

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 24 AUGUST 1988

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Mr SPEAKER (Hon. L. W. Powell, Isis) read prayers and took the chair at 2.30 p.m.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE**Death of Mr F. P. Bromley**

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Premier and Treasurer and Minister for the Arts) (2.31 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

- “(1) That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late Fred Phillip Bromley, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland.
- (2) That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland in the loss they have sustained.”

Fred Phillip Bromley served the people of Queensland as a member of this House for more than 14 years. I knew him well. He entered Parliament in May 1960 as member for the then seat of Norman, and from 1972 represented the seat of South Brisbane until his defeat in the December 1974 election.

Fred Bromley was born in Nottingham, England, in May 1917 and arrived in Queensland with his family two years later. He was educated at Toowong State School and Brisbane Technical College, and became a dental technician.

In World War II he served as a corporal in the 2/1st Australian Dental Unit. On return to civilian life, he played an outstanding role in trade union and community affairs. He served on the executive of the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union, and was a State councillor and Federal delegate. He was a court advocate for the union, and delegate to the trade union congress. He was a life member of the Dental Technicians Association—in this place he made long speeches on the registration of dental technicians—and a member of the Group Apprenticeship Committee.

As a member of the ALP, he was secretary of the Buranda branch from 1956 until 1974, and had extensive experience in directing State and Federal election campaigns. He was a delegate to both the Labor-in-Politics Convention and the Queensland Central Executive of the Labor Party.

In addition to the significant contributions he made to his party and to the proceedings of this House, Fred Bromley will long be remembered for his selfless dedication to improving the lot of the less-fortunate members of our society. He was a founder member of the Subnormal Children's Association, and a tireless worker for the Narbethong Welfare Association. He was also patron of the South Brisbane RSL, and a subpatron of the totally and permanently incapacitated servicemen's movement; he was on the Queensland advisory board of the Salvation Army; he was an executive delegate to the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade, a trustee of the Woolloongabba Senior Citizens Association, an executive member of the Lady Nell Seeing Eye Dog School and a vice-president of the Equal Opportunity for Women Association.

In the field of education, he was president of the Coorparoo State High School P. and C. Association, and he had many long and valuable associations with sporting groups and conservation movements, including the Fraser Island Defence Organisation.

Fred Bromley was a man of high principle who believed passionately in service before self. His record speaks for itself.

On behalf of the Queensland Government and all honourable members, I extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends.

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works, Main Roads and Expo and Minister for Police) (2.35 p.m.): I second the motion moved by the Premier to express sympathy to the widow and family of the late Fred Phillip Bromley. Mr Bromley, who was born in Nottingham, England in 1917, came to Australia with his family as a four-year-old child. During World War II he enlisted in the army and saw service overseas. As a young man, he was keen on sport and played competition cricket and table tennis. After his marriage, he was encouraged by his brother-in-law to take an interest in boxing, and regularly attended the Friday night fights at the old Albert Street stadium, at times helping out with the boxers.

Mr Bromley's involvement with the trade union movement and his interest in helping other people led to his nomination for the old electorate of Norman in 1959. His unbroken record as State member for Norman and later South Brisbane testified to the dedicated service he gave to the people of Queensland generally, and particularly to those in the electorates he represented.

Mr Bromley was one of the early advocates of equal opportunities for women and was actively involved with the campaign for the removal of restrictions on the employment of married women in the Commonwealth public service. He also lobbied strongly on trade union matters, the need for preventive medicine, road safety, pre-school education and after-school care for children. He was honoured with life membership by the Dental Technicians Association, the Miscellaneous Workers Union, his local branch of the Australian Labor Party and the Narbethong Welfare Association, of which he was a past president. For his services to the community, particularly in the welfare of disabled people, Mr Bromley was awarded the Order of Australia in 1984.

I had the pleasure of serving with Mr Bromley during his final term in Parliament and respected him as a straight-talking politician who was not afraid to stand up for what he believed in. Mr Bromley was strongly supported in his career by his loving and caring wife, Beryl. I join with the Premier in extending condolences to her and other members of his family.

Mr GOSS (Logan—Leader of the Opposition) (2.37 p.m.): Fred Bromley's career of almost 15 years in State Parliament preceded my entry to this House by almost a decade, but my parliamentary colleagues who served with Fred say that he was the epitome of the local member. He was first elected, as we have been told, in 1960 as the Labor member for Norman. Of course, he was a worthy candidate for that seat, and he was very fortunate to be assisted by an outstanding campaign director by the name of Burns. Mr Bromley held that seat at subsequent elections and, as we have also been told, became the member for South Brisbane in the 1972 election. He represented that electorate until he was defeated in the 1974 election.

Those who served and worked with Fred Bromley say that he had great pride in his association with local community groups and with local people. He was active in numerous service organisations, sporting clubs and conservation groups. As an ex-serviceman himself, Mr Bromley took a keen interest in his role as patron of the South Brisbane RSL and his involvement with the TPI Association. He was a founding member of the Queensland Subnormal Children's Association, an executive member, as the Premier said, of the Lady Nell Seeing Eye Dog School, vice president of the Equal Opportunity for Women Association, and a member of the Fraser Island Defence Organisation, to name just a few of the many community organisations in which he was involved. My colleagues also tell me that his interest in such groups was evidenced by and consistent with his true grassroots style of politics and the way in which he made his way around his electorate. He canvassed that electorate extremely well and was a keen advocate of knocking on doors. He had a genuine touch, which was entrenched and continued by the way in which he served his electorate. I am told that his calling-cards carried recipes on the back of them for some of Fred's favourite dishes.

Fred trained as a dental technician and was active in the Miscellaneous Workers Union. He served in various elected positions at both the State and Federal level of the Miscellaneous Workers Union and was at one time an industrial advocate for the union. He had a long and active involvement in the Labor Party prior to his election in 1960. As I said, he was a politician who had, and also maintained, the common touch.

On behalf of the parliamentary Labor Party, I join in this condolence motion and pass on to Fred's widow, Beryl, and his family our sympathy.

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Leader of the Liberal Party) (2.40 p.m.): I wish to place on record the condolences of members of the Liberal Party with the family of Fred Bromley. I knew Fred Bromley only from the annual parliamentary lunches. Some of my colleagues, of course, remember him as a parliamentary colleague. I will not repeat the recitation of his achievements—they are on the record—and, of course, members of his party can speak best about his contribution. However, the members of my party remember him not just as a hail-fellow-well-met person but as good company. He certainly travelled with one of the members of my party as members of an overseas delegation.

