the honourable member should not participate in this debate. This is a political judgment that has been made by the Government. The Government has made a political judgment to reduce funding to Queensland's education system. I thought that the honourable member referred to that earlier in his speech. He ought to reconsider what has been said. If the honourable member does not think that the taking away of representation, or the opportunity for students to have representation, when decisions are made about their future and their studies is a political decision, once again there is something wrong with his judgment.

I turn now to the business and the functions of the accreditation council in relation to cross-accreditation, which, as well as the need for new courses, was one of the Labor Party's policies during the last State election. Queensland residents are probably more Anglo-Saxon in nature than our southern counterparts, although the nature of Queensland society is changing to a degree. Throughout Australia there is a need for people to study the ways, the cultures and the languages of our trading partners and our northern and eastern neighbours. Today a Tongan delegation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association visited this Parliament. There is a real need to study, and I would go so far as to say that there is a need to make compulsory at some stage in our schooling system, particularly in the secondary school area, the study, in various degrees, of our Asian neighbours and our trading partners. I think that we are all as guilty as anyone else in our community of an abysmal iganorance of those matters. Some members have had the privilege of visiting some of those people and talking with them, as happened tonight with the Tongan delegation. So honourable members are more favoured than others and have more experience in that area.

If we are to prosper and understand the people with whom we are dealing, we must learn those things as a matter of course. At the crossroads of the world—in Singapore and in other places—it is automatic for people to have a grasp of several languages. Some members have a better grasp of the English language than others. We think that we are the kings of the world. One has only to go outside Australia's boundaries to realise how illiterate we really are in communicating with other people throughout the world, particularly those people who are more important to us.

Asian languages, Asian studies, South Pacific languages and South Pacific studies are very important. Yet Queensland does not have one facility that teaches Pidgin English, which is the national language—I can see the Minister grimacing—of Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Solomons and, I believe, Vanuatu. My knowledge in that area is a bit shaky. The people in those areas have a very important bearing on our future. Facilities are needed in Queensland so that people learn Pidgin English. A person cannot even buy a self-help book or a set of cassette tapes anywhere in Queensland on that language.

Pidgin is just one language. The Indonesian, Japanese and Chinese languages also ought to be taught in our schools. I know that work was being done within the schools. People were working very hard and giving their own time and energies and using their own finances to do that. I would like to see the Government encourage that even further. It should also encourage the general public to take an interest in those languages. The

biggest hurdle of all is probably getting the general public to take a particular interest in those languages. The next step is for the Government to back up that interest financially by providing staff and resources. They are some of the matters that the Opposition wished to raise in this debate.

Mr POWELL: I would like to answer briefly some of the statements made by the member for Ipswich. Firstly, I thank the 10 members who participated in the second-reading debate. I must say that I was disappointed that there has not been an in-depth discussion from the members on the opposite side of the Chamber about the Bill itself. Its rationale was clearly stated, as were the structures that will be put in place and the reasons why they will be put in place and the benefits that will be derived by Queenslanders—not only schoolchildren but also Queenslanders generally—as a result of it. I am disappointed that members opposite generally depended for their total debate on newspaper clippings, some of which were extremely old. I can only suggest that their only research has been done by reading the *Courier-Mail*. It is a pity that they had not—

Mr INNES: I rise to a point of order. Not only has the Minister moved the gag in the House, but he is also now using the time for debate on the clauses that are contained in this legislation to respond to those honourable members who contributed to the second-reading debate. This is outrageous.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: You're trying to raise your ratings.

Mr INNES: I want to take part in the debate.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: You know you're in deep trouble.

Mr INNES: The honourable member got his promotion. He will have to show a lot more energy as spokesman on Mines and Energy.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! I have taken note of the honourable member's objection. I am sure that the Minister was using only introductory remarks. I am sure that he will reply now on clause 5.

Mr POWELL: The address that has just been delivered for approximately 12 minutes by the Opposition's spokesman ranged very wide. For example, he made statements along the lines that support staff had been cut in the film and video section of my department. That is a lot of nonsense. A number of units within the department have been brought together. The opportunity has been taken to rationalise the operation.

Mr Underwood: "Rationalisation" means cuts.

Mr POWELL: It does not mean cuts.

The honourable member for Ipswich West has no conception of what it is like to try to run an operation efficiently. This Government has rationalised the operation and has returned some of those people who were regarded as education officers—special duties—to the class room. It was never suggested that those people would be kept out of the class room for the rest of their working lives. In fact, there is a very good reason for bringing people out of the class room for a specific period of two, three or six months and then sending them back to the class room, because the experience that they have gained in head office can be utilised in the class room.

There is no basis for saying that this Government is cutting services. In fact, we are rationalising services so that they will be streamlined and more effective. There is no need to replace them. In fact, I believe that most of the EOSDs could go back to the class room and the support for the department would not change at all.

Mr Underwood: What about your software people? You won't have the software to sell to anyone.

Mr POWELL: The honourable member has had his opportunity to speak. I ask him to keep quiet and listen. It is a shame that the facts spoil his argument.

The honourable member for Ipswich West spoke about a TAFE college at Hervey Bay. There is no such thing. There is a senior college at Hervey Bay. The student who was expelled from that college should have been expelled from any other educational institution in this State in which there are minors and other people who are easily led. That person was convicted of a drug offence. I make no apologies for supporting the consultative committee—not the Department of Education; not me—for expelling that particular individual.

The debate on this Bill has not centred on the Bill at all. It has centred—particularly from the Opposition spokesmen—on little bits and pieces that they have dragged up. They have not concentrated on the Bill at all. The Opposition spokesman who has spoken already this evening was really talking apart from the Bill. The one part that the honourable member did mention that had something to do with this Bill related to appointing students to committees. The honourable member thought of that only after he had spoken to some student teachers who were holding a demonstration outside this Parliament House. Those students have been fed false information. They have been incited, and I do not blame them for being annoyed. They have been told a bunch of lies. Graduate teachers will be employed in 1988.

The teacher establishment for 1988 is the same as the teacher establishment for 1987. With the resignations that will occur at the end of this year, there is every expectation that a fair number of people who are qualified and able will be employed in 1988.

I will reserve further remarks until after other honourable members have spoken, if I have time.

Mr INNES: There is a saying that, when people move to the extreme Right and the extreme Left, they finally end up meeting round the back. The nub of the complaints and reservations that people have expressed about this legislation is that, although the first draft stated that the Minister be advised by people over whom he had total powers of appointment and direction, the second is simply a laundered version. Crucial parts of the education system are still subject to the Minister's direction.

My reference to the extreme Right and the extreme Left is a reference to motivation. People from extremes will be passionately committed to having their point of view imposed upon others. Boundaries can be gerrymandered. People from the Right or Left who believe in gerrymandered boundaries or voting systems often believe in gerrymandering people's minds. In this case, despite the accommodation——

Mr Elliott: I would have thought you would be better than this.

Mr INNES: The honourable member for Cunningham is a perfect example.

Despite the laundering of the committee into an unusual form for a National Party committee in that it is representative—it has had to be representative because of the extent of the outrage about the original proposal—we still find that the curriculum is to be devised outside and not directly answerable to the committee, which is now to be somewhat representative of education.

I make a point with regard to the laundering. First of all, a committee called the post-secondary course accreditation committee was to be appointed totally by the Minister. That, rightly and justifiably, engendered enormous outrage. It then was proposed to be a committee of 11. Then it became something like 22, then 11 and then back to 15. In the latest contortions that Cabinet apparently went through to arrive at something acceptable, we found that there was a reduction in the number of nominees of the director-general, of the directors of CAEs, of the Advisory Council on Education for Economic Development, of the Queensland Teachers Union and of the parent bodies. Fascinatingly, there was an elimination in a board of post-secondary accreditation of the only obligatory nominee of the director-general from TAFE—the only obligatory nominee representing TAFE, which is surely a most important part of post-secondary education.

And who was put in place of the obligatory member who was eliminated from TAFE? It was one nominee of the Isolated Children's Parents Association.

One might well believe that that association should perhaps rightly be represented, particularly on committees representing primary education, where their numbers would be significant with significant problems. However, as the member for Cunningham has rightly said, in the secondary field the solution for people in isolated situations so often is to move into the non-Government school system, which is somewhere they can find accommodation. That is another reason why I said in this Chamber previously that there is an obligation to publicly fund college-type accommodation. I have served proudly for 20 years on the governing council of one of the accommodation colleges at the University of Queensland. However, that is another matter.

It is staggering to see an obligatory TAFE representative removed to place in a post-secondary course accreditation committee a representative of the Isolated Children's Parents Association. That has a darn sight more to do with the fact that Mr Stoneman and the wife of a vice-president of the National Party are involved in that small in number, but very influential, National Party group than it has with its significance to post-secondary education. How the devil could one leave out of a post-secondary course accreditation committee an obligatory representative of TAFE, which represents tens of thousands of people throughout this vast State?

The fear in the minds of people is that there is the potential in Governments of either persuasion to use direction, particularly in relation to curriculum, to impose a viewpoint. It is not just a matter relating to the National Party or the Liberal Party, as we proposed it. The spokesman for the Australian vice-chancellor's committee has expressed exactly the same sentiments about the proposal by Mr Dawkins to bring things under ministerial control in Canberra.

If we come back to this State, do we find that there is any reason for misgivings by people who see things more directly and strongly coming under ministerial control? I say we have.

We have an unusual situation in this State. I have mentioned the matter before, and I have no shame in doing it again. I have been to the Minister's rooms to discuss confidential matters, which is supposed to be done in camera, shall I say—not with the outside world—and found myself in debate not only with the Minister's own advisers, which is quite proper and reasonable—with his personal staff and the departmental staff—but I have discussed sensitive issues in the presence of Mr and Mrs Rona Joyner. Without any notification to me, with no notice to the party room, in approximately 1983 the Minister invited Mr and Mrs Rona Joyner to discuss sensitive amendments to the Education Act.

I will go further and say that the people of Queensland have an unusual situation pertaining to education in this State. I asked the honourable member for Mansfield, who was formerly a science teacher, whether he believed in creation science. He did not answer. There would not be one per cent of the educated scientific population of this world who would believe in creation science.

This State is remarkable in that the last two Education Ministers, spanning the whole of the 1980s, have professed openly—which is to their credit—a belief in creation science. Worse than that is the fact that the Minister has attempted to influence the education system of this State to make creation science teaching part of the science course in spite of the fact that it has been absolutely rejected by science teachers. That demonstrates that the Minister is prepared to use his ministerial influence to do something that is contrary to the educational standards of the majority of the enlightened and educated world.

It is incredible that that should happen in a State in which primary industry and the mining industry are dominant. There would be more geneticists and more accelerated evolutionists in the Department of Primary Industries than in any other. Every studmaster is an evolutionist. Every time a geologist goes out into the field to look for coal and oil,

he does so on the basis that certain strata were set down so many millions of years ago——

Mr Gilmore: Are you an evolutionist?

Mr INNES: Of course I am an evolutionist. Any person with a reasonably modern education is likely to be an evolutionist, or is likely to prefer the theory of evolution.

I reject the view that supports the literal truth of Genesis. I do so without any denial of the teachings of the Christian faith. The mainstream churches accept and accommodate evolution along with their own teachings. Genesis was a parable to explain difficult things to simple people.

Mr Powell: Balderdash!

Mr INNES: The Minister can talk! Government members supported amendments to the Education Act.

The Education Minister is prepared to pursue a totally minority viewpoint. He is also prepared to attempt to encourage science teachers to teach creation science as part of a science course. It might be all right to include it in an education course for those people who deal with young people who belong to certain religious denominations. However, it is unacceptable to impose those influences——

Mr Elliott: You're now doing what you complained of Opposition members doing.

Mr INNES: All the Government members are embarrassed. They should be embarrassed. The honourable member for Cunningham should be embarrassed because the Minister's intentions are part of the hypocrisy involved in this whole debate.

This Minister takes particular objection to the Board of Secondary School Studies because it is a repository of resistance to the type of influence I have described. Nobody says that the board was perfect. Nobody has said that CTEC was perfect in a commonwealth sense; but at least it provided a cauldron, shall I say, of the diversity that exists in a modern, educated and independent community. That is the importance of its role in education.

Education is seen by the electorate to be important. That is why the Minister drew enormous resistance to what he proposed to do. At the end of the process of sifting, laundering and imposing a persuasive influence on a variety of educational bodies, the Minister has brought the final product—after it has gone through all the contortions in the Queensland National Party Cabinet—into this Chamber and has given honourable members only one week to absorb its implications. The Minister has given little or no time to the many bodies who have shown such a great interest in not only the debate about amendment of the Education Act but also in the extraordinary document, *Education 2000.* The recommendations of the Basset review committee on Education 2000 have not been widely promulgated and are not available for honourable members to test against the document that has been presented to Parliament.

It took two years of criticism of *Education 2000* and the second-reading speech in the second attempt made by the Minister to amend the Education Act before any rationale for education was presented. As the honourable member for Mount Isa rightly said, that rationale—belated as it is and reasonable, in part, as it is—bears no relation to the structure presented in the Bill, which is a direct result of community reaction and opposition to the first attempt made by the Minister to centralise and impose his will onto the new structures to be set up under the provisions of the Education Act.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! In compliance with the terms of the resolution adopted by the House earlier today, I will now put all remaining questions pertaining to the Committee stage.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 63, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Hon. L. W. POWELL (Isis—Minister for Education) (8 p.m.): I move—

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

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 43		NOES, 36	
Ahern	Lane	Ardill	Shaw
Alison	Lester	Beanland	Sherlock
Austin	McKechnie	Beard	Smith
Berghofer	McPhie	Braddy	Smyth
Bjelke-Petersen	Menzel	Campbell	Underwood
Booth	Muntz	Casey	Vaughan
Borbidge	Neal	Comben	Warburton
Burreket	Nelson	D'Arcy	Warner
Chapman	Newton	DeLacy	Wells
Clauson	Powell	Eaton	White
Cooper	Randell	Gibbs, R. J.	Yewdale
Elliott	Sherrin	Goss	
Fraser	Simpson	Gygar	
Gately	Slack	Hamill	
Gibbs, I. J.	Stephan	Hayward	
Gilmore	Stoneman	Innes	
Glasson	Tenni	Knox	
Gunn	Veivers	Lickiss	
Henderson		McElligott	
Hinton		Mackenroth	
Hinze	*Tellers:*	McLean	*Tellers:*
Hobbs	Littleproud	Milliner	Davis
Hynd	FitzGerald	Palaszczuk	Prest

Resolved in the affirmative.

BUILDERS' REGISTRATION AND HOME-OWNERS' PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 11 November (see p. 4047).

Mr R. J. GIBBS (Wolston) (8.08 p.m.): Thank you, Madam Chair—Mr Chairperson—Comrade Chair——

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Harvey): Order! It is "Madam Acting Speaker".

Mr R. J. GIBBS: Madam Acting Speaker, thank you.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am sorry, it is "Madam Acting Deputy Speaker".

Mr R. J. GIBBS: Madam Acting Deputy Speaker—that is a mouthful. May I say what grace and presence you bring to such an esteemed position.

Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, may I say that the legislation before the House is legislation that, in the past, the Opposition has always been pleased to support. This legislation has seen the establishment and the continuation of the Builders Registration Board in Queensland.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible discussion in the Chamber. I ask the members to come to order.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I notice that the honourable member for Pine Rivers, the Minister for Family Services, is in the Chamber tonight. What an opportune time for her to be in the Chamber, when legislation dealing with the Builders Registration Board is being amended. The Minister should hang her head in shame over the role that she played

earlier this year in costing seven house-holders and home-owners of this State coverage in the insurance fund.

Mrs Chapman: Go outside and say that.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I do not have to go outside and say it. I debated the matter with the Minister on television. She fell in a heap. She could not defend herself. Facts and figures that the Opposition laid on the table of this Parliament over a number of weeks showed that the Minister deliberately, knowingly and wittingly misled this House.

The fact is that the legislation before the Parliament tonight is, as I said, legislation which in essence is welcomed by the Opposition. The Opposition has supported and will continue to support the Builders Registration Board as such. However, the Opposition is not prepared to give cart blanche support to the continuation of what is little more than a builders' club. That is the only way in which I can describe the present constitution of the board.

If one needs proof of that, one needs only to examine the amendments that have been introduced to the legislation tonight. The Minister has introduced amendments that will result in a reduction in the number of members on the board. I have no personal barrow to push about a reduction in the membership of the board from eight persons to seven persons. I have always believed that eight people on a board almost constitutes a Portugese army anyway. Seven is a preferable number.

However, the amendment that is designed to reduce the number of board members to seven involves abolishing the architects' representative. Again, the Opposition has no qualms about that because architecture is only another extension of the building industry itself. However, the Government then deliberately sets out to remove from the board, firstly, the union representative and, secondly, the building societies' representatives.

The simple fact is that although honourable members have become accustomed to the very provocative acts by the Queensland Government that are designed to lead the trade union movement into disputation, other States have legislation that is different from this legislation in some respects but similar to it in other respects. There is a guaranteed representation for union people on the board or whatever governing body has the overall responsibility of overseeing and administering the builders' registration legislation in those States.

It is very proper that the trade union movement be represented on the Builders Registration Board. The fact is that many of the people who build homes throughout this State are members of trade unions. In many cases people who pay a lot of money up front to purchase homes happen to be members of and supporters of various trade unions throughout Queensland.

If the Minister is seriously considering a reduction in the membership of the board to seven members, it should be done properly. It should be expected that on that board there will be at least one representative of the trade union movement. I believe that there should also be a representative of the legal profession because on so many occasions in this Chamber the Opposition has shown very conclusively that a person with legal expertise could be in a position to advise the board. In fact, that representation on the board would not only reduce the expenses and the overheads of the board in some litigation cases in which it becomes involved, but also save a lot of heartache and personal agony for a number of people who have been involved in litigation in certain cases.

I welcome the fact that at least in one of the changes that are being made to the membership of the board the Government will allow one representative to represent consumers. I hope that in his reply the Minister will outline in some detail how he proposes to select that one representative of consumers. Will he do it personally? Will it be a ministerial appointment? Will the board make the selection or make a recommendation to the Minister? Or—more preferably—will the Minister allow the various consumer organisations throughout Queensland to pool their resources and nominate

the persons of their choice to the board? That is the most preferable situation to be followed.

Other sections of this legislation are very important to the people of Queensland. I am concerned when I read in the Minister's second-reading speech—and I note the amendment in the legislation—that it is proposed to allow duplexes, but not home units, to be included in the insurance scheme. The Minister stated—

> "... together with single dwelling units on group title, to limit the liability of builders to six years and three months and to subrogate the rights of the owner to the board to enable action to be taken to recover moneys from negligent parties to faulty building work."

The Opposition has no objection to the period of six years and three months that is mentioned in the legislation, but I wonder why it is that this amendment to the legislation proposes to allow duplexes but not home units to be included in the insurance scheme, together with single dwelling units on group title.

Some years ago when I held the shadow portfolio of Justice and Attorney-General, I noted that one of the greater moments of the honourable member for Moggill in this Parliament was when he introduced and steered through this House very progressive legislation concerning group titles and strata protection, etc., for people in home units. In this day and age when Queensland is entering a building boom, why is it that people who wish to purchase home units are not entitled to coverage under the insurance scheme of the Builders Registration Board, whilst those people purchasing duplexes or single dwelling units on a group title are entitled to coverage? It seems to be a crazy situation. In this day and age unit dwelling is becoming one of the more popular concepts of home living, not only for families but also for single people and couples who have reached middle age and whose families are off their hands. This Parliament knows full well the incredible problems that I have exposed in the past, particularly during the controversy over the Builders Registration Board earlier this year. I drew to the attention of the House the innumerable problems experienced by people over home-unit construction on the Gold Coast. Pipes were falling out of people's ceilings, walls were almost falling off and improper building materials were being used. I notice that the honourable member for Nerang is in the House this evening. He would have to agree in all conscience that he could not stand up in this Parliament tonight and say to me that there would not be a time, during the short period that he has been in this House, when he has not received complaints from his constituents on the Gold Coast who have been ripped off by shonky dealers who are building and selling substandard home units in that area. That applies to the north coast as well. I believe that the Minister is far from reality in not allowing these people to be covered.

Mr Gately: Could you just tell us how the Builders Labourers Federation knocked some of those houses down when people tried to build them?

Mr R. J. GIBBS: The honourable member for Currumbin would be well acquainted with all the activities of the Builders Labourers Federation in every shape and form. Everyone is very well aware in this Parliament of how he was politely asked to leave the New South Wales police force on suspicion of graft and corruption.

Mr GATELY: I rise to a point of order. I find those words most offensive. This House has been told on two occasions that I was put out of the police force as a result of injuries sustained in a head-on smash. I ask that the remarks be withdrawn.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I withdraw the comment. If it is true that the honourable member was forced out of the police force because of injuries and illness, it is obvious that he must have rubbed the builders' labourers up the wrong way.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Harvey): Order! The honourable member will withdraw without comment.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I unequivocally withdraw the statement.

I express some concern about the section of the legislation that relates to the amendment of section 31, which is titled "Persons who may be registered as registered house builders". It is proposed to include the following provision in the Act—

> ". . . he has had not less than 2 years sufficient practical and supervisory experience in and has sufficient knowledge of all aspects of the house building industry to enable him to carry out the functions, responsibilities and duties of a registered house builder;".

This matter has been drawn to the Minister's attention before. It was also drawn to the attention of the former Minister, Mr Claude Wharton, in this Chamber. How is it that we can say to young people in this State, "You will serve a four-year apprenticeship to learn about the building industry. You will come out with a qualification on paper that says that you have done your apprenticeship and that you have qualified as a carpenter. Get a bit more experience under your belt and, upon examination, you will be registered as a home builder if you so desire."? Here we are saying that we want young people in the community or any other person to undertake a four-year apprenticeship and that we should have those qualifications written into the legislation. The proposed section states, "he has not had less that 2 years sufficient practical and supervisory experience . . ."

I will cite the brick-laying industry as a classic example. People go onto jobs as builders' labourers. They find out the short-cuts, how to do things and how to be involved in the construction industry. They go through the process and they show a natural aptitude for brick-laying. I do not deny that there are such people. However, after a two-year period, a person who has never done an accepted apprenticeship course can suddenly sit for an examination and be granted a licence to go out and become a registered home-builder. That is totally and absolutely wrong. There has to be an obligation——

Mr Vaughan: Shocking!

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I agree with Mr Vaughan that it is shocking. It is like giving somebody a licence to go out and do house-wiring.

I know that that does not occur. To allow someone who has never had any practical experience or training on the job as a qualified electrician to go out and rewire a house or to work with SEQEB would be totally and utterly wrong.

Another provision in the Bill that causes members of the Opposition a great deal of concern is the proposed section 31 (d), which states—

> "he has sufficient financial resources to enable him to carry on business as a registered house builder;".

I can remember very well the television program *State Affair*, which used to be famous for showing up shonky builders time and time again. Builders have walked in and said that they would complete somebody's home construction. However, they have gone bust half-way through it. On many occasions they deliberately put themselves into a state of bankruptcy. They have walked out and left little more than a hole in the ground or a basic set of foundations.

On numerous occasions the Government has denied that that can happen. At one stage I think that the chairman of the Builders Registration Board was Joe Box, who was a nice old fellow but an absolutely hopeless person for the position that he occupied. Based on his performance on television, he must have been an embarrassment to any section of the Government and the Builders Registration Board. He said, "No, these things just don't happen. It is not true."

This Government has acknowledged the fact that statements that have been made on numerous occasions by Opposition spokesmen have been true; that there have been financial fly-by-nighters in the industry who have been caught out. Members of the Government have denied that fact time and time again. In the past, the present Minister and the former Minister, Claude Wharton, have said the very same thing. They have

denied that that is occurring. But at least that aspect will be tightened up by this legislation. The people of Queensland can be extremely thankful that the Opposition—the Australian Labor Party in this State—has continually brought that fact to the attention of the media and to those people who have been affected.

In his second-reading speech the Minister stated—

> "The board and industry are concerned about the action of some people trying to circumvent the Act by repeatedly seeking owner-builder permits. It is proposed to amend the Act to give the board discretionary powers in applications of this nature in order to uphold the rights of the genuine owner-builder."

I welcome that provision, because I believe that, on many occasions in the past, people who wished to make improvements to their own property were hamstrung by the actions of the board. I would draw a line by saying this: if a person wishes to undertake a major home-improvement scheme—and I am not talking about the construction of a pergola or something of that nature—that construction must be policed fairly rigidly.

I turn now to a particular case that involves a gentleman who lives in my electorate. I know that he would not mind my mentioning his name here. I refer to a fellow by the name of John Roymans who runs a very excellent gymnasium and small business at Ebbw Vale. He is a very capable, very conscientious fellow who has a knowledge of the building industry. He decided recently to take a giant financial gamble and virtually rebuild his gymnasium.

I personally visited that gymnasium and inspected the work that he has done. That work has got to be the equal of the most excellent standard of any builder. Those are not my words; they were the words used by the engineer from the Ipswich City Council. That council has had building inspectors constantly on that site. Suddenly, out of the blue, because somebody complained—obviously a petty little builder who was sour that he did not get the opportunity to build that construction himself—Mr Roymans was cited by the Builders Registration Board and asked for a "please explain". He replied to that "please explain". The city council then requested him to visit its offices and supply further information. The Ipswich City Council was not really interested in his explanation. All that it wanted to do was to threaten that poor fellow with a substantial fine and the further threat that the council is not only in a position to take legal action against him but it can also have the whole construction knocked down.

Mr Roymans is a genuine person who is trying to do the right thing. Following the city council's inquiries, he went to the Builders Registration Board and undertook the basic examination. However, in common with so many people, Mr Roymans has never pursued any studies since he left secondary school. He has worked with his hands all his life. Quite frankly, it is a little beyond his ability to write legally worded letters or to really understand some of the clauses that are contained in business contracts. However, he is still an honest, genuine person who is faced with this tremendous problem.

Mr Gately: Did he break the law?

Mr R. J. GIBBS: No. He did not break the law in any shape or form.

I emphasise the point that Mr Roymans had obtained approval from the Ipswich City Council for the construction, which is under constant supervision by the engineer from the city council and inspectors who were more than delighted with the standard of work that had been carried out. I am pleased that the board is to be given discretionary powers in applications of that nature.

I reiterate a concern that I have about the board that I expressed at the start of my speech tonight. It is a concern that has been expressed by me in this Parliament before and which is continually brought to the attention of members on this side of the House by way of letters from constituents. The concern is that the Builders Registration Board, although I support its concept, is seen as little more than a private club for some of the major builders in the State of Queensland. It makes me wonder how and when the discretionary power is going to be used. Will it be used on occasions such as we

have seen in the past for the favoured few—the friends and the people who have influence on certain members of the board and people who have connections with the National Party, possibly with the white-shoe brigade? I suggest to honourable members that as an example of the white-shoe brigade and the operations of the National Party and the Builders Registration Board—I certainly would not betray a confidence—that they might look at the pool construction at Sanctuary Cove, which was built by Government members' white-shoe brigade friend, Mike Gore, to see how it measures up to local government standards. They will find that it simply does not measure up. If they kick it in the side hard enough, they will almost drive their shoe through it.

Other aspects of the legislation cause the Opposition some concern. I specifically refer to clause 11 and clause 15. I must apologise to you, Madam Deputy Speaker, because I know that under the Standing Orders of the House I should not refer to the clauses during the second-reading debate. I will retract those words and refer to the clauses later. A number of provisions in the legislation refer to penalties. One is titled "Offences by persons not registered as registered builders or concerned with building construction who are not so registered." Another is titled "Offences by registered builder." In the case of a natural person, for a first offence under this legislation he will be fined $5,000. Isn't that wonderful?

Mr I. J. Gibbs: That is a maximum.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: That is right. It is a maximum. I am glad that the Minister made the interjection to emphasise the point that it is a maximum.

In the case of a second offence, a penalty of $7,500 can be imposed. In the case of a third or subsequent offence, the maximum penalty is $10,000. Of course, from there on, we get a bit greedier. In the case of an offence by a body corporate, the penalty is $10,000 for a first offence, $15,000 for a second offence and $20,000 for a third or subsequent offence. Those same fines apply to another part of the legislation that relates to offences by a registered builder.

I find it absolutely offensive to people's intelligence that we could find a situation—as was outlined in this Parliament earlier this year—in which people on Mount Tamborine, along with six other home-owners in this State, were ripped off and their dreams were actually shattered because they were not covered by the insurance scheme, thanks to the intervention of the honourable member for Pine Rivers. Although they were ripped off, this crooked builder who committed an offence will be fined only $5,000. Which is worse—shattering the dreams of a couple of young people of owning their own home, ripping off an old couple who are building a home and being fined $5,000, or accepting an illegal SP bet in a hotel bar on a Saturday and being liable, for a first offence, to a fine of $15,000? Where is the justice in that comparison? For example, for a third offence of making an illegal SP bet, the fine is $50,000. Yet here we have these clowns who are fined $5,000 for a first offence, $7,500 for a second offence, and the measly, paltry sum of $10,000 for a third offence. The Bill does not even mention a gaol sentence for that offence of illegal SP betting under the Racing and Betting Act.

It is a ludicrous, mad and crazy situation to impose fines of that magnitude. If I had my way, I would amend the legislation; but I know how far amendments proposed by the Opposition get in this House. I will not bother wasting my time.

If I had my way, I would legislate to ensure that an offender is up for $50,000 for a first offence. If the fine is not paid, the offender would be for the high jump. I would not give anybody a second chance.

Mrs Nelson: Can I ask a question?

Mr R. J. GIBBS: Of course.

Mrs Nelson: Do not forget that that $10,000 includes full restitution.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: Oh, come on! The honourable member for Aspley knows as well as I do that restitution would naturally be covered.

Mrs Nelson: It is separate.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: No, it is naturally covered under the insurance scheme. The builder is not required to make natural restitution or full restitution.

Mrs Nelson: It is separate.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: Of course it is separate, but they should be required to make full restitution.

I can argue a line of consistency in this matter. I adopted the same line of argument when I complained about the lack of uniformity in Commonwealth and State legislation, which absolutely stinks. The situation is that companies—building companies in particular—can lodge a debtor's petition for voluntary bankruptcy, despite the fact that they have secret bank accounts with $1m stashed away in them, and assets such as a beautiful home and cars for the whole family. The company can be made bankrupt and Mr and Mrs Average—the ordinary people in the street—are left without a leg to stand on. The people who apply for voluntary bankruptcy are let off scot-free. When the conditions relating to the period of bankruptcy expire, within a short time these people can register themselves and establish another crooked organisation. I say that it is high time that proper legislation—Australiawide legislation—was introduced into the Parliaments that will dove-tail into the provisions of this legislation.

The Opposition will support the legislation that is before the House. To use an oft coined phrase—it reminds me very much of the curate's egg: it is good only in parts. I give notice to the Minister that the Opposition does not accept clause 3 because it removes representation on the board by a member of the trade union movement. I welcome the appointment of a consumer representative, but I believe the clause should go further and include not only a consumer representative and a trade union representative but also a representative from the legal profession. I accept that the other four members of the board should be members of the building profession itself.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (8.38 p.m.): I rise to speak on the Builders' Registration and Home-owners' Protection Act Amendment Bill. At the outset, I observe that the speech made by the honourable member for Wolston reminded me also of the curate's egg, because it was not all bad. In fact, some of it was quite good.

I think that honourable members must realise that when an attempt is made to protect people—which is what the Government is trying to do by presenting this Bill—a few errors will be made. I do not think it would matter who had control over the legislation. All I can say is that in a Bill that is designed to offer protection, the Government will do the best that is humanly possible. I believe that that is what the legislation presently before the House is aimed at.

In rising to speak to the legislation before the House, I would like to address a number of the areas covered in the amendments. I am pleased to see, for instance, that the board's insurance scheme will cover duplex buildings. I am also pleased to note that although the coverage has been extended to duplexes it is not to be extended to home-units. I think that this is the proper course for the board to be taking.

What the Government is talking about is the type of housing that a house-builder would usually be expected to be able to construct. In this respect, the duplex building—basically two houses separated by a wall—is a structure which the house-builder is competent to undertake. Once the construction is past that stage, however, it goes on to the home-unit area, which is generally a multi-storey project. Construction then is moving beyond the area of capability of such builders.