Fred Bromley was a trenchant and persistent person in his own electorate. It is obvious, from his record and from the contributions he made, that he was a very good member. No doubt his skill as an advocate placed him in a situation in which, it is recalled, he could give and take interjections in good humour; in the spirit of the joust. Fred Bromley was a good member of Parliament who, it is recalled at least by members of my party, had a particular interest in health matters, for obvious reasons, in Aboriginal affairs and in industrial relations. In other words, he was a good, pleasant and contributing member of Parliament and, clearly, a loyal member of his own party.

The Liberal Party is pleased to place on record its condolences.

Mr BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.41 p.m.): Frequently when members of Parliament rise to speak to condolence motions they talk about people whom they have never met or had little to do with during their years of service. I always recognise the service that the family of a member has given. When one pays respects to a family, one says thank you to them for the years that their husband and father gave to the Parliament and the people of the State.

I knew Fred Bromley really well. I was the president of the Norman EEC when he was selected by the Central Executive as our candidate. I was his campaign director. We had a lot of good times together. I enjoyed his company. As has been said, Fred Bromley was a member of just about every organisation in the district. At one stage when a pamphlet was produced it was decided to list on the back page the organisations that Fred Bromley was patron of or was connected with. The list ran to two pages. As the Leader of the Opposition said, Fred liked to put recipes on his pamphlets. There was a photo of Fred on the front, two pages of recipes and a page and a half of the organisations that he was involved in before we started to get down to any politics.

Fred believed in door-knocking; he believed in meeting people; he believed in street meetings. Fred Bromley used to make some of the longest speeches in this House. Can honourable members imagine Fred and I attending street meetings together? Boy, did we give the people around Greenslopes, Buranda, East Brisbane and South Brisbane a run for their money in those days. They were enjoyable days. Fred's wife Beryl was always there to look after us when we arrived home. So was his young daughter, Julie, who has now grown into a beautiful young lady. They had to put up with all of the things we did as politicians and that we still do as politicians.

Fred was a good bloke for his electorate. He worked hard for his constituents and in many ways he loved them. It was a pity that the redistribution took him well out of the area. He lost his seat in the big swing in 1974. Fred Bromley and Kevin Hooper were two of the members who came from the dental hospital to this Parliament. Both of them have now passed on.

I want to say thank you to the Bromley family for Fred's commitment to the people of the State, for his heartfelt work on behalf of the people he believed in and the workers who he always supported. We will miss him, and I am sure that they will miss him very much, too.

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (2.44 p.m.): It is always a sad occasion when one speaks to the condolence motion concerning a colleague, particularly a colleague such as Fred Bromley for whom one had a lot of time. Fred, of course, was a member of this Parliament for about three terms before I entered the Parliament. However, I knew Fred from the political side of things. Fred was a great help to me. As honourable members are aware, new members always meet some of the old members. Fred and I hit it off well. Fred liked a little bit of intrigue, even though I did not. We had some good times. As was recalled by previous speakers, Fred was very much involved in boxing. His brother-in-law Gordon Jamieson, whose father was Jim Jamieson, was the trainer of a couple of Australia's greatest boxing champions. One of them was Mickey Hill. Fred used to be in his corner down at the old Festival Hall.

Fred loved the political life. If there was one person who missed the political life, it was Fred Bromley. He liked not only the intrigue of political life but also the constituent part of it. Before members were provided with secretaries, Fred used to write all of his expressions of sympathy in longhand. I thought that was a wonderful thing, particularly as Fred suffered badly from arthritis in his hands. Despite that disability, he had beautiful, legible handwriting.

Many kind things have been said about Fred, but now and then he had a few problems with the Chair. About a month before he died, Fred rang me. We reminisced and gave a couple of our old friends a bake or two. We remembered an embarrassing experience in which both Fred and I were involved. It occurred on a very quiet Thursday night, such as during the Address in Reply debate. I forget the minor details of it, but a disagreement occurred between Fred and the Chair. It became rather heated and the Chair, wisely or unwisely, used that infamous Standing Order 123A and asked Fred to remove himself from the Chamber. Because of the high principle involved, Fred decided that he would remain. At that time the Opposition Whip was Doug Sherrington. Doug went to the place where Tommy Burns is sitting now and made a gesture to Fred that he did not want him to carry on. However, Fred thought that as the principle was important, he should carry on. Honourable members in this Chamber know that the occupant of the Chair has a lot of artillery and that we cannot win.

The Leader of the House or the Premier then moved a motion that Mr Bromley, the member for South Brisbane, be suspended from the House for seven days. I was sitting next to Doug Sherrington. When it came to a vote on the motion, I noticed that Doug did not seem to be too keen to call "divide", so I took it upon myself to do so. Eight or nine members of the Labor Party then trailed into the House. The next morning, at a specially organised caucus, I was subjected to abuse from Doug Sherrington and the Leader of the Opposition. I still recall that as one of our most embarrassing days.

Fred will be missed because he was a wonderful person. He was a great asset to this State. Mention was made earlier of Fred's wife, Beryl. As Tommy said, although some members of Parliament do not like the rather mundane things of political life, such as fetes and those types of things, Fred and I always liked them. It is a fact of life that on some occasions Fred would attend up to four fetes on one day, such as those held at the East Brisbane State School and the Narbethong school. He would then attend barbeques at night. Beryl would always be with him. When Fred was awarded the Order of Australia, I thought that no-one deserved it more than Fred and that there should have been another one for Beryl.

I thank honourable members for allowing me to speak on this motion of condolence. I would like recorded the sympathy of my wife and family.

Ms WARNER (South Brisbane) (2.49 p.m.): I place on record my sympathy to the family of Fred Bromley, especially to his wife, Beryl. For many years I knew Fred not

as a colleague but as another member of the Labor Party. Even though on many occasions Fred and I did not agree, one thing I can say is that he was always a progressive thinker and a sincere man. One of his characteristics was his basic humanitarianism, a humanitarianism that one could almost feel when one spoke to the people in the electorate with whom he had such a deal of association. I was associated with Fred particularly in his work at the Narbethong school. He put in an enormous amount of effort there. One of Fred's priorities in life was to try to help those people who were less fortunate than he was, not only the disabled but also the impoverished within our society. Fred was very much a grassroots politician who cared about the less advantaged people of our society who live in South Brisbane.

The other aspect of Fred's life and thinking that always impressed me was his commitment and dedication to the trade union movement. Until his death he was involved and interested in the union which was his life, namely, the Miscellaneous Workers Union. Many members of that union would want me to put on record their condolences and sympathy for Fred's passing. He is a great loss to the Labor movement and to all honourable members in this House. Would it be that such kind things could be said of us when we leave.