The description I have given fits the Bill. If the Government attempted to legislate to cover home-units, the legislation would affect major building companies and it would be very complicated. I fear that such legislation would push small builders out of the industry or they would find it too expensive to take out insurance. More to the point, the home-unit structure is one which generally employs, for design and for construction supervision purposes, the services of an architect or an engineer. That aspect of residential

accommodation is already provided with a protection not usually afforded to the home-buyer.

Extending the insurance cover to the home-unit area would also have another major impact that I feel is clearly undesirable, that is, it would lead, I am sure, to considerably larger premiums under the scheme. I think everyone would realise that for high-rise buildings, where possibly the risk is increased considerably, the premiums will have to rise.

I applaud the Minister's move to extend the coverage to duplex buildings while at the same time resisting the move to cover the multi-storey-type buildings. I think it is also a positive step that the Minister has taken to ensure that project managers, construction managers and the like are registered builders, with the exception of those who are in the employ of a registered builder.

In relation to registration matters—I am pleased to see that provision is made for the extension from one month to two months of the time allowed for an aggrieved person to lodge an appeal with the Magistrates Court. That is important because sometimes an aggrieved person may not have had a great deal of experience in courts and it could take him a while to make up his mind. That may seem a minor matter, but it is, I feel, symptomatic of the change in direction within the board that is making for a more effective operation of the board.

In recent times there has been a tendency for matters to go to litigation within the board. That occurred until the changes were introduced this year. If I may, I will illustrate that by referring to some statistics that I have obtained from the board. They deal with the handling of appeals against registration decisions. They involve cases in which a builder applied for registration under a particular category. Until the changes were introduced to the board a growing number of applicants were going to the Magistrates Court to appeal against the decisions made by the board.

In the six months to September last year, 31 appeals against registration decisions were lodged with the Magistrates Court. In the same six months this year there were just six. Something has happened. I suggest that the main thing that has happened is that both the board and the Minister have adopted a much more commonsense approach to the matter and they have had a good look at litigation before they have forced the issue. That is to be commended. I do not think there is any point in going to the court unless there is a real need—perhaps not a desperate need—to do so. The Builders Registration Board has shown that it is able to handle many of those things in a commonsense manner. There has been a conscious effort on the part of the board to set up mechanisms whereby such matters can, wherever possible, be resolved without having to experience the delay and incur the expense of having the matter dealt with by the courts.

This year a review subcommittee has been established, which allows the parties concerned with such matters to further discuss them. There has also been increased discussion of such matters with builders by the staff at the time when the applications are made. Such steps are helping to break down barriers of misunderstanding and are helping to reduce the need for recourse to the courts.

I should emphasise, however, that the applicants retain the right to take their appeals to court. That is why the extended period for lodging such an appeal has been provided for in these proposed amendments. It means that the applicant has the opportunity to use the other avenues open to him and still have the time available to lodge an appeal, should he so desire. It is another sign of positive thought and action in regard to the board and its operation and one which should be welcomed.

I want to refer briefly to a couple of other matters. One is the owner-builder permits. I favour the availability of such permits but I believe that care has to be taken with them. I am sure that with these amendments some common sense will be able to be applied to that aspect, too.

The other commendable feature of the legislation is the proposal to prevent an individual whose registration has been cancelled by the board from forming a body corporate and employing a nominee to overcome his cancellation or suspension. I do not think that anything annoys people anywhere and at any time more than someone being able to circumvent the law by merely changing his name or by making some slight adjustment.

The legislation is good and sound. It is not my intention to speak for much longer. The Bill will be of benefit to the industry and will give adequate protection to those who make the biggest investment of their life-time. I suppose that the two biggest investments that most people make are the purchase of a house and the purchase of a motor car. Although it is perhaps impossible to give the same protection to a person who buys a car—in any case, it is not as big a purchase—I think it is only right that the maximum protection should be afforded a person when he buys a house.

I agree with the sentiment that is often expressed that it does not matter what happens to a person in his life; as long as he owns his own house, he is pretty right. That is why home-ownership is the great Australian dream and the great Queensland dream. I am pleased to see that the protection for home-buyers has been stepped up, that at the same time it is to be administered in a commonsense way and that, for want of a better expression, people will not be driven round the bend by the board's being too irksome. I support the legislation before the House.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah—Leader of the Liberal Party) (8.46 p.m.): The Liberal Party supports the legislation. As will be known, when the member for Yeronga was Minister some years ago, he initiated this board. It has worked quite well, although there have been occasions when members have had reason to be concerned about the ability of the board to handle the problems that confront it. When these things are looked at more closely, it is found that it is not necessarily the board that is at fault, but the legislation under which it operates. That is the responsibility of this House.

I query why the architects' representative has been removed from the board, in the same way, I guess, that the Labor Party queries the fact that unions will no longer be represented on the board. It would seem to me that an architects' representative on the board would be of considerable assistance in its deliberations. However, as a general principle, we in the Liberal Party favour reducing the size of statutory bodies rather than increasing them. Of course, once special people have to be represented on boards, as there might be a number of people considered suitable to serve on a board, it can be a never-ending process.

The annual reports of the board comment on the use of owner-builder permits. In recent times it has been critical of them. This is a somewhat grey area that ought to be considered more closely. Perhaps the board would be in a position to advise whether the legislation is adequate to supervise this particular area of the building industry.

A matter that has been raised tonight and on previous occasions is the quality of those people who are registered. It surprises me—I am sure it is news to others—just how many applicants are not accepted for registration. According to the board's annual report, more than 40 per cent of applicants are unsuccessful. I wonder why people who obviously are not qualified would bother to seek registration. In fact, the board has commented that 45 per cent of those who apply have no formal qualifications. If people who are not in any way qualified apply to be registered, it would seem to me that they have some misunderstanding about the board's registration requirements. I understand that, through pamphlets and other means, the board is conducting an education campaign to acquaint people with their obligations. However, it is a worry. That worry is accentuated even more by the concern that comes about with the realisation that those who do qualify must be just on the borderline of qualification.

Mr Smith interjected.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: It is a very thin line between being qualified and not qualified for anything.

With such a high percentage of unsuccessful applicants and a high percentage of applications from people who are not qualified, I wonder how many have just scraped through.

Mr Smith: There are a lot of people who have got through who obviously should not have got through. However, the other side of the coin is that I have seen a number of people who ought to have got through and who, for some reason, didn't make it.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: There is redress available. They can appeal. In fact, there have been a number of successful appeals. I would not be concerned about that. At least people have the opportunity of having the matter heard again before a magistrate.

I am quite sure that there are not too many fields in which registration is required by law and such a high percentage of applicants fail to qualify. There seems to be some gap in the system; either a lack of information or a feeling that it is not really necessary to have the qualifications. However, honourable members should be grateful that the board does examine the applicants sufficiently thoroughly to discourage those who should not be registered. Perhaps the number of applicants who fail to qualify will drop dramatically in future years as a result of education or better information being made available.

The backlog of work of which the board complains as a result of claims is also some indication of the problems that the board faces. It is a matter of the financial ability of those involved in this industry. In its 1985-86 report the board comments in some detail on business failure by builders. I imagine that it could be worse. A profile has been established of the typical builder who fails. It is rather valuable information. That profile was compiled as a result of a survey carried out by the board of those builders who have failed.

According to the report, the most frequently occurring age for builders who fail in business and who are presumably registered is between 30 and 40 years. Their industry experience is about 10 years, either as a subcontractor or as a builder. Under the subheading "(Trade) Qualifications", the report states that they have no management or financial training. Under the subheading "Finance", the report states that they have little capital and the only realisable asset is a house, which is mortgaged. The period of registration appears to be for a maximum of 10 years and normally about four to five years. Apparently they do work successfully for a while before they get into difficulties. Under the subheading "Work History", the report states—

> "Commenced building—
>
> 1st Year—2-4 houses;
>
> 4th Year—Between 10-20 houses;
>
> Consistent under-quoting to maintain cash flow."

As I have said, that appears to be the result of a survey conducted by the board. It relates to bankrupt builders. It is a very valuable piece of information.

There seems to be some need not only to educate people in this industry to become qualified but also to educate them to adopt sound business principles and develop business acumen. Obviously there is a need for an educational program of some sort for builders because when the builders become bankrupt—and that is rather sad—it must be remembered that they have clients who are grossly inconvenienced as a result of the bankruptcy. All honourable members would know of instances in their electorates in which clients of builders have found themselves in very embarrassing circumstances as a result of the bankruptcy of a builder.

In one instance in my electorate a builder got into difficulty. The building concerned was only a small cottage. The builder walked off the job and left the client in a very embarrassing personal situation. The lady concerned was a spinster and not familiar with the commercial world. She found herself in all sorts of difficulties financially as well as personally and socially. It was in fact some time before work could recommence

on her house. From my knowledge of the situation, I feel that that lady suffered considerable embarrassment in a number of ways.

This is what we at the legislative level should be concerned about: the impact upon clients, or consumers, as a result of poor management techniques and bad financial management by builders who subsequently go broke. I realise that it is not the role of the board to be a Big Brother and I am not suggesting for one moment, as I am sure that the Minister would agree, that the board runs around holding people by the hand. We still live in a community in which one has the right to go broke, but obviously there is an urgent need in the community for education in not only technical knowledge but also business management.

I have made this comment when referring to other statutory bodies, and I mention in passing that the pay-roll tax paid by this board as part of its administration costs is proportionally very high. In its general fund it rates at about 5.5 per cent of administration and, in the insurance fund, at about 5.9 per cent of administration. It is absurd that a board of this nature should pay pay-roll tax. This is another area where pay-roll tax could conveniently be abolished to the benefit of the community.

Mr HYND (Nerang) (8.56 p.m.): I am pleased to have the opportunity to join in the debate on the amendments to the Builders' Registration and Home-owners' Protection Act.

There are probably few more important things to most people than their own home, and for most people there is no other item that is a greater investment. I have always believed that Queensland has a very good home-building industry. For quality and building at competitive prices, the industry in Queensland has a great track record.

This House has heard on many occasions from the Opposition just how poorly Queensland is doing on the economic front. The Labor Party seems to take a perverse delight in knocking Queensland; in pulling the rug out from under this State's economic performance. It has used housing statistics from time to time to do just that.

Mr Davis: Who wrote this for you?

Mr HYND: If the honourable member listens, he will hear something.

This is despite the fact that its partner in Canberra, the Hawke/Keating Government, has been the root cause of the problems that have been inflicted on the housing industry for many years. At long last things appear to be on the upswing, due in no small way to the remarkable effort of the housing industry in Queensland.

I have been looking at the lastest Australian Bureau of Statistics figures—the figures issued by the Commonwealth Government—and what they show for new housing approvals is most illuminating. The extent of the upswing here in Queensland is remarkable and far outstrips that of the nation as a whole.

Firstly, if we take a look at the latest month for which figures are available from the Commonwealth—that is September this year—the number of dwelling units approved for construction in Queensland was slightly in excess of 2 700. The figure was 21 per cent up on the previous month and 55 per cent higher than the figure for the same month last year, that is, September 1986.

By comparison, the number of dwelling units approved for construction throughout Australia in September this year was up by only 11 per cent on the same month in 1986. If one looks at the comparison between Queensland and the nation as a whole over the three months to the end of September this year, the rate of increase in approvals in this State is running close to 10 times that of the national performance. I will repeat that—in the latest quarter, Queensland's increase in dwelling approvals, compared with the same quarter last year, was at a rate almost 10 times that of Australia as a whole. In the September quarter of this year, dwelling construction approvals in Queensland amounted to more than 7 300. This was an increase of 35 per cent on the same quarter of last year.

I turn now to the Commonwealth's performance: its increase was just under 4 per cent. So we can see what a great contribution Queensland is making to the national building economy. There is little doubt that without such a strong performance from Queensland the national fugures would be a lot worse. In fact, honourable members can readily appreciate how much the national industry is relying on Queensland.

Right now, Queensland, which has 16 per cent of the national population, is heading towards providing 25 per cent of the total national building approvals. In the month of September this year, in fact, Queensland accounted for 23 per cent of the national housing approvals. Even for the September quarter as a whole, Queensland still accounted for 22 per cent of all approvals. So Queensland is far outpacing its per capita share of the building industry activity.

I think Queensland is achieving these figures partly because of the faith that Queenslanders have in their housing industry. I have no doubt that the State Government's move to have the Builders Registration Board and its home-owners' protection scheme operating effectively will further enhance the confidence of the home-buyer, and I commend the Minister for his actions in this respect.

For those reasons, I support the Bill.

Ms WARNER (South Brisbane) (9.01 p.m.): I understand that the legislation improves the present situation. I think that any member of the House would have to admit that the practice of people being ripped off by builders has been nothing short of disgraceful. I think that everyone would have seen pictures and television coverage of a number of houses on the Gold Coast that are unsafe and subsiding, yet people are residing in them. Those poor people received absolutely no compensation for the disastrous damage that was done to their homes.

Mr Borbidge: The council was not without blame on that one.

Ms WARNER: Once the deed was done, there were no means available for those people to obtain compensation for rectification work.

I understand that the processes in the legislation are quite complex and that they are difficult to proceed with. As the member for Warwick has already pointed out, no system is perfect. However, I welcome the Government's attempts to tighten up the whole procedure and its decision to provide more protection.

As a matter of some public interest, I raise the fact that there is a group of people who have bought substandard houses and who have very little recourse. Some people buy houses through the Housing Commission for $45,000, which is the maximum amount that is available by way of loan. Honourable members know that Housing Commission houses tend to be built on the periphery of cities, on substandard land and according to substandard building requirements. That leaves a lot to be desired. Obviously those people do not have recourse to this type of legislation. They can only take their complaints to the Housing Commission. Of course, the Housing Commission does very little to ensure the compliance with the proper building standards in those areas.

The Government has promoted a system of encouraging builders to build substandard housing for $45,000, because that is the maximum amount that the Housing Commission will lend. As I have said, the houses are built on the periphery of cities. The residents do not have access to facilities, nor do they have a guarantee that their house will be built to minimum building standards. Frankly, I would say that many of the houses are shoddily built. I do not know what the Housing Commission inspectors are doing, but I would like built into the legislation a court of special appeal system to which those people could have recourse. At the moment, those people have no protection whatsoever.

When we are talking about protection, we really need to look at the whole scope of providing protection. Of course, those people are left outside the protection. That is a public scandal of significant proportions, as is a whole range of issues to do with the Housing Commission. Members of the Opposition have raised them in this Chamber

on a number of occasions. For instance, I understand that earlier this year the Commissioner of Housing was subjected to an inquiry within the commission. Despite repeated calls in May and June of this year by the Opposition spokesman for Works and Housing, Bob Gibbs, the report of that inquiry has never been tabled in the House.

During this session of Parliament I too have asked the Minister to report on what happened in that inquiry. What is the point of conducting an inquiry into an allegation of wrong-doing if the results and the clearing of a particular person's name are never made public? I would argue that, because the results of that inquiry have never been made public, Mr Hall's name has not been cleared.

Let us get this matter straight. Before Mr Hall retires in December and his place is taken by Brian Ferris, the Minister's former private secretary—which in itself should be looked into—Mr Hall's name should be cleared. I do not believe that his name has been cleared. The Minister has never been prepared to bring before this House or to make public in any way the results of that inquiry.

The Housing Commission is as tight as a drum. The last person from that department who made allegations against another officer of that department was transferred to the Works Department and then to somewhere else after that. The last person who had the courage to say anything untoward about somebody else in that department was swiftly dealt with. Nobody within that department is prepared to say anything about anybody in that department. As I said earlier in this House today, the Education Department is in a similar situation, as are most Government departments.

I challenge the Minister to state whether the inquiry into Mr Hall's activities was ever carried out. I do not believe that it was. That is a totally unsubstantiated allegation, except for the fact that nobody has any knowledge of that inquiry. The Minister is sitting back with a blank expression on his face and is not even responding. He probably has no knowledge of it, either.

Mr Borbidge: That is disgusting.

Ms WARNER: If the inquiry was held, why have the results not been made available? Public inquiries into wrong-doing should be made public if the man has been cleared. If he has not, all that can be said is that the inquiry was a waste of time, because it has not served the purpose of clearing someone's name. If that is the case and it has not got to the bottom of the matter, the public has a right to know what is going on in Government departments. It has the right to know what this Government is doing with public funds from both State and Federal levels. The Housing Commission obtains funds from both sources and the public has a right to know what happens to those funds.

Allegations have been made about wrong-doings within the Housing Commission in relation to tenders and building. Those allegations have never been cleared up. Mr Hall is due to retire in December, and his place is going to be taken by someone who the Minister put into that department simply for the purpose of his obtaining that job. I do not know how the other people within that department feel about that, but I would hazard a guess that they would not be very happy about that sort of leap-frogging, typically political appointment.

For very many years the Opposition has raised questions about what is going on in Government departments, and on every occasion the Opposition has been pushed aside and dismissed—not just on this level. Its allegations have been said to be frivolous.

Mr Borbidge: They have been treated with the contempt that they deserve, haven't they?

Ms WARNER: They have, have they not?

Then what happened? The Fitzgerald inquiry was set up following a *Four Corners* program that could not be ignored. It all came out then. Is that what will happen in the case of the Housing Commission? From what I know about what is going on in that

department, there is a heap of information about wrong-doing within it. I would like to get to the bottom of that.

This is yet another call by the Opposition for facts, figures and information to be made available. This Government is not practising open government. It is not a responsible Government, because it has never answered the questions that have been raised. It has sat upon the questions and has deliberately side-stepped those issues. If the Government has nothing to hide, it should answer all of those questions and make the report available. It should do the decent thing by Queenslanders.

The situation is a mess. A whole web of intrigue and deception is being woven. Honourable members should consider the fact that $18m was remaining in unused appropriations from the fund for the provision of low-cost housing through Housing Commission loans at $45,000 each. The sum of $18m is left over because the demand was lower than anticipated. How is that for mismanagement? The Minister could not even work out what the demand was going to be. There was $18m left over in that instance, and $12m left over from housing construction. So the Government was not even doing the decent thing and building houses.

The Budget figures show clearly that the commission is not being efficiently managed and administered. When there is that level of inefficiency, cover-up and mismanagement of funds, something is seriously wrong. The Minister should make every effort to clear his name, the commissioner's name and the department's name and tell us one thing——

Mr Borbidge: For you?

Ms WARNER: Not just for me; for the people of Queensland. There are many people who are asking what is happening within the commission.

Mr Borbidge: You are wrong.

Ms WARNER: I am sorry to contradict. There has been meeting after meeting at which large numbers of people have been asking, "Could you just tell us what the policy is?"

Mr Stephan: Can you tell us what is going right, or just what is going wrong?

Ms WARNER: Quite frankly, not a lot is going right. Does not the honourable member have the inquiries in his office that I have? I am sorry, but not a lot is going right.

If there is nothing wrong, the Minister has nothing to hide; so why does he not tell us exactly what is going on and why does he not bring the report of that inquiry before the House so that we can all look at it and everybody's mind can be put at rest? The secrecy is what is so disturbing. The secrecy is what causes people to think that something is going wrong. If there is nothing to hide, show it.

It would be in the interests of the present commissioner if that was done before he retired at the end of the year, rather than maintaining the treatment of a public utility, which is the Queensland Housing Commission, as if it was a secret service. That is what is going on. It is like a secret service within the Government, because everything is so tight in there and everybody is frightened to talk.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise) (9.12 p.m.): I am pleased to support the legislation before the House tonight. I cannot help but remark upon the quite scurrilous contribution to this debate by the honourable member for South Brisbane, who is now retreating from the Chamber, apparently unprepared to remain in here and receive the response that she so duly deserves.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: She is here.

Mr BORBIDGE: I am glad that she has received the message and has decided to stay in the Chamber.

By every independent analysis that I have seen, the Queensland Housing Commission is the most efficient public housing authority in Australia today. It has achieved a great deal, despite the fact that for a considerable period under the Commonwealth/States Housing Agreement we have experienced massive under-funding.

I regret very much that a senior public servant of the standard of Mr Stewart Hall has been subjected to the smear, the innuendo and the diatribe of the honourable member who preceded me. If there was an ounce of decency across the Chamber, honourable members opposite would be paying tribute to a man who in a long career has contributed a great deal to making the Housing Commission in this State the force that it is today, and paying tribute for his role in the contribution that it has made to public housing in this State. In fact, honourable members opposite seem to forget the fact—rather enthusiastically—that Queensland has close to the highest rate of home-ownership anywhere in the world.

The Housing Commission waiting-list is amongst the lowest in Australia. These accomplishments have been achieved during a period of considerable economic adversity that has been imposed upon the Queensland Government by those people who control the purse-strings, the colleagues of members of the Opposition and their friends who control the Treasury and the Federal Government in Canberra. I can only make the point that comments made by the honourable member for South Brisbane do her little credit in this Parliament.

The Builders' Registration and Home-owners' Protection Act Amendment Bill is worthy of strong support by members on both sides of this House. It is a pleasure to support the legislation. I want to commend the Minister for Works and Housing for the steps that he has taken in relation to the Builders Registration Board since he became the Minister responsible for its administration. I believe that all responsible members would recognise the progress that has been made with the board since the Minister initiated certain reforms. Noticeable changes have been made, but perhaps the most significant change has been one of direction. Changes have meant a new direction for the board. They have, in fact, taken the board back to its basic reason for being. It is now functioning more effectively as a consumer-protection body. I might add that the changes honourable members are debating in the amending legislation that is before the House tonight will add to that protection.

One of the amendments I appreciate most is the move away from the extremely legalistic approach adopted by the board in respect of its role approximately 12 months ago. At that time, there had been a growing tendency for matters that came before the Builders Registration Board to be settled through litigation. Although such a course may suit certain honourable members of this Parliament, and perhaps certain people outside the Parliament, it did not suit the Government or the majority of Queenslanders.

I am sure that most honourable members appreciate that a consumer protection body that has an increasing number of its problems being brought before the courts for resolution cannot be achieving its basic aims and objectives. The Builders Registration Board, for example, was established as a body aimed at giving prompt and inexpensive resolution, whenever possible, to problems that arose between builders and buyers. The trend that became increasingly obvious approximately 12 months ago was one that undermined the very effectiveness of the board, but that now has been corrected.

During the past year, a significant reduction in the amount of litigation that the board was involved in has been achieved. I believe that in a debate such as this, the role of the people who are responsible for the Builders Registration Board and members of the staff should be acknowledged. I refer to people such as Mr Ray Griffith, the board's general manager and registrar. Mr Griffith is most ably qualified to play the role of problem-solver. He is a builder. He has a practical outlook and approach to problems that confront the board in these difficult times. He is able to appreciate the difficulties being faced by buyers who may have problems with a home. He is also able to talk directly with builders about ways in which problems can be solved. He has adopted a practical approach to the role that the Government has given him to play. I believe also

that the board has the benefit of services provided by other extremely well qualified people, such as Mr Col Wright, the administration manager, and other members of the board's staff.

The administrative changes that have been introduced to the board stem from the work of the Internal Operational Audit Service. As a result, two new bodies have been established within the board. Through their activities, these bodies are helping to make the board's operations more effective than it has ever been before. The first of these bodies I wish to mention is a review subcommittee, which reports to the board on disputes concerning either building or registration matters. The second body is a financial subcommittee which reports to the board on the day-to-day financial administration of the organisation. A number of people have played important roles in reorganising the Builders Registration Board.

Obviously it is difficult for members on this side of the House to name them all, but I feel that it is appropriate that at least two are given recognition in this debate tonight. I refer to the present Director-General of Works, Mr John Bellert. Last year Mr Bellert was very much involved with the reorganisation of the board and its subsequent implementation. The work that he undertook at that time has paved the way for smoother running and a better system in Queensland today.

The other person whom I wish to mention briefly is the former Minister for Works and Housing, the Honourable Claude Wharton, who in recent times has served as a consultant to the board. Mr Wharton's extensive knowledge and experience in this area has been very much appreciated and has shown itself to be of value through the advice and assistance that he has provided and also the experience and the knowledge that he has accumulated over a long period.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: It is the old boys' club—jobs for the boys.

Mr BORBIDGE: I am disappointed that the honourable member opposite would dispute that. I do not believe that there would be one fair-minded member of this House who cannot say that the Builders Registration Board is working better, more efficiently and more effectively today than it was 12 months ago. Surely that is what responsible Government is all about. If honourable members opposite do not agree with that, then I feel sorry for them because they are obviously quite out of touch with reality. Then again, we on this side of the House are used to honourable members opposite being quite out of touch with reality.

The legislation before the House is a further positive indication of the Government's commitment to the people of this State. I commend the Minister and those people responsible for introducing it into the House. I wish it a speedy passage. I am sure that it deserves and will receive the support of all responsible members of this Parliament.

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (9.22 p.m.): It gives me much pleasure to join in the debate this evening and to support the Minister and to add my congratulations to him on his efforts. I support also the comments made by my colleague the member for Surfers Paradise when he complimented our past Minister, Mr Warburton.

An honourable member: Mr Warburton?

Mr STEPHAN: I am sorry—Mr Wharton. Of late I have heard a little bit in the news about a person by the name of Mr Warburton. I might say that it related to a different issue. That name seems to be in my mind at this stage.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: You were never an over-bright fellow.

Mr STEPHAN: That is right. And I am talking to one of my kin on the other side of the Chamber. So I have friends in that regard.

It also interested me to see the tunnel vision that Opposition members displayed in their attitude generally to legislation, particularly this Bill. The member for South Brisbane said that she did not have too much to compliment the Government or the

board on and that the board was not doing too much that is right. I wonder how many complaints are now made by home-owners or builders and how many complaints are still awaiting determination by the board after more than a short period. That is the test as far as the efficiency, the will and the success of the board itself are concerned. I would venture to say that there are very few. I know that one or two could be mentioned. Perhaps every member in this House could mention a problem that has drifted on a little bit. However, I reiterate that because of the manner in which the board is presently set up the number of complaints has decreased. Presently there is a great deal of difference in the number of complaints coming into my office compared with the number that I received in the previous 12 months.

The review of the Act is timely. It follows the reorganisation of the board which took place earlier this year. It is timely and necessary. As part of that review the board has undergone a rigorous examination. I am pleased to say that the Minister for Works and Housing has already achieved much in making the board more effective and efficient in its operation. The reduction in the number of complaints is proof of that. I know very well that, when something goes wrong with the building of a house, home-owners are very concerned. I take a great deal of interest in their problems. I note with interest that, since the restructuring of the board, operational procedures have been substantially reviewed to achieve more efficiency and to provide an improved means of handling owners' complaints and builders' inquiries.

At a time when staff numbers have been reduced, the efficiency of the organisation has increased. I am also pleased that an opportunity has been given to the private sector to put forward its case for the provision of the services presently offered by the Builders Registration Board. As some dissatisfaction had been expressed at the running of the board, that step was warranted. Approaches from the private sector have suggested that it could provide a scheme similar to that run by the board. So the Minister deserves credit for providing the opportunity for interested bodies and organisations to put forward proposals.

Discussions were held with, and between, builders' organisations and a submission was received from one of those bodies. However, because of the changes to the Builders Registration Board in the interim period, in the end there has been general industry agreement that the board should continue to function. The Minister has taken note of the matters raised in this process. I am sure that the input from the industry organisations has been of benefit to him in the reorganisation of the board.

The State now has a leaner, fitter board. The amendments now under consideration will enhance the board's performance. For instance, in keeping with what has been happening to the board's staff, the board itself is now to be made smaller. The eight-member board that has served until now is to be reduced by one. That is to be achieved by the abolition of the representatives of architects, building societies and unions on the board while, at the same time, an additional board member will represent consumers and another will act as a representative of the State Government.

The Minister should be congratulated for his initiative in reintroducing the consumers' representative. This was a provision in the House-builders' Registration and Home-owners' Protection Act, which came into being in 1977. In those days there were two registration boards, one for general builders and one for house-builders. When the two were amalgamated in about 1980, a new board was formed and the consumers' representative was abolished. I believe that was a mistake. I am very pleased that the Minister has reintroduced representation for consumers. After all, that is what the legislation is about—consumer protection in what is probably the most important item people will buy in their life-time, that is, their own home. If it is not the most important item people will buy, it will certainly be the most expensive. It will certainly be a source of more pride than anything else they will ever own. Obviously they want a representative who can put forward their views when problems with the building of a house may arise.

Since the Minister introduced the legislation into the House, some critics have claimed that they will not be represented on the board. I point out that their claims are

premature. The matter of who will be members of the board is still to be decided. That is a matter for State Cabinet.

Several other amendments will further strengthen the Act in its resolve to provide protection for consumers. I refer in particular to the steps included in the amendments that will help prevent people from trying to circumvent the Act by repeatedly seeking owner-builder permits. As the Minister pointed out in his second-reading speech, it is proposed to prevent an individual, whose registration has been cancelled by the board, from forming a body corporate and employing a nominee to overcome his cancellation or suspension. That step was very necessary and the Minister is to be commended for taking it. There will also be the new measure that will stop builders who have been deregistered from continuing their activities through the guise of a body corporate set up specifically to overcome the effects of the deregistration.

Other measures will assist the consumer. There has been a tightening-up of the provisions contained in the Act which will, I am sure, promote much more efficient administration of the board's business. As has been heard tonight, the board is in the process of hearing a number of complaints. There is certainly more on the credit side than the debit side. I congratulate the Minister and his staff. John Bellert is to be commended for the work that he is doing. Stewart Hall has also been a tremendous help.

It gives me great pleasure to support the Bill.

Hon. I. J. GIBBS (Albert—Minister for Works and Housing) (9.31 p.m.), in reply: It gives me great pleasure to reply to several of the members who spoke in the debate. First of all, I will deal with the contribution by the member for Wolston, Mr Gibbs, who is the Opposition spokesman. In the main the honourable member supported the Bill. I thank him very much for his comments.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: You are losing me tonight.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I am aware that the member for Wolston is losing his position as Opposition spokesman on my portfolio and will become the Opposition spokesman on Mines and Energy.

I am very pleased that the honourable member supported the Bill. He did make some criticism of it. That is quite acceptable. The Government does not mind constructive criticism. I have taken note of the criticisms that have been made. The honourable member referred to the board as a builders' club. He said that he was disappointed that the architects' representative, the union representative and the building societies' representative are being removed and he suggested that there should be legal representation on that board. I suppose that the board has its own legal advisers. Legal advisers are employed. I do not think that the board has ever been short of legal advice, judging by the amount of money that has been spent on solicitors and legal actions in the various courts. The Government has received applications by letter and telephone from people who wish to become members of the board in future. All of those applications will be considered at the appropriate time.

The honourable member also said that duplex buildings are similar to but not the same as home units. A duplex is really only a double house. When one gets into the home unit field, in the main they are three-storey walk-ups through to high-rise buildings. As a result of local authority regulations, buildings of that nature usually have to have architects, engineers and other such professional people associated with their construction. One would expect that, if members of those professions are associated with the construction of a building, the beginning of their association is a sufficient basis for any future legal action that may be taken on the basis that it is a substandard building. I believe that in the past some substandard buildings have been constructed, but most local authorities have tightened up their by-laws and town-planning principles and have achieved a very good result. That action has been based on past experience. My department's inspectors co-operate with local authorities and do inspections where necessary. However, in the main I believe that my department should not at any stage

intrude into the construction of home units, which would take the department into the field of high-rise construction. Insurance, which is quite another matter altogether, has also to be considered. Perhaps that should be discussed on some other day. Certainly I would never recommend that my department get involved in that arena.

The honourable member talked about brick-layers, electricians and other people being registered and not registered. He complained about the registering of a builder who has had two years' experience when an apprentice has to serve four years plus experience. In the same breath almost he talked about a builder who did something without a licence. I might add that the Builders Registration Board helped him out to a fairly large extent. It is strange for the member for Wolston to be having two bob each way in this case, by referring to a man who has ability but who has not served the required four years. That is what the latitude in the amendment is all about; so that someone with natural ability and a lot of experience can be looked after.

Letters of complaint to the board have almost ceased since its reorganisation. That is great to see, because it means that the reorganisation has worked. The Government is happy with the way that the board is currently set up.

A longer period for appeal is being provided and a committee has been set up within the board itself to deal with appeals to the board and also to the Minister. This is being done administratively and I believe that this will cut out the need for courts almost entirely.