Motion agreed to, honourable members standing in silence.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF SOUTH COAST

Resignation of Member and Issue of Writ

Mr SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that the Acting Speaker received the following letter on 24 May from Russell James Hinze, member for the electoral district of South Coast—

“Waverley Park Stud,
Waverley Drive,
PIMPAMA. QLD. 4209
24th May, 1988.

The Hon. L. Powell, M.L.A.,
The Speaker of the Queensland Parliament,
Parliament House,
George Street,
BRISBANE.

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I tender herewith my resignation as member for South Coast in the Queensland State Parliament to take effect immediately.

Yours faithfully,

R. J. HINZE.”

Accordingly, I issued a writ on 29 July for the election of a member to fill the said vacancy.

PAPERS

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

Report of the Public Accountants Registration Board of Queensland for the year ended 31 December 1987.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Proclamations under—

Financial Administration and Audit Act and Another Act Amendment Act 1988
 Travel Agents Act 1988
 Employment, Vocational Education and Training Act 1988
 Electricity Act Amendment Act 1988
 Electricity Act 1976-1988
 Gas Act Amendment Act 1988
 Sugar Acquisition Act 1915-1987
 National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975-1984
 Forestry Act 1959-1987
 Optometrists Act Amendment Act 1987
 Health Act Amendment Act 1988

Orders in Council under—

Parliamentary Members' Salaries Act 1988
 Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977-1985
 Regulatory Reform Act 1986
 Police Act 1937-1987
 Urban Public Passenger Transport Act 1984 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984
 Travel Agents Act 1988
 Inspection of Machinery Act 1951-1987
 Workers' Compensation Act 1916-1988
 Industry and Commerce Training Act 1979-1988
 Rural Training Schools Act 1965-1984 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984
 Electricity Act 1976-1988
 Explosives Act 1952-1981
 Gas Act 1965-1988
 Mines Regulation Act 1964-1983
 Petroleum Act 1923-1988
 Agricultural Standards Act 1952-1981
 City of Brisbane Market Act 1960-1985 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1988
 Fisheries Act 1976-1984
 Milk Supply Act 1977-1986
 Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations Act 1923-1986
 Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1987
 Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1987 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1988
 Queensland Grain Handling Act 1983-1988
 Queensland Grain Handling Act 1983-1988 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1988
 Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act 1962-1986
 Sugar Experiment Stations Act 1900-1983

Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936-1986

Brisbane Forest Park Act 1977-1981

Fauna Conservation Act 1974-1985

Forestry Act 1959-1987

Land Act 1962-1987

National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975-1984

Nursing Studies Act 1976-1984

Ambulance Services Act 1967-1986

Health Act 1937-1988

Regulations under—

Main Roads Act 1920-1985

Traffic Act 1949-1985

Tow-truck Act 1973-1985

Motor Vehicle Driving Instruction School Act 1969-1985

Land Act 1962-1988

Brigalow and Other Lands Development Act 1962-1978

Travel Agents Act 1988

Workers' Compensation Act 1916-1988

Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1961-1987

Construction Safety Act 1971-1987

Weights and Measures Act 1951-1983

Inspection of Machinery Act 1951-1987

Factories and Shops Act 1960-1987

Private Employment Agencies Act 1983-1985

Industry and Commerce Training Act 1979-1988

Electricity Act 1976-1988

Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Pensions) Act 1941-1985

Gas Act 1965-1988

Agricultural Standards Act 1952-1981

Banana Industry Protection Acts 1929 to 1937

Fishing Industry Organisation and Marketing Act 1982-1987

Fruit Marketing Organisation Act 1923-1985

Hen Quotas Act 1973-1987

Meat Industry Act 1965-1988

Milk Supply Act 1977-1986

Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1987

Stock Act 1915-1987

Tobacco Industry Protection Act 1965-1985

Tobacco Industry Stabilisation Act 1965-1972

Clean Waters Act 1971-1982

Fauna Conservation Act 1974-1985

Fraser Island Public Access Act 1985

Health Act 1937-1988

Hospitals Act 1936-1988

Nursing Studies Act 1976-1984

By-laws under—

Railways Act 1914-1985
 Meat Industry Act 1965-1984
 Brisbane Forest Park Act 1977-1981
 Podiatrists Act 1969-1987
 Dental Act 1971-1987

Rules under—

Police Act 1937-1987
 Coal Mining Act 1925-1981
 Hospitals Foundations Act 1982

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

Order under the Consumer Affairs Act 1970-1987

Determinations under the Electricity Act 1976-1988

Reports—

Brisbane Exposition and South Bank Redevelopment Authority for the year ended 30 June 1988
 Valuers Registration Board for the year ended 31 December 1987
 Queensland Commercial Fishermen's Organisation for the year ended 30 June 1987
 The Golden Circle Cannery for the year ended 30 November 1987
 Cane Pests and Disease Control Boards for the year ended 31 December 1987
 The Central Queensland Grain Sorghum Marketing Board for the year ended 31 December 1987
 The Cotton Marketing Board for the year ended 31 December 1987
 The Queensland Cotton Growers' Co-operative Association Limited for the year ended 31 December 1987
 The Ginger Marketing Board and the Buderim Ginger Growers' Co-operative Association Limited for the year ended 31 December 1987
 The Queensland Cane Growers' Council—together with Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 1987
 Queensland Pork Producers' Organisation for the year ended 31 December 1987
 The Tobacco Leaf Marketing Board and the Tobacco Quota Committee for the year ended 31 December 1987
 Council of Agriculture for the year ended 30 June 1988
 Queensland Dairyfarmers' Organisation for the year ended 30 June 1988.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON BILLS BROUGHT OVER FROM PREVIOUS SESSION

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Leader of the House) (3.04 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That, pursuant to Standing Order No. 276, the following Bills, which were presented in the first session of this Parliament, be resumed in this, the second session, at the stage reached in the previous session and thereafter be proceeded with as if no prorogation had taken place—

Brisbane Forest Park Act Amendment Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (19 April 1988, Mr Comben).

Status of Children Act Amendment Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (23 March 1988, Mr Braddy).

Surrogate Parenthood Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (23 March 1988, Mr Prest).

Holidays Act Amendment Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (16 March 1988, Mr Vaughan).

Drainage of Mines Act Repeal Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (16 March 1988, Mr R. J. Gibbs).

Poultry Industry Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (16 March 1988, Mr Davis).