The honourable member referred to the Sanctuary Cove pool and criticised its finish. I have had a look at that pool and I believe that it is a good standard. Of course, pool-builders are not registered builders and have nothing to do with the board in any way, shape or form.

The matter of fines was referred to by the honourable member, who said that the fines were not enough. The fines set in the Act are the maximum amounts, and it is up to the court at the end of the day to determine what happens. Builders can be sent to gaol for not paying fines; so there is an opportunity for the suggestions made by the honourable member to be put into effect.

The second speaker was Mr Des Booth, who is the chairman of my committee and, together with the remainder of the committee members, has done an excellent job in working on this legislation with me, as have my officers and also the industry itself. The honourable member mentioned the number of appeals lodged. It is interesting to give the House some facts on the number of appeals and prosecutions lodged in the courts. Between 1 March and 30 September 1986, the number of appeals lodged against board orders under section 60 amounted to 18; the number of appeals lodged from 1 March to 30 September 1987 fell to 8. The number of section 48 appeals lodged against registration decisions in the period 1 March to 30 September 1986 amounts to 31; the number of appeals lodged from 1 March to 30 September 1987 dropped to 6. This Government has a very favourable record in that regard and I appreciate the comments made by my chairman, Mr Des Booth, as well as his work in assisting in the formulation of the amendments to the Act.

The honourable member for Nundah, Sir William Knox, referred to the fact that the honourable member for Yeronga, Mr Norman Lee, introduced much of this legislation. The legislation has stood the test of time and tonight the amendments alter the Act only slightly, but they do help to streamline it and tighten it up. In the main, the Government has achieved results by changing the administration of the board, and that has been one of the main developments in the last 12 months. The honourable member referred to education and the right of appeal. I have covered the right of appeal already to some degree. The honourable member referred to the failure rate of builders seeking registration and said there was a fine line. In the past, some builders were treated very harshly and some of the builders that I have talked to and examined should have been registered. There is no doubt about that. However in the early days, if a builder was a new Australian and could not speak perfect English and answer all the questions, he had no

hope of being registered at all. I found quite a few anomalies in that regard, but they have been overcome and the system is working very well.

The fourth speaker was the honourable member for Nerang, Mr Tom Hynd, who is also a member of my committee. He referred to the housing industry as a whole, its progress and the fact that Queensland, with 16 per cent of Australia's population, is providing 25 per cent of home-building in Queensland.

The housing industry in Queensland is in a very sound state. If all members of the House were fair, they would agree that the housing industry in Queensland has a very good record. People are still moving to Queensland. They have a need for housing and thereby create jobs in the building industry. Many parts of Queensland, particularly the south-east corner, are developing very quickly and are the fastest-growing areas in Australia.

The member for South Brisbane, Ms Warner, referred to Housing Commission protection. The matters relating to the Housing Commission to which she referred had nothing to do with the Bill. I thought that it was worth listening to her to see whether she could put forward any practical suggestions. Of course, that did not occur. She made her usual speech. It was evident that she had a hang-up about Mr Stewart Hall, the Commissioner of Housing. Of course, the honourable member for Surfers Paradise, Mr Borbidge, straightened out a few of those matters. I can only say that the honourable member for South Brisbane must be judging people by her own standards. Mr Hall has a perfect record in his employment with the Government. The final years of his career have been spent in the Housing Commission. As a finance expert, he has done a great deal to tighten up everything in the Housing Commission. With fewer staff, he has that organisation producing more than it has produced in the past. He has done a tremendous job. I have the utmost respect for him. In December he will retire with a perfect record of working for this Government. He has dedicated his life-time to working for Queensland. He will retire with a great dignity and, as I have said, with a tremendous and perfect record.

The member for South Brisbane referred to a surplus of approximately $18m in the Housing budget. At present, interest rates are high. That has been caused by many factors. Sometimes the Federal Government seems to think that it has control over interest rates. Interest rates are now falling and the number of applications received by the Housing Commission is increasing. Despite what Ms Warner said, the Housing Commission is working very well.

The honourable member for Surfers Paradise, Rob Borbidge, is also a member of my committee. To some degree he answered the criticism levelled by Ms Warner and by other people. The honourable member for Surfers Paradise spoke highly of the present staff of the Builders Registration Board. He referred to its reorganisation. I must thank Ray Griffiths, who has been given the top job in that organisation. I must also thank the board members for their reaction. The board members and the staff co-operated very well. I publicly commend Ray Griffiths, the board and the staff. Although the board has seven fewer members on its staff, it is doing a more efficient job. The small number of complaints received by the Builders Registration Board speaks for itself and indicates the good work done by the staff.

I also thank the members of the Works Department. The Director-General of Works, Mr John Bellert, played a role in the reorganisation of the staff. Mr Wharton did an excellent job. Mr Bellert and Mr Wharton have been working as an excellent team. Mr Wharton has given much of his time for very little reward. He is only receiving his expenses and car allowance. No doubt when everything is put into place—and that will be very soon—his work will be complete.

The honourable member for Gympie, Len Stephan, who is also a member of my committee, spoke about the reduced numbers and other aspects of the Builders Registration Board. The honourable member spoke also about the Master Builders Association and the HIA, who were given the opportunity to play some part in the Builders Registration Board. That was very helpful. Meetings were held with both of those organisations. At

the end of the day, it was decided that the Builders Registration Board was working so well that it was better left in its present form. Members of those two organisations were not interested in taking up the challenge of running, re-forming or privatising that board.

All in all, this Government is happy with the present situation. I thank all honourable members for their contributions to this debate.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. I. J. Gibbs (Albert—Minister for Works and Housing) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—

Mr R. J. GIBBS (9.47 p.m.): Whilst accepting the Bill with some reservation, the Opposition certainly intends to oppose clause 3. Although I welcome the reduction of board members from eight to seven and the fact that, at long last, a consumers' representative will be a member of that board, I am concerned about how that consumers' representative will be appointed. Will he be appointed by ministerial appointment, by appointment of the board or, as I would prefer him to be——

Mr De Lacy: It will be a member of the National Party.

Mr R. J. GIBBS: It is very likely that he will be a member of the National Party.

Will that consumers' representative be a representative of the collective consumer organisations throughout Queensland? That is what I would prefer.

A representative from the trade union movement should also be one of those seven board members, bearing in mind the number of people who are unemployed within the building industry and the fact that many people who want homes built or improvements carried out on their homes are supporters and members of trade unions. Although perhaps inadvertently, conditions, award payments and the board's responsibilities in relation to overseeing may have an effect upon those people.

I believe also that the board should consist of a representative from the legal profession. Speaking on behalf of the Opposition, I cannot accept the change that is proposed to be made in the composition of the board. The Opposition intends to oppose this clause.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I appreciate the honourable member's comment. The Government will have to take great care in the constitution of the board. It has been in existence long enough for this Government to realise the types of people who should be represented on that board.

Many people and groups have expressed interest in who should constitute the board. That aspect will have to be very closely considered.

Based on past experience, this Government believes that the proposed changes will work very well. Eventually, at the end of the day, I am sure that people will be pleased with the board. However, the proof of the pudding will finally be in the eating.

Question—That clause 3, as read, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 53		NOES, 28	
Ahern	Knox	Ardill	
Alison	Lane	Braddy	
Austin	Lee	Campbell	
Beanland	Lester	Casey	
Beard	Lickiss	Comben	
Berghofer	McKechnie	D'Arcy	
Bjelke-Petersen	McPhie	De Lacy	
Borbidge	Menzel	Eaton	
Burreket	Muntz	Gibbs, R. J.	
Chapman	Neal	Goss	
Clauson	Nelson	Hamill	
Cooper	Newton	Hayward	
Elliott	Powell	McElligott	
Fraser	Randell	Mackenroth	
Gately	Sherlock	McLean	
Gibbs, I. J.	Sherrin	Milliner	
Gilmore	Simpson	Palaszczuk	
Glasson	Slack	Shaw	
Gunn	Stephan	Smith	
Gygar	Stoneman	Smyth	
Harvey	Tenni	Underwood	
Henderson	Veivers	Vaughan	
Hinton	White	Warburton	
Hinze		Warner	
Hobbs		Wells	
Hynd	*Tellers:*	Yewdale	*Tellers:*
Innes	Littleproud		Davis
Katter	FitzGerald		Prest

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clauses 4 to 21, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr I. J. Gibbs, read a third time.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 11 November (see p. 4062).

Mr SMITH (Townsville East) (9.59 p.m.): The Opposition will not oppose the Bill in principle. Members of the Opposition have previously drawn attention to the establishment of unresearched and unco-ordinated industrial estates and the piecemeal manufacturing that results.

The legislation presently before the House is in fact a simple Bill. It states the Government's intention to sell off certain industrial estates that have little prospect of being developed in the future for their stated purpose. I will refer to the stated purpose aspect of the legislation at a later stage.

The land that is proposed to be sold is not Crown land. It is land that has been purchased, basically, on the retail or commercial market.

We on this side of the House certainly agree with the stated intention and the reason for selling that land. In fact, in his second-reading speech the Minister said that he wanted to place a greater emphasis on industry development and lesser emphasis on property development. We support that line, and we have said so previously in this House. In fact, we have taken the Government to task over some things.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Harvey): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I ask honourable members to come to order.

Mr SMITH: However, the Opposition is concerned that the Minister has not provided a schedule of the estates that will be sold off or, for that matter, an estimate of their value or the total area of land involved. There is no doubt that some communities will be dissatisfied with that decision.

I want to place on record now that, although the Opposition may agree in principle with the proposals, it does not necessarily mean that it agrees with individual sales. For example, the Opposition would be concerned if a community lost an estate because of an incorrect evaluation of its potential or because of some political pay-back. Unfortunately, because of the actions of the Government, not necessarily the Minister, in victimising some communities, including the electorate I represent, because they choose not to elect National Party candidates, individual sales will be closely scrutinised by the Opposition to ensure fair treatment by the Government.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Lytton! I have asked honourable members to come to order in the Chamber. It is very difficult to hear the honourable member for Townsville East.

Mr SMITH: Previously I have drawn attention to the fact that half the budget of the department concerned has gone in expenditure on establishing industrial estates. In 1981 the number of estates was 47, and by 1987 it had grown to 64. One of the problems with those estates is that some flexibility is needed. In instances in which it has been shown that there was no possibility of manufacturing enterprises taking up the opportunities, perhaps some flexibility should have been allowed in order that the estates could be developed for other purposes. I believe that, because of the Act, limitations that prohibited a certain type of development have been imposed. For example, in Innisfail a freight company wanted to establish a forwarding agency to handle a lot of produce from the north Queensland area. That company was prepared to spend about $2m. Because of the limitation in the Act, the company was not able to establish that agency and, as a result, the industrial estate has not been used for anything else.

I will return to the point that I made before, that half of the money has gone on the establishment of estates. It is unfortunate that most of the people who approach my office with requests for assistance are doing so because, in spite of full attention being given to them by the Minister's officers, to whom I give credit, they are disappointed that they have not been able to be helped. I would suggest that, to a large extent, the Government creates too high or too great an expectation of the service. Frankly, it is a situation of the service not matching the rhetoric.

Queensland has the lowest manufacturing base of any State in the Commonwealth. Only 11 per cent of all people in employment contribute to manufacturing. That includes those involved in the production of sugar, which, really, in a purely technical sense, hardly qualifies.

There is no doubt that we in the Labor Party believe that every assistance has to be provided to enhance manufacturing opportunities. We and the Labor States have agreed that preferences ought to be eliminated. Over the longer term that will certainly bring about more efficient manufacturing. We have supported that.

The House ought to be aware of the fact that, although those preference clauses were eliminated, there was an expectation that some loyalty would prevail and that, particularly, Government departments and large industrial enterprises would, as far as possible, purchase their equipment from Queensland manufacturing concerns. In recent times I have been told that that has not happened. Although people certainly cannot be forced into buying certain goods, it has to be sheeted home to business and to the Government that, when a comparable product that meets the particular requirements of the purchasing organisation is available within Queensland, every opportunity ought to be provided to Queensland firms to meet those requirements.

Hopefully, some of the money that will come from the sale of these estates will give the Minister greater flexibility. Perhaps the Minister will respond to that. The Government must pay more attention to the encouragement of industries that can add

value to the products, particularly the primary products, that the State already produces. The Government must also pay some attention to the provision of relocation assistance. There is no doubt that some industries are certainly strapped for capital. If some that are currently badly located could be relocated at considerable Government expense, that could possibly create viable industries for a long time to come.

I wish to turn to something that has been very successful in the Northern Territory and speak about its application to Queensland. Three or four years ago, the people in Darwin established a trade development zone. Although it got off to a fairly shaky start, it is now doing quite well. A recent article in the *Bulletin* showed that the concept is going from success to success and will be totally economically viable within a few years.

In 1985, the then Labor Party spokesman proposed the initiative that a trade development zone be established in Townsville. That proposal by the Labor Party was well documented. Early in the next year, as an election proposal, the National Party adopted that Labor Party idea and proposed a trade development zone for north Queensland. The National Party made the point that it would examine the options and choose between Cairns and Townsville.

That was certainly embraced by the community as being a worthwhile proposal, but, as far as I can establish, instead of being handled by the Minister's department, it was handled by the Minister for Northern Development. From correspondence that has been freely available in recent times, it seems that the initiative has fallen into a hole and the Minister for Northern Development has indicated that funds are not available to proceed with an examination of that proposal.

I believe it is something that the Minister for Industry and Technology ought to pick up. The sale of these industrial estates should overcome any argument that might be based on budgetary restraints. I hope that the Minister will examine it very thoroughly. I make the point that a place such as Townsville certainly has the infrastructure. One big point is that very valuable trade links have been established with Papua New Guinea, particularly with the shipping by Curtain Brothers. The proposal to bring gas to Townsville will make it an even more viable manufacturing centre.

There is no doubt that, if the Minister's department were to consider seriously this proposal, it would receive full co-operation from the local authority, the development bureau and the harbour board. If such a trade development zone is to be established, people need to know well in advance what sort of concessions and incentives will be offered. For instance, they will need to know the Government's attitude towards concessions on freight and such things as pay-roll tax. They will want to know that adequate water will be available, that roads will be in place and that a rail link will be established. That takes me to the matter of providing a new rail link into the port of Townsville. All of those things have to be put in place so that anyone considering going into the TDZ knows the ground rules well in advance. I sincerely commend that proposal to the Minister's department. I believe that it has been improperly placed in the hands of the Minister for Northern Development and that it is the responsibility of the Minister's department.

In conclusion, I must say that I think it is unfortunate that this portfolio has seen very little activity. I have held the shadow portfolio for 12 months and this is the first occasion on which an opportunity has arisen in the Parliament to talk about any aspects of that portfolio. I will not extend the debate by talking about broader matters. However, I will say that it is unfortunate that such a portfolio has not received more scrutiny by the Parliament over the last 12 months. The Estimates of the department were not debated and no legislation has been introduced. What ought to be a very exciting portfolio has been a portfolio of very little activity. As I am about to move on to another shadow portfolio, I am sorry that that has been the situation. I hope that there will be more activity in this portfolio in the future.

Mr SHERRIN (Mansfield) (10.11 p.m.): I rise to support the legislation. In so doing, I commend the Minister and his officers on their efficient administration of the department.

As honourable members are aware, this legislation will allow for the sale of land currently held by the Department of Industry Development that is now surplus to that department's requirements. The legislation is, of course, primarily machinery in its nature.

The Crown industrial estate is a significant feature of the Government's assistance to manufacturing industry in this State. I am very fortunate to have had one of the Government's more recently-established industry estates located in my electorate at Eight Mile Plains. The program is targeted towards direct assistance to new and expanding industries by the provision of fully serviced sites on Crown industrial estates. Honourable members will of course be aware that these sites are made available generally on a 30-year lease with specific improvement conditions and performance requirements imposed on the manufacturers relating to the establishment and the continuity of operation of that particular approved industry.

I must commend the Minister and his department for their selective targetting of certain key and strategic industries essential for the broad economic development of this State in their location on these estates. From the contact that I have had with the department since my election last year, including a couple of instances in which I have been able to take constituents of mine to the department, I have found that officers of the department are certainly implementing the scheme very well. In the two instances to which I have referred, I have certainly had no cause for complaint, and I can only praise the officers of the department for the way in which they have implemented Government policy in this area.