Main Roads Act Amendment Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (23 March 1988, Mr Burns).

Public Trustee Act Amendment Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (13 April 1988, Mr Braddy).

Racing Venues Development Act Amendment Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (13 April 1988, Mr Smith).

The Criminal Code, Evidence Act and Other Acts Amendment Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (21 April 1988, Mr Braddy).

Partnership (Limited Liability) Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (20 April 1988, Mr Braddy).

Retirement Villages Bill; Resumption of second-reading debate (26 April 1988, Mr Braddy).”

Motion agreed to.

SITTING DAYS; DAYS ALLOTTED TO ADDRESS IN REPLY

Sessional Order

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Leader of the House) (3.06 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That for this session, unless otherwise ordered and, notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders—

- (1) The House shall sit on Tuesday at 10 o'clock a.m., Wednesday at 2.30 o'clock p.m., and Thursday at 10 o'clock a.m. and Government business shall take precedence of all other business except for that period set aside for a Discussion of Matters of Public Interest on Tuesday.
- (2) A discussion of Matters of Public Interest shall take place on each sitting Tuesday between 11 o'clock a.m. and 12 noon.
- (3) On days allotted for Address in Reply one allotted day shall comprise the period from one hour after the commencement of the sitting day until 4 hours of debate have elapsed. At the discretion of the Leader of the House, double days may apply to the debate on the Address in Reply, in which case each allotted day shall comprise 4 hours debate. A double day shall also commence one hour after the sitting day has begun.
- (4) All other provisions of the Standing Orders shall mutatis mutandis continue to apply.”

Motion agreed to.

TIME LIMIT OF SPEECHES

Sessional Order

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Leader of the House) (3.07 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That for this session, unless otherwise ordered, the following amendments to the times for certain speeches shall apply—

Under Standing Order No. 109:

- (1) Paragraph one—substitute ‘thirty minutes’ for ‘forty minutes’ in line one and omit all words following the word ‘House’ in line two to the end of the paragraph.
- (2) Paragraph three—omit the word ‘thirty’ and substitute the word ‘fifteen’.
- (3) Paragraph seven—omit the words ‘one hour’ in the third line and substitute the words ‘thirty minutes’.”

Motion agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1)

All Stages

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Leader of the House) (3.08 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would otherwise prevent the constitution of Committees of Supply and Ways and Means, the receiving of Resolutions on the same day as they shall have passed in those Committees, and the passing of an Appropriation Bill through all its stages in one day.”

Motion agreed to.

REFERENDUM TO ALTER CONSTITUTION

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Premier and Treasurer and Minister for the Arts) (3.09 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That this Parliament opposes more power to Canberra and calls on all Queenslanders to vote ‘No’ to all four questions in the 3 September referendum.”

The \$40m referendum on Saturday, 3 September, is a States’ rights versus centralisation of power in Canberra battle, and puts the country at the constitutional crossroads. The four seemingly simple questions constitute a major attack on States’ rights—on Queensland rights—and, if passed, will radically alter our present Constitution.

Canberra’s record for attacking the States is legendary. There were the infamous Evans spy flights over Tasmania, the use of external affairs powers to introduce equal opportunities legislation and World Heritage listing and the attempt by the ACTU/Hawke Labor Government to override our industrial legislation. Financial discrimination against the States is further evidence of Canberra’s grab for power.

Now, having exploited the external affairs powers to the hilt, the Hawke Government has turned to a referendum to further diminish the States’ powers. The sad part about using the referendum machinery is that the Hawke Labor Government is using the Australian people; it is trying to trick the Australian people into giving more power to Canberra. The vehicle is these four deceitful and deceiving questions.

Make no mistake about it: this referendum is an attack on States’ rights and on Queensland particularly. Take, for example, the so-called fair elections proposal. It is not a referendum issue, but a political issue. It is, and was, pushed by a weak and unpopular Queensland Labor Party because it could not win more than the 50 per cent of the vote necessary to win the Treasury benches. For five years the Queensland Labor

Party has begged the Hawke Government to use the referendum machinery to “get the National Party out of office”. Sadly—for purely political gain, not for reasons of principle—Queensland Labor has been aided and abetted by a weaker Queensland Liberal Party in this scandalous attack on this sovereign State. Although both the Queensland Labor Party and the Queensland Liberal Party are riddled with dissenting voices, they want a system that equates to a Labor gerrymander.

Ironically, in 1974 Prime Minister Whitlam put to the people a similar referendum proposal. It was resoundingly defeated. The same fate should befall the so-called fair elections proposal in 1988.

More cynically, the Hawke Labor Government is proposing four-year maximum terms for both Houses of the Federal Parliament. This too, in another guise, was put to the people in 1974, 1977 and 1984. Again the people rejected those proposals, simply because they perceived them as being designed to give more power to Canberra.

The current referendum battle is against Labor centralism, against Canberra overriding and overpowering the States and against the Hawke Government’s entrenching a so-called Bill of Rights in our Constitution. Supposedly, the constitutional amendments are Hawke’s present to the Australian people in the bicentennial year. They are sugar-coated poison. Under the candy wrapping is a hidden agenda: the centralisation of power in Canberra.

I have a very strong view that amendments to the Constitution of Australia—the people’s Constitution—should be approached in a bipartisan way. They should be agreed to by Government and opposition parties and then put to the people at the time of a general election. That would save \$40m. But this referendum is a cynical party-political exercise directed at Queensland.

Our Constitution has served us well for 88 years. It is a strong Constitution that ensures no sphere of government has too much power. We have a Federation; thus power is shared. The Australian Constitution is a document that sets out the basic relationships between the Federal Government and the States. It clearly limits the power of the Commonwealth, the executive Government, the bureaucracy and the courts.

The founding fathers never intended the Constitution to be a Bill of Rights. Now, the Hawke Labor Government, having increasingly and embarrassingly used international treaties to by-pass and override the States, has moved to a referendum to centralise yet more power in Canberra.

One must ask why the Hawke Labor Government did not wait for its own Constitutional Commission to finish its work and suggest its amendments to the Constitution. No, the Hawke Labor Government rushed its own legislation through before the much-vaunted Constitutional Commission could get its paperwork done. What a farce it has turned out to be. How different are the recommendations from those suggested by the commission.

It is important we note that, in the Hawke Labor Government’s rush and nervous haste to push the referendum legislation through, a serious mistake was made and Federal Parliament had to be recalled to redress it. Make no mistake; this is a political referendum. The timing and the questions are an attack on States’ rights, and on Queensland’s in particular.