This valuable program recognises that industry can be and quite often is liable for very large and significant capital outlays in the establishment phase of the industry. For example, considerable funding allocations must be made by the manufacturer for land purchase and the overall construction costs. Fitting out can be a very sizeable part of the budget in establishing a new industry, as can stocking, where that is required. Even the early operational costs can be very, very significant and often are such an impost as to act as a disincentive to new industry being established. This program saves the industrialist or the developer a significant amount of the front-end cost with which he is often faced.

To evaluate the success of the program, I suggest that honourable members take the opportunity to drive around the many subdivisional developments that have been undertaken by the department. Earlier this year, in company with a number of other Government back-benchers who are members of the Minister's committee, I was given the opportunity to tour a number of development estates. One was in the electorate of my distinguished colleague the member for Mount Gravatt, Mr Henderson. Another was in my own electorate, and a further one was a Carole Park development.

I was very impressed indeed with the range and scope of industry encouraged by the department in the State through such extensive industrial parks as Carole Park and the park on the Gold Coast. Honourable members who represent provincial seats will be aware that there are many industrial estates in provincial cities such as Mackay and in my own electorate there is the Brisbane Technology Park located at Eight Mile Plains. I commend the Minister and his department for the range of high technology industries that are being encouraged into that estate.

Mr Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr SHERRIN: Yes. He did a magnificent job, too.

In that estate there is the Unisys computer manufacturing facility and a number of other high technology industries: satellite communications, laser developments, etc. I look forward to the continued development and expansion of that park. In 1985-86 the department provided in excess of $11m for the development of these estates. This Bill gives the Minister greater freedom in the provision of very tangible assistance to manufacturing industry in Queensland and I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr WHITE (Redcliffe) (10.16 p.m.): The Liberal Party is happy to support this legislation, which is basically a machinery amendment to allow the Government to sell off a number of surplus industrial estates that have accumulated over the years. Over the years, those of us who have been around the State have seen a number of industrial estates in country towns and provincial cities which are lying dormant and this legislation is a positive move by the Government to do something about those estates.

A Government member interjected.

Mr WHITE: I do not need any help from the honourable members; I have been helping myself lately.

It is time that the Government made this move. I note that through the legislation the Government intends to encourage the private sector to exercise its entrepreneurial flair in different areas. That is to be commended.

Tonight it is worth reflecting that unfortunately most of today's legislation has been gagged. I am referring principally to the gagging of the most controversial piece of legislation to go through this House for a long time, the Education Act and Another Act Amendment Bill. All members, be they Government, Liberal Party or Opposition, who have had a long-standing interest in Queensland's educational process, would have liked the opportunity to express their views. This is a very negative way for a Government to behave, because, after its recent National Party conference, this National Party Government has professed to want more open and accountable Government. When one looks at the decisions made at the recent National Party conference in Townsville, it did everything bar endorse the implementation of a public accounts committee, and the only reason that the National Party did not endorse the concept of a public accounts committee was because members of the Liberal Party have propounded that for many years. It is worth reminding the House tonight that those members who would have liked to have put forward their point of view on the Education Act—whether or not the Government would agree with those sentiments or not—have been denied that opportunity.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Harvey): Order! The member will restrict his comments to the Bill.

Mr WHITE: We are dealing with industrial development, and those members who have examined the legislation would realise that it is basically a machinery measure. As I said earlier, it is very difficult for members to make a contribution when the opportunities to speak are limited.

The Minister for Industry and Technology should also have been putting forward tonight some concrete proposals about how we are going to deal with the future of the manufacturing industry in this State.

The recent ABS figures show that the number of bankruptcies has reached an all-time record. A break-down of the detailed figures shows that one of the most significant industries that has gone down the chute is the manufacturing industry. It is putting one's head in the sand to look at the State economy and to think that for ever and a day Queensland can rely on its agricultural sector and its extractive industries. Mount Isa Mines is probably the most efficient producer of commodities in the world today. One has only to look at the performance of that company to see that in the last financial year its return on its enormous capital investment was only about 5 per cent.

One of the major problems facing all countries today is unemployment. At the end of September, 9.3 per cent of Queensland's population was unemployed. Queensland is not going to soak up the unemployed in the agricultural sector, because it has experienced a decline in the number of persons employed in it. Jobs are not going to be picked up in the commodities industry or in the extractive industries. However, a great deal could be achieved in the manufacturing industries. If one looks at the difficulties experienced by industries today—and the manufacturing industry is but one—one sees a plethora of

State regulations, Government charges and taxes including pay-roll tax to which Sir William Knox has referred on numerous occasions.

Today, the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer tried to convince all honourable members by saying that the grouping principles adopted by the State Treasury are fair and equitable; whereas, in reality, they are iniquitous. Somebody can have one-twelfth of a share in a business and, because he has entered into a partnership with somebody else, be put into a group. It is a dreadful state of affairs that a Government that espouses private enterprise in its rhetoric penalises people with enterprise, get-up-and-go. It can be seen from Queensland's last State Budget that pay-roll tax is again on the increase. The projected revenue from pay-roll tax is expected to pass the record figure that was achieved in the last financial year.

Mr Sherrin: What's that got to do with the Bill?

Mr WHITE: Members opposite really do not have any great degree of entrepreneurial spirit, nor do they have any substance or experience in the business world. I must say that at least the member for Mansfield did the job for the Minister when he outlined to the House what the Bill was all about.

Let me go back to the National Party conference in Townsville. The great National Party is the so-called conservative party, the party that stands for tradition and conservative values. What did the members of the National Party talk about in Townsville—condoms! What are condoms going to do for this State?

What was the second item on the agenda? Sex education. Finally, the Minister for Local Government came to the rescue. He said that something was going to be done to improve the economic welfare of the people of this State.

Mr Henderson: You are not on your car phone now.

Mr WHITE: The honourable member should not worry. I will mention him on the next occasion that I am on the telephone.

What did the Minister for Local Government have to say about improving the economic welfare of the people of this State? He put forward the proposition that prostitution should be legalised.

The National Party is supposed to stand for private enterprise and conservative values. It makes a great issue out of religion and Christian values, but at its conference in Townsville, condoms, sex education and the legalisation of prostitution were discussed. That is very relevant, indeed!

As Sir William Knox has pointed out, pay-roll tax is an iniquitous tax. This year, for the first time, between 10 000 and 12 000 individual small businesses will be paying pay-roll tax.

In some areas the development of industrial estates has been a success. However, I remind honourable members that that has involved extreme favouritism.

Mr Henderson: Do you sell breathalysers in your chemist shops?

Mr WHITE: The only time that I see the honourable member in one of my chemist shops is when he is looking either for condoms or for black hair-dye—or should I say hair-restorer? That great Bible-bashing member for Mount Gravatt visits my chemist shops to buy condoms, hair-restorer or black hair-dye.

Government members interjected.

Mr WHITE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I seek your protection against the aggressive onslaught by Government members.

Let me turn to some of the people who, over the years, have gained advantages through industrial estates. One has only to look at Sir Edward Lyons. All honourable members know the story of how "Top-level" Ted was given rights to set up a factory

at Beenleigh. For many years, the Premier and the Government of the day said that that was a great idea, that Katies would establish a factory there and hundreds of people would be employed. But what happened to it? Nothing! Other people who wanted that opportunity were not given it. That is a disgraceful state of affairs. I do not wish to speak at length about favouritism and cronyism.

Mr Gately: We would be very pleased.

Mr WHITE: The honourable member should not say too much, or I might give him an honourable mention. Some thought must be given to those people.

The proposed amendment to the Bill is a minor one. The Bill concerns the industrial development of this State. I would have thought that a Government that espouses private enterprise would be more entrepreneurial.

Where has mention been made of the establishment of enterprise zones? Honourable members have witnessed the American experience in which the Reagan administration has gone into depressed areas. I would have thought that tonight the Government would put forward some constructive proposals. All that the Bill provides is the opportunity for the Government to sell off some surplus land. In this State, where there is an enormous land mass and there are such great opportunities, one would have thought that at least the overall concept of an enterprise zone would be considered.

We have seen the success of what happened in the Northern Territory many years ago when the then Chief Minister, Paul Everingham, established a similar zone in which an area was set aside to be free from Territory taxes. People were given an opportunity to establish in that zone an industry that would be free from at least a significant proportion of Territory taxes and would create employment. I simply remind the Minister of that and suggest that he might like to comment on whether or not the Government wants to do something constructive to attract manufacturing industries to this State.

As the member for Warwick has reminded me on occasions, many opportunities exist in this State to create employment if we have enough initiative and sense, and if we provide the carrots in forms of tax concessions, write-offs, lease-backs and so on.

Finally, this is an opportunity that one should take to talk about the capitalist system. I know that members of the Opposition get very upset about it, but the life-blood of our society is the capitalist system, or the private-enterprise system.

Mr Davis: You have always been a capitalist.

Mr WHITE: I am not ashamed of it. I am quite proud of it. It is rather a pity that there are not more capitalists. If there were more entrepreneurial people who would invest their funds and take a risk, the larger the cake would be and the better society would be.

I remind the member for Brisbane Central of a recent speech made by Mr John Ralph, the managing director of CRA Limited, when he was addressing the churches of this country. He said—

> "Profits are frequently attacked as somehow being bad, and the integrity of those of us who are involved in the often-difficult task of earning them is under attack, even within our Churches. Yet the role of profits and of those involved in the productive economic system are fundamental to alleviating the economic and many of the social problems which are of concern to our Churches and their members. I believe that we are more involved in providing the means for curing society's ills than we are in their causes."

There is nothing evil or wrong with profit.

Mr Gately: Not unless you make a mistake.

Mr WHITE: As Mr Gately said, not unless one makes a mistake. However, if someone is interested in making a profit, he also has to accept caveat emptor and the possibility that he will make losses. In relation to profits and the community—if the

community interests are to be served, it is in the community interest that profits are maximised and the cake is enlarged as a result.

I quote again from Mr Ralph's article in which he goes on to say—

> "Profits are fundamental to all the freedoms we enjoy—not just the freedom to make profits or losses. A state cannot begin to constrain the ability of its citizens to make their own decisions on how they will earn their incomes and how they will spend them, without beginning to place shackles on the liberty of those citizens."

Even people in the Labor Party, if they are truly democrats, would have to recognise that the profit system—the private-enterprise system—is integral to our way of life in this country. The more a Government considers constraints on enterprise and individuals and their ability to earn profits, the more it must continually attack the freedoms of its citizens. That point is worth reflecting on tonight. Although there is not much to talk about in relation to this Bill, I think it is appropriate to take something of a philosophical approach to business, enterprise and economic development.

The provision of employment opportunities is a matter related directly to this legislation. Some people jump up and down—particularly those people with a socialist bent—and say that the capitalist system has gone off the rails because the stock exchange has collapsed. They are almost gleeful. I find that rather disappointing because, if those people are really interested in creating jobs and providing opportunities, they should be doing all they can to encourage the capitalist system, private enterprise and entrepreneurialship. My message to the Government tonight is to take the shackles off people.

I daresay that the Minister receives a fair amount of criticism about Government red tape, taxes and the great difficulty that many enterprises face in terms of establishing a base in this State.

Mr Smyth: If you let the capitalist system run riot, would it not be the case that capitalists would take all the money for themselves and leave nothing for the ordinary man? Wouldn't it be true to say that? Hasn't that been proven throughout history?

Mr WHITE: I thank the honourable member for his interjection because it reflects a classic Marxist or socialist point of view.

Mr Smyth: But isn't it true?

Mr WHITE: Socialists believe that capitalists are ruthless manipulators of people. That is certainly not true.

I remind the honourable member, in case he has not noticed, that this State and this nation have a mixed economy. Functions of government are recognised by all political parties as the legitimate role of a Government. Furthermore, if the honourable member is really interested in improving the welfare of his fellow man—and I mention that I do not agree with his philosophy, although I respect and understand it—I point out to him that the socialist philosophy just does not work. If a Government is to look after people and create employment opportunities and commercial opportunities, a free-enterprise system has to be maintained.

If Christianity interests the honourable member at all, he may be interested to know that through the years, churches have recognised the need for a private enterprise system because they recognise that it is an integral part of a Christian way of life to protect the rights of individual people. One could go on all night in a philosophical vein, but I simply say that the Liberal Party supports the amendments that have been proposed.

I take this opportunity to point out to the Government that industries can be encouraged to come to this State in various ways. Opportunities exist for a Government to establish tax-free zones in a State. If that were done in Queensland, no doubt it would encourage major interstate and international companies to establish themselves in Queensland for the ultimate benefit of the people who live in this State.

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (10.39 p.m.): I am very pleased that this Bill has been introduced into the Parliament and that the Minister has been prepared to bite the bullet and attack a problem that has existed in his department for a considerable period. In actual fact, this is the second time that a big mistake has been made by the Department of Industry Development, or the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development as it was previously known, insofar as real estate transactions are concerned.

The first mistake occurred inititially when the concept of industrial estates emerged. At that time, the Government went mad and bought huge tracts of land in and around the Brisbane area. It became very easy for industries to be located in Brisbane because of the encouragement offered by the existence of those estates. In fact, what simply happened was that some industries from the provincial and country areas of the State moved to Brisbane and those that did not, particularly the fabricating industries, suddenly found that they had unfair competition right here in Brisbane. Because of the deal in relation to land and assistance with buildings and so forth, those industries that moved to Brisbane were outbidding the others for contracts and tenders. Also, because of the support that they were given by the Railway Department to ship their product north, they were competing unfairly with those industries in the areas from which they came originally. That disadvantaged the country and provincial areas of the State.

As quite often happens, the Government swung its pendulum in the opposite direction. It went mad throughout the countryside and bought land and created industrial estates hell, west and crooked without in fact undertaking proper research into the market that was available for the type of land that it was buying. No consideration was given to providing special help or special assistance to industry to relocate in those areas. The Government went out into the country and purchased tracts of land in areas in which major industry was never going to be established. As is the style of this Government, the usual sorts of things happened. Once the estate was built, a big plaque was erected, which contained the name of some National Party member of Parliament or a National Party stooge or hack in the area. That was his estate.

However, a year or two later, the only thing that had really happened on such sites was that guinea grass, lantana and gum-tree saplings had grown. I see the Minister for Lands smiling. On some occasions the Lands Department lost a lot of good land. It could have made much better use of some of the land that was handed over to the Department of Industrial Development.

I think in all honesty that the Minister for Industry would accept that. He has inherited these industrial estates. They are not of his doing or his creation. He has inherited the land. It is land that the department has had for a long period. A lot of capital has been tied up in those estates.

I accept the point that was made by the honourable member for Townsville East—that the Bill makes provision for the moneys received from the selling off of this land to go back into the industrial estates fund. That will mean that at long last the department might have additional finance within its own set-up to really get out and do what it should be doing, that is, what its name implies—industrial development. It should be developing industry in this State, helping it and sponsoring it, and getting Queensland to the stage at which it has value-added manufacturing, particularly of its primary products. I am pleased to see that happening tonight.

This Bill gets over a legal technicality in the Act. It will enable the Government to move in and sell off some of the lantana, guinea grass and sapling-infested land that it has in various areas throughout the State. The estates are not just in isolated country areas, either. If my memory serves me correctly, one of the first estates to be created in a country area was the estate on the Bruce Highway just north of Maryborough. That great estate stood there for years and years before any development was carried out on it.

In the last few years an estate in my electorate of Mackay has been surrounded by a little bit of controversy. Additional land was needed, and there was pressure on the Government to develop land. It was unfortunate that an environmental problem was

associated with that land as well. That made development very, very costly. Consequently, it has been very, very difficult to help industry to establish on that land. However, some people will be looking forward to purchasing it. When the Minister replies he may be able to tell me whether, when such land is sold, it will be done in accordance with local government by-laws and whether there will be a change in its designation. Many of those estates have been built close to residential areas, and if they are sold and their designation is changed, considerable dispute will arise amongst the people in those residential areas.

Hon. P. R. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Industry and Technology) (10.45 p.m.), in reply: I shall commence by answering the comments of the honourable member for Mackay, who mentioned the industrial estates program in country areas and provincial cities. Many industries that have been established on industrial estates in country areas would not have been established but for those estates. Just to name one of many, I can think of the town of Stanthorpe in my own electorate. However, it is acknowledged that there may be better ways to help industry. My department and I are definitely intending to keep some land in some areas but, if the estates have not been a success, not necessarily in all areas. It is my very firm intention that there will be very close consultation with local authorities before the department decides what to do with the estates as a block. Obviously the honourable member would not expect the department, after a decision in principle had been taken, to consult with a local authority on every little sale.

One of the reasons that people tend to start businesses in Brisbane, Mackay and other places is access to ports and those sorts of facilities that are not available in rural areas. My department is doing what it can. I compliment particularly the regional development officers of the department for the work that they do in trying to bring industry to country areas.

I shall now address the comments made by the Opposition spokesman. He said that presently there is no schedule of land for sale. The reason for that is very simple. The department wanted to do everything properly. It sought amendments to the Act so that it could go to the local authorities concerned knowing that it had the necessary legislative backing. The reason there is no schedule is that the department wants to have those consultations with local authorities before making decisions on what is to be done with each and every industrial estate.

Mr Smith: Are you proposing further amendments down the track?

Mr McKECHNIE: No. After consultation with the local authority, the department might want to sell in that local authority area land to be used for some other purpose.

In certain areas of provincial cities, Brisbane and the country, the department plans to retain strategic reserves of land because, quite obviously, it is not always possible for private enterprise to hold industrial land for future development. Even though interest rates have fallen somewhat, they are still of such magnitude that they remain a problem. The department plans to address that problem in a sensible manner.

Mr Eaton: You restrict them by your Act, though. It stipulates only manufacturing.

Mr McKECHNIE: One of the purposes of the amendments to the Act is to give me the power to sell land for other purposes. For instance, if the department has too much land for industrial purposes on a particular estate, in future it will be able to be sold for use for other purposes. Apart from a general review, that is part of the reason for the amendments to the Act.

Mr Eaton: In other words, they can still have industry, but not necessarily manufacturing.

Mr McKECHNIE: The department will work out with local authorities the appropriate use for land in particular areas.

Mr Eaton: Right along the coast, over the years various communities have lost millions of dollars because it stipulated manufacturing.

Mr McKECHNIE: I am saying to the honourable member that, in years gone by, the thought behind that was that it was unfair for businesses in the town to have to compete on an industrial estate with similar types of business that were getting concessional rentals and things like that. If somebody wants to engage in something other than manufacturing, commercial rents will be paid, so that the competition is fair.

The Opposition spokesman also mentioned the State preference agreement. I can assure him that the Government takes its obligations under that agreement very seriously. The Government tries to encourage local industry to tender. The honourable member is aware that the other day one of his colleagues brought along a group of workers and we discussed the particular problem. They went away with a better understanding. We parted very good friends. The Government has taken on board what that group of workers had to say. That is the sort of consultative process that I want to see in place.

Mr Smith: The more serious example relates to the Wivenhoe Dam. You probably remember that.

Mr McKECHNIE: There is a form of tendering that the Government has to abide by. Preference is given to local Australian products as against overseas products. The Queensland Government takes its obligations in that regard very seriously.

The Queensland Government is absolutely determined to encourage industrial development. Mention was made this morning in this Chamber of the $2 billion—not $2 million—problem with the Victorian workers' compensation scheme called Work Care. That State's third-party scheme is actuarially unsound to the tune of $1,000m. New South Wales has a $500m problem with its new workers' compensation scheme.

I personally have had consultation with industry interstate. My officers tell me that many industries want to get out of the southern States and come to Queensland because of the environment in this State. Queensland now has a better industrial relations climate than that in all other States. Queensland has favourable workers' compensation premiums and pay-roll tax rates and it has no financial institutions duty. Another reason why industries are coming to Queensland is that the land appropriately zoned on industrial estates in this State is a great incentive to them. It saves a lot of red tape that has to be contended with in other States.

Mr Casey: They have got some pretty good industrial estates in some of those southern States.

Mr McKECHNIE: I am simply saying that industries are breaking their necks to come to Queensland. Many exciting negotiations that will have positive results are presently taking place.

I might add that, in consultation with the Minister for Primary Industries, a biotechnology study is presently being conducted. My department is providing the funding and the Minister for Primary Industries is making available his officers. Private consultants have been engaged. This is being done in an effort to bring some of our primary products to a further manfacturing stage. That is the sort of thing that the Opposition spokesman talked about. The Government already has things in hand. I can assure members of the Opposition of that. A lot of good work is being done in that regard. I thank my colleague the Minister for Primary Industries for his co-operation in trying to bring value-added industry to our primary products.

Mr Smith: The QIT is able to do that.

Mr McKECHNIE: The university has the Centre for the Development of Entrepreneurs. The Government also works closely with the QIT. I can assure the honourable member that the Government has a very close relationship with the academic institutions and also with my colleague the Minister for Education.

I thank the member for Mansfield for his contribution and his support for industry and technology in this State. The honourable member is a great supporter of the Brisbane Technology Park. There is a growing interest in that park, of which the honourable member is aware. There will be more exciting developments in regard to that park as certain things unfold.

I wish that the honourable member for Redcliffe was still in the Chamber, because he made many comments. If the Government had consultations with the particular local authority and there was surplus land, and if it was decided that it would be appropriate to zone some of that land for a chemist shop, I just hope that the honourable member would not carry out the negotiations on his car telephone. I sincerely hope that the honourable member has learnt his lesson.

The honourable member for Redcliffe mentioned also the future of manufacturing in this State. He said that he wished that this Bill contained more provisions. The amendments are quite specific. They are to allow the Government to have a greater opportunity to raise money for industry development rather than property development. I thought his criticism was quite invalid because that is the whole purpose of the Bill.

At present, my department and I are involved in the quality assurance program. Some honourable members may not have heard of that program. It will give the businesses of this State a very marked advantage as far as manufacturing in this State is concerned. The Queensland Innovation Centre, which is a joint Commonwealth/State responsibility under the NIES program, and the Queensland Centre for Manufacturing Technology, which I announced last week or the week before—the Government is putting $2m into this development this financial year at the request of industry—will allow manufacturing to get off the ground within this State.

Generally the philosophy of this Government is quite clear: it welcomes business and the business community knows that. Sometimes the Government is disappointed by the knocking from some of its opponents when it tries to implement activities that will encourage business in this State. I assure honourable members that this Government has a good reputation both in this State and interstate for standing up for industry, and it will continue to do that. That is the whole purpose of the amendments to this legislation, in addition to trying to reduce the interest and redemption bill of the department, in order that funds are available for even more innovative industries and to encourage better ideas for development in this State.

Mr Eaton: You have got everything at your finger-tips. I will just refer to my own electorate in Innisfail. One thing that has been a bugbear concerns manufacturing. I am hoping that now you have said that, you will allow other industries to develop at some stage because we still have vacant land here on the industrial site for manufacturing.

Mr McKECHNIE: My reply to that interjection is that if there is a particular industrial estate where land is in rather short supply, obviously those scarce sites will be reserved for industries that are truly manufacturing industries, but if there is an estate that has ample land with room to develop—and many of them have—I would welcome and encourage it. I want to cut the interest and redemption side of my department's budget and generally I am in agreement with what the honourable member said.

Today someone from down the coast told me that he wished to expedite an exchange of land that is necessary in the interests of industry generally in that area. That estate is really crammed up and it would be a great pity to put an assembling industry on that site when manufacturing sites on that estate are scarce. That is the rough rule of thumb that I will adopt to try to overcome this problem.

Mr Smith: What about that trade development plan? I heard you say something about it.

Mr McKECHNIE: I think that the honourable member is mixed up. It is the Co-ordinator-General's Department that has the responsibility for bringing this matter to fruition. The whole concept of a Co-ordinator General's Department is to bring different

departments together when something arises which involves a whole series of departments. As far as trade development zones are concerned, when the honourable member talks about tax incentives, etc., this involves Treasury, my department and a whole series of other departments. That is the reason why that comes under the Co-ordinator-General's Department.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

LAND ACT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. W. H. GLASSON (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying) (11.01 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Land Act 1962-1987 and the Land Act Amendment Act 1987 each in certain particulars and for related purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Glasson, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. W. H. GLASSON (Gregory—Minister for Lands, Forestry, Mapping and Surveying) (11.02 p.m.): I move—

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

This is a short Bill, which further underlines the Government's intention and determination to streamline the procedures necessary for the efficient and practical management of the activities of our public administration to meet the needs of our community.

It addresses four distinct aspects of the Land Act, namely—

- adjustment of boundaries of title of trust areas held in trust under freehold title;
- relaxation of provisions preventing some lessees of special leases from electing to have the Land Court determine their reassessable rent;
- providing the option, in respect of cash sales at auction sales for an estate in fee simple, for a deposit to be paid at the time of sale with balance to be paid within a specified period; and
- leasing by trustees of grants in trust or of reserves for a purpose contrary to or inconsistent with the purpose for which the land was so granted or reserved.

This Government has so far granted 29 deeds of grants of land in trust, containing over one million hectares, to Aboriginal and island councils in this State. It involved the cancellation of some 84 existing reserves and the creation of over 370 new reserves containing the infrastructure for the management of public facilities and utilities within the trust areas.

As negotiations with the remaining councils are finalised, further deeds will issue, and in the Torres Strait there are over 200 islands that my Government has agreed can

be added to the existing 14 deeds in that area. Deeds have been issued on "about" areas, with plans being drawn by the Department of Mapping and Surveying from the best information available at the time. As more accurate information is obtained as to the locations of the boundaries of the trust areas, and their relationship to reserves and roads within and adjacent to those boundaries, it is necessary for adjustments to be made to existing deeds.

Provision already exists for reservations in the deeds for areas for future public purposes to be made when deeds are granted. The present machinery for resumption of a reservation in a deed or for adjustment of areas of deeds is cumbersome and complex. The provisions contained in the Bill will to some extent reduce the machinery requirements for these adjustments.

I would point out that in any exchange of land involving a deed and a road or reserve the consent of the Aboriginal or island council is required and the exchange must not result in a net loss of area to the council. There will be no adverse or detrimental effect to the Aboriginal or Islander people. Land otherwise can only be taken from a trust area by a resumption from a reservation contained in a deed or by an Act of this Parliament.

The proposals have been studied by both the Island Co-ordinating Council and the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council, which, I understand, have consulted with legal counsel on the proposals. I have been assured by the Under Secretary, Department of Community Services, that both councils have advised him that they have no difficulty with the proposals and therefore no objection to their being submitted to Parliament for consideration.

In 1981, provisions were inserted into the Land Act which related the quantum of the annual rent to be determined for special leases to the purpose for which the lease could be used and for the rent, in the first instance, to be determined by the Minister.

The amendment also contained the right of having the rent determined by the Land Court restricted to those holdings where—

(a) the lease is a lease of Crown land;

(b) the annual rent determined by the Minister is more than $200; and

(c) the lease contained a condition that the lessee could require that the annual rent for a second or subsequent period be determined by the Land Court.

In other words, the lessees of special leases over reserves and, in many cases, over Crown land could not test the Minister's determination in the Land Court.

In 1985, provision was made for the annual rent of other tenures to be first determined by the Minister. However, in those cases, if determined at other than the minimum rent, the lessees had a right of electing to have the rent determined by the Land Court. The Bill now proposes that special leases be treated similarly to other leasehold tenures. However, the $200 embargo before being allowed to elect to go to the court is to remain.

Recent sales of Crown land have highlighted the need in the Land Act for provision to allow for flexibility in what is a cash sale. At present, where the notification specifies that a sale is for cash and does not provide for the alternative of a term sale, the whole of the purchase price has to be paid immediately upon completion of the auction. Commercial practice is for a deposit to be paid at the time of sale with the balance within a specified period, say between 30 and 90 days.

The Bill provides for the sale notification offering the land for sale to specify where it is a cash sale—

- for the terms of that sale to specify that a deposit is to be paid at the time of sale with the balance to be paid within a time specified; or
- that the whole of the purchase price be paid at the time of sale.

Members will be aware that in many Government buildings, in addition to the Government-occupied areas, there exists areas occupied by banks, cafeterias and newsagencies. Under present arrangements those areas are leased from the Public Trustee.

A need also exists for race clubs and show societies to be able to lease areas for the grazing of stock or for the growing of crops where it does not interfere with the primary purposes of the grant or of the reserve.

To maximise the benefit to accrue to the State, areas that are granted in trust or are reserved and set apart for public purposes, which are not immediately required or where multi-use purposes can co-exist, should be able to be utilised by the trustees of those grants or reserves. The proposal provides that the Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the Minister, approve of such leases from trustees for purposes contrary to or inconsistent with the purpose for which the land was so granted or reserved. However, any such lessee will be prohibited from erecting structural improvements on such land. This will apply across the board and will provide a greater flexibility to meet community needs. Flexibility already exists in sections 198 and 203 of the Act in the issue of special leases over reserves. Fear has been expressed that this could allow unlimited retail development of Crown reserves and grants in trust. However, with the prohibition on making of any structural improvements on the land, this will prevent any development contrary to the public interest. In addition, a lessee is bound by the local authority by-laws and town-planning requirements.

The opportunity is also being taken to amend section 68 of the Land Act Amendment Act 1987 to clarify the savings provisions of that section in respect of the procedure for a lessee electing to have the rent of his pastoral lease determined by the court.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Eaton, adjourned.

PUBLIC SERVICE (BOARD'S POWERS AND FUNCTIONS) BILL

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs) (11.09 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to provide for the exercise and discharge of powers, authorities and functions of the Public Service Board."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Lester, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment, Small Business and Industrial Affairs) (11.10 p.m.): I move—

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

The purpose of the Bill is to provide for the exercise and discharge of powers, authorities and functions of the Public Service Board. Members of the House will be aware of the Government's intent to reform the public sector and to provide for opportunities to streamline the administration of the Queensland public service. The Honourable the Premier announced in his Budget Speech that, as part of this streamlining process, there would be opportunities for more flexibility for staffing and, indeed, enhancement of the public service generally.

The Government intends to introduce legislation which will replace the Public Service Act 1922-1978. However, such an important piece of legislation requires careful consideration. This Bill before the House will provide a transition arrangement to enable the Government's policies to be implemented in the interim.

One change to the staffing of the public service announced in the Budget Speech was the option of retirement from age 55 years to all members of the State Service Superannuation Scheme. To ensure that existing public servants may take advantage of the early retirement option to be introduced on 1 January 1988, it is necessary to amend regulations of the Public Service Act.

The Public Service Act 1922-1978 empowers the Public Service Board to amend regulations of the Act. As the previous members of the Public Service Board have resigned, it is necessary to ensure that the board's powers, particularly with respect to regulation amendment, be vested in an appropriate authority. This Bill provides for the powers and authorities conferred on the Public Service Board and the chairman of the board to be conferred on and exercised by the director of the Office of Public Service Personnel Management. The director of the Office of Public Service Personnel Management will therefore be able to amend regulations with the approval of the Governor in Council, including regulation 65 concerning the accrual of long-service leave on retirement.

Since the resignation of the Public Service Board, a number of Government departments have reviewed the qualifications of positions that have fallen vacant or have been newly created. This Bill will allow for new qualifications to be approved and the approval authority to be delegated to permanent heads.

There are a number of outstanding appeals to be heard which require appropriate authority to be vested in the Promotion Appeals Committee. This Bill will also ensure that the Promotion Appeals Committee will be able to hear and determine appeals against promotions in departments.

This Bill will therefore ensure the continuing efficient administration of the public service.

I commend this very important Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Prest, adjourned.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Management of Art Unions

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.14 p.m.), by leave: I refer to the recent comments made by the honourable member for Logan regarding the management of art unions in Queensland. Unfortunately, such comments will invariably affect the public's support of art unions in general. Organisations conducting their own major art unions have previously expressed concern to me regarding the effect of such publicity on their ticket sales. The allegation by the honourable member for Logan that the Justice Department has not acted to ensure major art unions are properly conducted is without foundation.

The Justice Department is closely monitoring the conduct of major art unions, particularly those that have significant gross proceeds. Inspectors have in fact recently examined the operations of all organisations that conduct large art unions—that is, those which have approval to sell over $100,000 in tickets—to examine their manner of operation and compliance with the requirements of the Art Unions and Amusements Act.