I repeat: the tragedy is that the Queensland Labor Party and the Queensland Liberal Party—although there are dissenting voices within the ranks, namely, those of Senator MacGibbon, Mr Beard and Mr Eaton—are aiding and abetting this political referendum for no other reason than to get at the Queensland National Party Government. I urge Queenslanders not to fall for the trap.

Let us look at the questions. The four-year maximum term proposal for both Houses is about weakening the check on Canberra’s power. If carried, it will encourage the holding of more Federal elections—not fewer. There is no requirement for Parliament to sit for a minimum time; there is no constitutional provision to prevent the Prime

Minister from dissolving both Houses of Parliament for any reason he chooses. It is not a fixed term; the Prime Minister can call an election whenever he chooses.

This proposal will result in continuous double dissolution elections, and the independence and integrity of the Senate will be jeopardised. Its role as both a House of review and as a States' House will be severely restricted by this proposal. Incidentally, Labor's proposed change is contrary to the recommendation of its own Constitutional Commission that Senators be elected for two House of Representatives terms. That is not the proposal in the referendum.

This fiddling with the Senate means that its watchdog process has been weakened. It was the Senate that stopped the ID card and the so-called Bill of Rights. It is little wonder that the Hawke Labor Party wants the Senate's power depleted—a long-term socialist philosophy.

The fair elections proposal is the real reason why we are having this referendum. It is the sop to the Queensland Labor Party for being good boys in the eyes of the Federal Labor machine. Prime Minister Hawke and his cohorts told Opposition Leader Goss and his then soul mate, union-leader Hodder, that, if factionalism was controlled in Queensland, the reward would be a referendum proposal to install a Labor gerrymander in Queensland. If it be successful, Australia will be the only country in the world with such a proposal written into its Constitution. There is a very clear message in that.

Mr Burns: You are running scared.

Mr AHERN: I am not scared of anything, least of all the honourable member.

The impact of a Labor gerrymander in Queensland will be addressed by my colleague Mark Stoneman, who will detail later the loss of eight parliamentary representatives in northern and western Queensland. These parliamentary representatives are the men and women who press for extra amenities, facilities, development and growth for their respective areas.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr AHERN: The honourable member cannot cop it.

Under a Labor gerrymander of the kind that exists in New South Wales and Victoria, the rural and decentralised areas will become backwaters as the clamour of parliamentary voices press for more development and more growth for the more populous areas.

I make it patently clear that an Ahern Government will never desert the needs of the rural and decentralised areas, despite this despicable conspiracy by the Queensland Liberal Party and the Queensland Labor Party to deprive northern and western people of proper and fair representation.

Turning now to the local government proposal, I remind the House that my Government will be making amendments to the Constitution Act to recognise local government in the State's Constitution. Once again the local government proposal is a political proposal to enable Canberra to grab more power. It is a mechanism to enable the Commonwealth to by-pass the States. I remind the House that the Commonwealth did this last year with respect to our Local Government Grants Commission——

Mr Innes: Tell us about the \$50,000.

Mr AHERN: The Leader of the Liberal Party cannot even count.

Canberra itself decided how much each local government council should get in taxpayers' grants and completely and arrogantly disregarded the State's submission.

The question must be asked: how long will it be before the Hawke Labor Government and the Canberra bureaucrats start saying which councils are too small, which councils are too big, which councils should be amalgamated, which councils should have equal votes, which councils should be abolished and so on?

The Hawke Labor Government has not been kind to local government. It has cut road-funding and local government's share of personal income tax collections very significantly.

I remind the House that the dream of Labor Government is a regionalised Australia—the death-knell for local authorities, as we know them, and possibly of State Governments.

This proposal opens local government to further Federal legislative measures and therefore High Court interpretations. If honourable members opposite do not believe that, they have not studied history. I have been around politics for two decades, and I well remember one proposal that came before the Federal Parliament dealing with Aboriginal rights. It was a very simple proposal. It was put forward then very simply. It was just simply to recognise Aborigines in the Census. The unintended consequences of that proposal are legend. Volumes of legislation have been based on the proposal, which was put to the Australian people as a simple proposition, that is, to count Aborigines in the Census. Yet the Federal Labor Government wants the people to believe that this proposal today in respect of local government will not have unintended consequences. For Heaven's sake, who is the Labor Party trying to kid? Who is it trying to blindfold?

I warn local government that if carried, this proposal will be a prelude to Federal interference of a kind never before dreamed of. This so-called Bill of Rights proposal again is a sneaky attempt to transfer real power from the people to the courts. It is little wonder that the Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr Penman, and the Australian Catholic bishops have urged a "No" vote to this proposal.

Senator Evans' words of wisdom obviously fell on deaf ears when he argued, "that before any attempt is made to include such provisions in the Constitution, they should be enacted as ordinary laws so that their meaning is determined by the courts before they become part of the Constitution". Those are the words of Senator Evans. That is not what is being done in this referendum. Oh, no! In this referendum, something very different is being done. I sound a note of warning to the Queensland people.

The United States Supreme Court has held that the First Amendment precludes school prayers, public displays of nativity, the presence of crosses and the Star of David in a war memorial, but at the same time the free flow of pornographic materials has been protected.

Furthermore, the whole question of State aid for private religious schools is opened up again. It is probable that if this proposal is carried, private religious schools and hospitals will have their Government funding scrapped. All that the Federal Government has been able to say is that that is not true. It has happened in North America. Why should it not happen here under interpretation by the courts?

This Bill of Rights is fraught with danger. These referendum proposals are a dishonest, deceitful and partisan attack on States' rights by the Hawke Labor Government, State Labor branches and, sadly, some misguided elements of the conservative parties.

There is no option for sensible Australians but to vote "No", "No", "No", "No" on 3 September.

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (3.25 p.m.): In rising to second the motion moved by the Premier, I suggest that any person who has taken the trouble to read each of the four Constitution alteration Bills in relation to which we will be voting would have been appalled by the sloppy drafting and the fact that they are replete with drafting and conceptual errors.

The Federal Government did not even follow the advice of its own Constitutional Commission in its drafting exercise. All honourable members know that the Federal Government knocked on the head the commission's recommendation for a fixed four-year term.

But most Australians would not be aware that in both the local government and the right and freedoms questions the Commonwealth has tinkered with the drafting of

the Bills to increase the scope for Commonwealth intervention in the affairs of States and to create legal doubts which will be resolved only by lengthy, costly and socially unsettling litigation.

I would like to concentrate specifically on the rights and freedoms Bill, because of all the Bills it raises the most potential legal problems. Before discussing that Bill, it was interesting and symptomatic to note that the Federal Government had to amend its fair elections Bill in the Senate because of unintended legal consequences flowing from the drafting.

As originally drafted, the proposed section 124E required that when a State or Territory election is held on an "at large" basis, the method of choosing the members was to be as nearly as practicable the same as choosing senators. It was only when this Bill was almost through the Senate that it was brought to Mr Bowen's attention that the effect of the wording would be to invalidate the list system of voting practised by the Labor Party in South Australia between 1975 and 1980, and now proposed for the Australian Capital Territory Parliament.

Labor did not even know and had not even taken the trouble to obtain elementary legal and political advice that this piece of legislation would strike at the very heart of a Bill it was then drafting for the ACT.

Of course, the Federal Government had to seek the assistance of the Democrats in clearing up the mess it had created, but it rejected any attempts by the coalition to delay passage of the legislation in order that other drafting problems could be sorted out. The real danger with these Bills is that they have been prepared hastily, without the benefit of mature thought and reflection, and the consequences of them even now are not fully determined. We are being asked to vote in favour of a blank cheque for Canberra.

Mr Davis: No!

Mr CLAUSON: We are!

It is a blank cheque which, if cashed, will benefit only one sphere of Government and only one group of politicians.

Let me refer to the local government question as an illustration. The Constitutional Commission recommended the insertion in the Constitution of a new section 119A. The wording of this section as proposed by the commission is as follows—

"Each State shall provide for the establishment and continuance of local government bodies elected in accordance with its laws and empowered to administer, and to make by-laws for, their respective areas in accordance with the laws of the State."

Now, the Commonwealth was not happy with that form of wording and changed the first part of it to read as follows—

"Each State shall provide for the establishment and continuance of a system of local government. . ."

Honourable members, we all know what local government bodies are; they are local government authorities. But do we know what a system of local government is? What does the word "system" mean? Does it mean "regional authorities"? Does it mean "harbour boards"? Does it mean some other entity created which has quasi-legislative powers? This doubt will only be determined by the High Court in due course. The intent behind the change in the wording is quite clear. Under the proposed section 119A, and in conjunction with the appropriations power under section 81, the Commonwealth will be able to starve into submission those local authorities that it chooses. It will be able to starve local authorities, forcing them to amalgamate with others and thereby creating regional authorities throughout the continent. It is the Whitlam grand plan dressed up in Hawke and Bowen's misleading apparel. This is Labor's hidden agenda, and Labor has not had the courage to put it clearly to the Australian people.

Let me make a prediction, and let it be recorded in *Hansard*: if this misleading proposal is passed, in the short to medium term there will be an attempt by the Commonwealth to revive regional government in Australia by means of Australian Assistance Plan-type proposals. That attempt will be challenged by the States in the High Court, and the High Court will give an expansive ruling so far as the appropriation power is concerned. From then on the Commonwealth will pass direct legislation affecting all or any local authorities that it chooses, engaging itself in favouritism, pork-barrelling—the favourite term of the ALP—and victimisation, which is another trait of the ALP. Local government will end up being weakened, and the Federation will be placed at grave and serious risk.

Let me turn to Labor's mini Bill of Rights. The first matter that we all need to consider is this: in 1988, are the rights to trial by jury and the freedom of religion or private property really under threat in this nation? With one small caveat, which I will discuss later, the answer is a resounding "No!" Taken as a whole, the proposals are both unnecessary and undesirable. Once again, Labor's mistrust of the people is coming to the surface. It wants to transfer the real power from the elected representatives of the people and their Parliament to the Federal judiciary. If this proposal is carried, enormous power will be given to unelected and unrepresentative judges to impose their political and value judgments on the community.

The first question that raises concern is the trial by jury proposal. Once again the Federal Government ignored the drafting of the Constitutional Commission in this proposal. In its report, the commission suggested that a person should be guaranteed a jury trial where he was liable for imprisonment for more than two years or where he was liable to capital punishment or corporal punishment. Has the Federal Government chosen to do that? No! The proposal on which we are being asked to vote has no reference to capital punishment. It is being deleted.

In fact, I wrote to Mr Bowen, the Federal Attorney-General, about this anomaly. I informed him that, under this proposal, it was ludicrous that a person charged with a minor offence such as stealing would be guaranteed a jury trial but that a person charged with a capital offence had no guarantee of a jury trial.

Mr Ardill: Tell us what State has capital punishment.

Mr CLAUSON: The civil libertarians on the other side of the House do not seem to think that this is a bad idea.

In response, Mr Bowen said that corporal punishment included capital punishment. I pointed out to him that I could not find a dictionary that gave such a definition of that term. I referred him to the *Oxford Dictionary*, the *Macquarie Dictionary* and several legal dictionaries. The best that Mr Bowen could do in response to that instruction was to write back and say that he had found a 1961 edition of *Webster's Dictionary* that contained a definition which equated with his idea of what the term really meant.

Under this great proposal a person charged with murder, treason or another offence that carries capital punishment will have absolutely no guarantee. What a farce! All honourable members know that, in Queensland, for almost every offence carrying more than 12 months' imprisonment a person is entitled to be tried by a jury of 12 citizens who will give a unanimous verdict, not a majority verdict by any smaller group of jurors as would be allowed by this shonky guarantee that is being dished up to us by the Federal Attorney-General.

The question arises: "Do we always need jury trials?" The answer clearly is, "No." Because of the grave risk to jurors, Northern Ireland, Italy and, for that matter, most European countries do not have jury trials for terrorist offences. One can look at the experience of America in relation to the trial of members of the Mafia. In certain instances, because of the threats and inducements held out to jury members and the impossibility of securing convictions in such matters, jury trials have to be abandoned.

In 1986 a major report on fraud trials that was presented to the British Government recommended against jury trials in every instance because of the time involved and the complexity of the issues. Surely each Government has the right and the responsibility to make an appropriate decision, in the interests of the administration of justice and the safety of its citizens, as to whether a jury trial is desirable in every instance. Under the proposal in the referendum, the basic rights will be taken away from the Parliaments of the States.

However, the most dangerous of the proposals contained in the referendum relates to the extension of the so-called freedom of religion. This proposal has already rekindled divisive debate over State aid. This proposal has already caused distress, concern and rancour among groups and organisations throughout the Commonwealth. Once again Mr Bowen is not content with leaving the existing section as it is and simply putting to us the proposal that the existing section 116 be extended to cover the States. Instead, he has again tinkered with the wording of the Constitution. Under this proposal, the existing words "shall not make any law for" are to be deleted.