Suitable action has been taken by the Justice Department regarding the findings of those examinations. The organisations concerned are aware of the Justice Department's attitude, should all relevant art-union expenses not be disclosed in returns made to the department. If an organisation is found to be incurring higher than acceptable levels of expenses in conducting its art unions, resulting in unsatisfactory returns, the organisation's ability to obtain further permits will be jeopardised.

The regular examination of the operation of major art unions will continue. Appropriate steps will be taken by my department should an organisation's conduct of its art union be unacceptable, or if any arrangement made with a management company

is disadvantaging the charity. Such examinations are by no means a recent innovation. In the past, associations that the department became aware of which were not conducting their art unions in a satisfactory manner have been called upon to show cause to the Justice Department why further art-union permits should be issued to them.

Under the Art Unions and Amusements Act, an audit report is prepared by an independent accountant and lodged with the Justice Department in relation to the conduct of each major art union by an organisation. Information provided, concerning the receipts and payments incurred during the art union together with the auditor's comments, are relied upon by the department. When the department became aware of problems in the case of the Blue Ribbon Art Union conducted by the Brothers Leagues Club, an investigation of that art union was promptly made.

I refute the honourable member's suggestion that the use of management companies, such as the ones referred to, is widespread. Generally, the large art unions presently operating are run in house, with professional assistance in areas such as advertising, printing of brochures, etc., provided at normal commercial rates.

I do not propose to publicly name the one organisation that has involvement with those particular companies, which was referred to by the honourable member for Logan, due to the consequences that that would have on its art union. However, following action taken by my department, steps have been taken by it—and are still being taken—to effect savings in respect of its art unions. The ongoing conduct of those particular art unions is being kept under close scrutiny.

I would emphasise to the House that the operation of an art union and decisions made that could affect its financial outcome, such as engaging management firms, are the responsibility of the persons running the art union. Although the Justice Department authorises the conduct of such art unions and monitors that the organisation is meeting the requirements under the Act, it is not the department's role to unduly restrict an organisation in the management of its art union. If it is established that art unions conducted by an organisation are not successful, further permits would not be granted. However, the primary responsibility concerning viability rests with the organisation.

Since the honourable member made those statements in the House, my office has received several telephone calls from major art unions expressing their dismay at his comments. Their fear is that those comments will have wide-ranging, deleterious effects on their viability.

This is a tatty and dishonourable attempt by the honourable member for Logan to bolster his own political fortunes. It is an unprincipled attack on art unions in this State, and on their administration. The member for Logan has placed personal, political expediency above principle and decency in a tawdry and dishonest manner.

Mr GOSS: I rise to a point of order. The latter comments made by the Minister are untrue and personally offensive. Pursuant to the Standing Orders, I seek the withdrawal of those comments. If you want me to detail those comments, Mr Speaker, I will.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no Standing Order that applies, but it is the practice of the House that, if a member finds remarks offensive, the member stating the comment is asked to withdraw it. I ask the Minister to withdraw the comment.

Mr CLAUSON: I withdraw the comment.

LAND (FAIR DEALINGS) BILL

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.20 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

> "That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to prohibit certain practices in connexion with certain dealings in land and for another purpose."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Clauson, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.21 p.m.): I move—

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

Complaints are continually being made concerning the false advertising of real estate. Section 65 of the Auctioneers and Agents Act deals with false representations as to property by an auctioneer, real estate agent or motor dealer or an employee thereof. That provision, however, does not apply to a real estate development company which is selling its own land, nor to an employee of such a company.

The Commonwealth Government reacted to this problem of false advertising by introducing section 53A into the Trade Practices Act. That section deals with false representation and other misleading or offensive conduct in relation to land but is only applicable to the activities of corporations where they engage in trade and commerce. The Trade Practices Act is enforced by the Trade Practices Commission, which has a general policy of taking limited enforcement action only, due to staff and other inhibitions.

False advertising in relation to land by developers or vendors reflects badly on the whole of the real estate industry and also in the State of Queensland. This Bill therefore prohibits false representations in relation to land and will apply across the board.

In order to avoid a conflict with the provisions of the Trade Practices Act and section 109 of the Constitution, the Bill adopts section 53A of the Trade Practices Act. It relates to the false advertising of land, whether by an agent or by a developer or vendor directly. The Bill makes it clear that its provisions are to operate concurrently with any corresponding law of the Commonwealth or of another State or of a Territory. However, a person convicted under one law will not be liable to be punished under the other for the same act or omission.

The Bill also amends the Vagrants, Gaming, and Other Offences Act to ensure there is no unnecessary duplication of legislation with respect to false advertising of land.

This is a desirable piece of legisation and should achieve more stringent standards in regard to advertising of land by all people involved in such activities.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Goss, adjourned.

DISTRICT COURTS (VENUE OF APPEALS) BILL

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.23 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to provide for the venue of appeals to and cases stated for District Courts, to amend the Justices Act 1886-1985, the Magistrates Courts Act 1921-1982 and the District Courts Act 1967-1985 each in certain particulars and for related purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Clauson, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.24 p.m.): I move—

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

The purpose of this Bill is to extend the arrangements presently in force relating to the fixing of the venue or place where appeals to District Courts from Magistrates Courts can be heard and determined. Appeals to District Courts from Magistrates Courts are authorised under various Acts of Parliament such as the Justices Act dealing with criminal and quasi-criminal matters and the Magistrates Courts Act dealing with civil debt matters.

Presently, the State is divided into three geographical divisions for the purpose of fixing the venue for hearing appeals to a District Court from a Magistrates Court and therefore appeals are presently heard at major centres within these divisions, namely, Brisbane, Townsville or Rockhampton. District Court judges are permanently stationed in those cities. District Court judges are now also permanently stationed at Southport, whilst an active bar is located at Cairns, Mackay and Toowoomba.

There is no reason in principle why the current restrictions limiting the hearing of appeals to the three major centres should be retained. Accordingly, the Bill enables appeals to be heard in District Courts at places such as Southport, Cairns, Mackay and Toowoomba, in addition to the three major centres.

The provisions of the Bill enable other places in Queensland to be appointed as places where appeals may be heard, should the need arise in the future for that action to be taken. The proposal for extension of the system so that appeals may be heard in these new centres conforms with the Government's overall policy of decentralisation, whilst at the same time permitting affected persons access to the courts at substantially lesser costs than those that are being incurred at the present time.

The Bill has been prepared on the basis that the Governor in Council will be empowered to appoint any place in Queensland where District Courts are usually held to be a place where appeals can be heard and determined. It is not intended, of course, to force the parties to have their appeals heard outside the three major centres. The parties will continue to be entitled to have their appeals heard in any one of the major centres if they so desire.

In essence, the Bill enables appeals to be heard in the three existing major centres plus the new centres at Southport, Cairns, Mackay and Toowoomba, depending upon the location of the Magistrates Court from which the appeal arose. If the parties consent, the appeal can be heard in any of those centres notwithstanding that the centre selected is outside the geographic division of the Magistrates Court from which the appeal arose.

The Bill provides for the jurisdiction of the District Court generally to extend to the new centres and, where the parties are in agreement, to authorise a District Court to transfer at any time the hearing of an appeal from one centre to the other if it is in the interests of justice or if it is considered that the appeal may be more conveniently heard at some other venue.

The Bill also provides the authority to enable computerisation of court records to be effected so that the records will be kept in accordance with modern-day record-keeping practices.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Goss, adjourned.

EVIDENCE ON COMMISSION BILL

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.27 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to provide with respect to taking evidence on commission and for related purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Clauson, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.28 p.m.): I move—

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

The main purpose of this Bill is to introduce a system so that court orders can be made in Queensland principally for the obtaining of evidence from witnesses in overseas countries were the evidence relates to the commission of offences in Queensland.

It is a well-known fact that evidence establishing the commission of criminal offences in Queensland is not at all times necessarily found in the State or, for that matter, in Australia. In certain cases, vital evidence is in fact located in overseas countries, resulting in a need for the conduct of formal investigations in those countries to determine the nature and extent of the evidence as well as assess its potential.

In the past, when it was known that relevant evidence of the commission of offences in Queensland existed in overseas countries, the practice was to obtain what was called a letter of request from the Queensland courts addressed to the judicial authorities in the particular overseas jurisdiction. The letter of request was a formal legal document issued for the purposes of the taking of necessary action by the overseas authorities to obtain evidence from relevant witnesses in the overseas country.

More recently this practice was considered by the Federal Court of Australia when a case in which a letter of request addressed to the judicial authorities in Hong Kong from a Magistrates Court in Western Australia was reviewed on appeal from the lower court. The Federal Court held as a matter of law that there was no legal power vested in the lower court to issue the letter of request. The Federal Court also determined that the use of letters of request to obtain the production of documents to secure their production in Western Australia as part of the formal investigations was not within the legal scope of the procedure envisaged by the letters of request. As a consequence of the decision of the Federal Court, serious legal doubts have been cast as a matter of course on the practice of issuing letters of request in Queensland to achieve similar objects and purposes to the Western Australian exercise.

Accordingly, it is proposed that Magistrates Courts in Queensland will be statutorily authorised in future to make orders for the examination of witnesses who are not resident in Australia. The effect of the orders will be the obtaining of evidence to assist in establishing prosecutions for criminal offences committed in Queensland or to assist in the obtaining of evidence for civil proceedings in Queensland.

The Bill will be of particular assistance where large-scale fraud is committed in Queensland, such as, for example, where the proceeds of the fraud are known to be located in overseas jurisdictions.

The Bill will enable the relevant prosecuting authorities of this State, such as the Director of Prosecutions or a police offficer authorised by the Director of Prosecutions, to obtain appropriate orders for the examination of witnesses in the overseas jurisdictions for the purpose of ascertaining the nature, extent and location of the proceeds. It is considered that the proposals will thus readily assist prosecuting authorities in Queensland in the conduct of prosecutions or in police investigations of offenders for offences committed in Queensland by the obtaining of relevant evidence that would not otherwise be authorised in view of the recent decision of the Federal Court.

The Bill provides for the making of applications for orders to a Magistrates Court by any of the parties to the proceedings. It is proposed that the orders can be made in the absence of the other parties to the proceedings and there will not be a need for

service upon them of any documentation relating to the making of the orders. Evidence to support the making of the orders can be received by the court by affidavit and the court may accept any evidence whatsoever, provided the evidence is relevant, credible and trustworthy.

Expedient means for the obtaining of orders are proposed to enable the seeking of orders in a minimum of time so that applicants will not be delayed by procedural requirements in the formal investigations in overseas countries to establish the location of relevant evidence. The Bill also provides for the evidence obtained in the overseas jurisdiction to be admissible upon its receipt in Queensland and for the Queensland court that made the order to retain, until the time of trial, custody of the material obtained from the overseas jurisdiction.

The Bill specifically provides for any evidence so obtained from the overseas jurisdictions not to be excluded in Queensland simply because of technical defects occurring in the process leading to the making of the order, the terms of the order made or the manner in which the order is given effect in the overseas jurisdiction.

The Bill also provides for copy documentation to be acceptable where the original documentation is not available to ensure that the procedural difficulties do not occur in the formal court hearings in Queensland following the receipt of the evidence in this State.

It is considered that the provisions of the Bill are more than sufficient to assist in ensuring that making of orders, the obtaining of relevant evidence in the appropriate overseas jurisdictions, the admissibility in Queensland of the evidence obtained and other associated requirements are capable of being satisfactorily fulfilled.

The incidence of large-scale crime is increasing and, coupled with the ability of the perpetrators of the crimes to successfully move large amounts of money derived from criminal activity to other parts of the world with a minimum of fuss, it is necessary that the prosecuting authorities in this State be equipped to deal with those situations with modern-day evidentiary aids such as those contained in the Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Goss, adjourned.

MEAT INDUSTRY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Primary Industries) (11.34 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Meat Industry Act 1965-1984 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Harper, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Primary Industries) (11.35 p.m.): I move—

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

The Meat Industry Act Amendment Bill 1987 addresses a number of issues important to the meat industry. Provision is made to permit buffalo meat to be sold for human consumption. At the moment, under the Meat Industry Act, buffalo meat is permitted to be sold in Queensland only as pet food. However, restauranteurs wish to provide it on their menus and smallgoods-manufacturers want to use it in smallgoods to compete with processors in other States. Consequently, it is proposed to allow butchers and

smallgoods-manufacturers to sell buffalo meat, derived from approved interstate premises, for human consumption in Queensland.

Buffaloes damage the environment and, whilst the Lands Act offers some protection by preventing buffaloes from having "liberty", it is considered essential that other legislative provisions discourage grazing of these animals in Queensland. Therefore, along with the proposal to allow buffalo meat to be sold for human consumption, it is intended to prevent the slaughter of buffaloes in Queensland for any purpose, except in special circumstances. This action will not inconvenience butchers, smallgoods-manufacturers or consumers, because of the abundant supply of buffalo meat available from the Northern Territory. It will, however, emphasise the Government's opposition to the establishment of buffalo farms in this State. A provision to allow slaughter of buffaloes for pet food under exceptional circumstances has been made in the Bill. This will allow a means for disposal of culled buffalo in existing herds held, for example, at theme parks.

An important issue covered by this Bill is the deregulation of controls of meat movement within Queensland. These controls were originally introduced to ensure that—as far as is practicable given the vastness of the State—the people of Queensland are provided with meat which has been fully inspected prior to sale. This is achieved by declaring those areas which have high population densities to be 'regional meat areas' within which only fully inspected meat may be offered for sale.

In the period between 1931 and the mid 1950s, a number of public abattoirs, operating purely as service works, were constructed in Queensland to provide fully inspected meat. To ensure their continued financial viability, these abattoirs were given franchises over the supply of meat in their respective areas. The system of franchising has been further supported by the meat industry legislation, which specifies that meat from abattoirs built since 1973 is not to be allowed into declared areas if the total slaughtering capacity of all abattoirs in the State exceeds the needs of the industry, unless the Livestock and Meat Authority of Queensland determines that the new abattoir is so situated as to contribute effectively to the orderly development of the industry.

It has been recognised that the franchise system imposes restraints on the movement of fully inspected meat and tends to reduce the competitiveness of the meat industry generally. Consequently, the authority has been gradually proceeding towards the abolition of these franchises and, since 1 October 1985, most restrictions on the movement of meat for the domestic market in Queensland have been removed. Any licensed abattoir, upon application and payment of the prescribed fee, may now be approved to supply meat to any area of the State. Such approvals have been granted in accordance with the authority's administrative powers, but it is desired to clarify the specific head of power involved.

The Bill also validates action taken by the authority to assist the commercial viability of the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir at Cannon Hill by the establishment of a boning room in conjunction with four of the major operators at the abattoir. The Meat Industry Act does not specifically allow the authority to hold shares in a commercial meat-processing operation at its slaughtering facilities. Although the authority does not seek blanket approval to compete with private enterprise in the conduct of abattoir operations, it does need to deal with commercial decisions. The measures already taken have been successful and are indicative of the steps which the authority has initiated towards making the abattoir financially viable.

As part of this Government's extensive program to control and rectify the pesticide residue problem, the Bill provides for a formalised process to be put in place concerning the sampling and testing of meat for residues. Licensees of abattoirs and slaughterhouses will have an obligation to have tests conducted, but will be free to go to either a Government laboratory or an approved private laboratory.

There is a provision in the Bill to ensure that all fresh meat products are sold in butchers' shops, unless they are prescribed meats, such as deli meats, poultry meats or other meats declared to be exempt by the Governor in Council. The amendment has

become necessary because of interest in marketing new meat products. One such product was a bread or pastry filling wrapped in a thin layer of fresh meat which was being sold through delicatessens. Such products have the same potential for causing food poisoning as other meats and should be sold only in hygienic and registered premises.

This Bill also makes provision for the Livestock and Meat Authority of Queensland to provide superannuation for employees whom it acquired when it took over the running of abattoirs following the disbandment of several public abattoir boards. The amendment validates action which the authority has already taken.

The Bill also proposes a minor change to the title "Chief Inspector of Slaughter-houses" to the title "Chief Meat Inspector" and a change from the expression "inspectors" to the expression "meat inspectors". Amendment is also made to authorise the collection of a modest fee to compensate for the cost of conducting special inspections of butchers' shops prior to a sale.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Prest, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 11.42 p.m.