It may be asked, "Why has he done this?" Mr Bowen says that the change is necessary in order to cover executive acts. Again, I pointed out to Mr Bowen that the existing section covers almost every conceivable type of executive act, and I referred him to a 1987 decision of the Full Federal Court which determined that the existing wording of section 116 protects Australians from almost all actions by members of the executive Government. So, if, as guaranteed by the Full Federal Court, there is no need in law for the change to the wording, why has Mr Bowen taken this particular step? Once again we see the Labor Party deliberately trying to reopen the debate on State aid, to open up new and fruitful avenues for High Court challenges and for unrepresentative pressure groups and unelected judges to be able to determine the political agenda of our nation. The effect of the change of wording is at least clear. It will widen the scope of section 116 and cast into doubt all previous High Court decisions on freedom of religion in Australia.

In the past, in large part because of the word "for", the High Court has given a narrow interpretation to this section. The High Court has interpreted this word as requiring that a statute's main purpose must be to infringe the section. It was not good enough that an indirect effect or a subsidiary effect of the statute would infringe the section.

We can well see a situation in the future in which, for the most frivolous and irrelevant of matters, persons will be able to institute challenges based on section 116. Many laws previously untouched by the scope of the section will be placed under a cloud of doubt. This is particularly so in the area of education. The right of a Government to register schools so as to maintain minimum education standards will be threatened. That has occurred in America and Canada, and it will certainly occur here.

In 1984 there was a challenge to the South Australian education system—the so-called Grace Bible case—which Mr Bowen has gone around the country citing as the main reason for this proposal. In that case a small religious group challenged the right of a State to register educational institutions. Does Mr Bowen agree with those persons that the State has no right to ensure that its most important resource, its infants, receive quality education? I hope he does not; but his proposal places this right at risk.

If I might look at a few of the American and Canadian cases and their equivalent provisions, I would firstly draw honourable members' attention to a 1985 decision of the Canadian Supreme Court. In *The Queen v. Big M Drug Mart Limited*, it held that Parliament could not legislate for Sunday as a day of rest. The Supreme Court ruled that it is not open to a Government to enforce a religious holiday by force of law, or to declare stricter trading hours for holidays that have deep religious significance. In other words, not only can the Parliament not legislate for Sunday as a day of rest, but it also cannot legislate for Easter and Christmas Day. I can assure honourable members that if this proposal is passed, one of the very first challenges will be from crackpot

religious groups wanting to stop decent Christian Queenslanders exercising their right of religious worship.

Again in Canada, a number of challenges to abortion provisions in the criminal law have been based on Canada's equivalent provision in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. I can quote a number of Canadian cases that cause me great concern. For example, in one decision, *Re Davis*—and I see the honourable members for Brisbane Central has left the Chamber—a challenge was made to a provisional law providing for blood transfusions to children in medical danger. Everyone knows that Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in blood transfusions and that there are laws on the statute-books that protect children of members of the sect from refusal to allow blood transfusions when their lives are at risk. Once again, will this be a fruitful area for legal debate?

Turning now to America, I point out that the United States Supreme Court has held in a 1972 decision, *Wisconsin v. Yoder*, that a State law requiring compulsory school attendance was unconstitutional. In another decision, it protected a so-called religious group from being prosecuted for using the mail to obtain money by fraud by making false representations. The Supreme Court ruled that the freedom of religion in the Constitution precluded inquiries into the truth or falsity of religious assertions. One can well imagine the scope that that decision has for criminal activity.

I think that most members would have some knowledge of the numerous American decisions which would prevent any form of State aid being given to religious schools. However, not as well known are the decisions which prevent voluntary Bible-reading and recitation of the Lord's Prayer in State Schools, and even voluntary religious instruction being given by ministers of religion for one hour on a weekly basis. The Supreme Court has also ruled that no aid for the furtherance of religion is permissible. In a decision in 1984, it went as far as to hold that a city council could not even erect in a park a Christmas display that included a nativity scene. Also at risk at the moment is the reading of prayers in Parliaments together with the teaching of anything except the doctrine of evolution in science classes.

In the past, the High Court has not relied on these overseas precedents. It has held, however, that section 116 also guarantees freedom from religion. So if the section is broadened, as proposed—and bearing in mind the High Court's apparent willingness to use it to prevent displays of religious belief—a diminution in religious freedom could well be brought about in Australia.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr CLAUSON: At risk will be any form of free Christian advertising on television—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have called for order in the Chamber. If my request for order in the Chamber is not respected, I will deal with someone personally.

Mr CLAUSON: As I was saying, there will be a risk to any form of free Christian advertising on television, to any tax benefits which religious charitable organisations receive, to aid to old people's homes run by churches and to church social welfare organisations.

At the beginning of my speech, I said that I had a caveat to add. The Federal Government has seen fit to force people to vote on three distinct questions on the rights and freedoms proposals. I am personally sympathetic to the proposed extension of fair compensation to the States—not because it is needed in Queensland, but because of the long history of Labor Governments ripping off private land-owners. The latest in this long line of rip-offs was in 1981 in the coal-grab by the Wran Government in New South Wales in the Hunter River Valley. This proposal is being put forward because of Labor rip-offs, and I would like to have seen this as a separate question which could have been discussed sensibly and openly. Instead, as usual Mr Bowen is intent on

pushing forward his hidden agenda and has not given the Australian people their right and the opportunity to vote separately on each issue.

I am not against constitutional reform, and nor is this Government. The Australian Constitution is in desperate need of reform as a result of more than 10 years of expansive High Court decisions based on the external affairs and companies power. In the future it has to be ensured that the Federal Government alone does not have the sole power to initiate reforms, because to date the history of Australia has been one of successive Federal Governments of all complexions putting forward referendums in order to bolster their power and weaken the Federation. Australia needs to have a system whereby the State Parliaments and the people themselves can have a say in initiating constitutional reform, and not just Canberra. The Australian Constitution is for all spheres of government and for all the people of Australia; not merely for the Federal Labor Government.

Therefore, I urge all Queenslanders to reject the latest in Labor's long history of referendum power grabs and vote "No" on 3 September.

Mr GOSS (Logan—Leader of the Opposition) (3.46 p.m.): Hasn't this been a captivating debate? Haven't the two speakers captured the imagination of this Chamber and the people of Queensland with that effort? This Chamber saw the new, tough performance from the other side. It was an effort that can best be described as papier mache Rambo. The Premier referred to the four referendum questions as being "sugar-coated poison". That is wrong. In fact they provide Queenslanders with an opportunity to put an end to their having to swallow boiled lollies from strange men who would seduce them into corrupt ways. What it means in democratic terms is that there will be no more seduction with boiled lollies which lead Queenslanders into corrupt ways. All this pseudo-anger and pseudo-determination about States' rights versus centralisation is a load of waffle. Earle Bailey must have written that for the Premier.

These referendums are all about people's rights because these questions will give the people of Queensland—

Mr Clauson interjected.

Mr GOSS: Keep quiet, Tonto.

These questions will give the people of Queensland the opportunity to determine for themselves what sort of an electoral system and what sort of Government Queensland will have. The fair and democratic elections question will wipe away the opportunity that these people have to rig the boundaries for their own corrupt purposes. The reason why Queenslanders will vote "Yes" for honest elections and boundaries in this State is that Queenslanders are proud to live in Queensland and are proud Australians as well.

Government members interjected.

Mr GOSS: I trust you can hear me, Mr Deputy Speaker.

As Australians, Queenslanders believe in honesty, a fair go and that all Australians and all Queenslanders are equal; they are equal irrespective of their sex, race, religion or geographical location. All of us are equal. That is what this question is all about. It is all about establishing the equality of the democratic right of all Queenslanders and all Australians and to remove a system that enables this Government to put the National Party first and Queenslanders second.

Accordingly, I move the following amendment—

“Delete all the words after—

‘opposes’

and substitute—

‘the misuse of public money for party political purposes to promote the National Party's opposition to democratic fair elections.’”

It is pleasing to see that at last members of the National Party have come out, albeit with speeches prepared by their advertising agency, from hiding behind their

\$800,000 tax-payer funded campaign. That \$800,000 of public money could have been spent on more police and more nurses or on our education system. Why did the National Party Government have to spend \$800,000—because the Premier was incapable of getting out on the stump and carrying the argument to the people of Queensland. That is why the National Party hides behind a tax-payer funded campaign.

The truth was revealed in the last week. A former senior Minister of this Government handed the Labor Party \$800,000 of free publicity when he exposed the fraud that has been perpetrated by the National Party by pointing out that electoral boundaries in this State are rigged. Mr Hinze said that they are rigged so that in certain areas any person with the National Party tag could get elected. What that means is that people do not get a competent member, a member who can truly represent their interests. What they get is the type of person whom I can see on the Government back bench, people who could get elected only with the National Party tag. In some electorates, if a telegraph pole carried the National Party standard, it could get elected.

It is an old but true saying that power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely. That is what we have seen in this State. Corruption has brought this State to the depths of the whole of Australia. That corruption is not just in the police force, not just in certain spheres of the legal profession, not just in the courts and not just in the business cronies; it is in the National Party and the Government itself. That is an absolute disgrace for which they should be thoroughly and endlessly ashamed.

Mr Ahern: What about Unsworth and Richardson?

Mr GOSS: Nothing compares to the depths to which the Premier and the National Party have taken this State and nothing compares to the corruption that has been revealed.

What is their basic argument for the gerrymander? It is to say that it relates to isolation. I will take some examples. I will compare Roma, which has about 8 000 electors, with the seat of Cook, which has 40 per cent more voters. What could be more isolated than the seat of Cook with its 12 000-odd voters. Therein is the lie. Let the Government go to the people of north Queensland and tell them what is so inferior about the north Queenslanders of Cook, Mount Isa, Thuringowa and those other northern seats that have so many more electors than seats such as Roma, Carnarvon or Balonne. That is where the corruption is to be found. That is the primary cause of the police corruption, the legal corruption, and the political corruption and cronyism that exists in this State today.

Mr Ahern: What a load of rot!

Mr GOSS: It is interesting that the Premier says, "What a load of rot!" What Queenslanders should ask the Premier is, "Where were you when this corruption was growing up in this State?"

I am sure all honourable members read that the member for Mount Gravatt, Mr Henderson, said that the Liberals cannot complain because they were there in Government and they helped that National/Liberal Party Government preside over the corruption that flourished in this State. If the Premier will not answer, I will ask the member for Mount Gravatt, "Where was the Premier in those days?" He was hiding quietly in the corner while the corruption flourished. Where was he during the Lucas inquiry, during the cronyism and during debate on the Sturgess report? On the front page of the *Courier-Mail* the Director of Prosecutions was reported as saying that the main perpetrators of organised crime in this State have enjoyed immunity from prosecution for years. What did the Premier do? What did Cabinet do? The Premier and Cabinet were prepared to accept the graft of political success, to sit there quietly and to reap the benefits.

When corruption was flourishing because the people of Queensland were insulated by a corrupt electoral process from turving out that Government and when Government members were protected by the gerrymander from being exposed and brought to account, the Premier sat there basking in the benefits of that electoral corruption. He accepted

the graft of political success and all the damage that has been done to this State, as all Government members did. He is not alone.

Mr AHERN: I rise to a point of order. I take exception to the implication of the honourable member that I have accepted graft. That will appear in *Hansard*. I take strong exception to it and I ask for a withdrawal.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I rule that there was a distinct personal imputation in the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition. I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr GOSS: In accordance with your direction, Mr Deputy Speaker, I withdraw any personal reference to graft. I intended no reference to graft in the financial sense or in the personal sense; I was speaking in the electoral sense.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I remind honourable members that the Leader of the Opposition has withdrawn his implication. I ask that the rules of the Chamber be respected.

Mr GOSS: It is appropriate that a distinction be made between electoral graft and monetary graft, because I certainly do not suggest the latter. However, the National Party has benefited from electoral corruption. I make that point in the political sense and not in any criminal sense. That electoral corruption has insulated the forces of evil and darkness in this State—the people who are now being exposed at the Fitzgerald inquiry—and has protected them from political accountability to Ministers and a Government who should have brought them to account and should have made them perform in the interests of this State. However, the Government let them go on, and its benefit was electoral success. That is the electoral graft or the political graft of which I speak.

I make an appeal to all persons in this State who believe in the true principles of free enterprise and competition. Those people get the best results when a political system exists in which the politicians and the parties are forced to perform if they are to succeed in their electorates and in Government. Those results are not achieved in the situation outlined by Mr Hinze, in which simply by rigging the boundaries a political party can ensure that a particular person can win a particular seat and, in the same way, that, no matter how hopeless it is or how much it has failed the State in terms of corruption or in terms of the failure of economic policy, it can be elected. An end must be put to that. No matter which party is in power, whether it be Labor, National or—Heaven forbid!—Liberal—the mad hatter's tea party—if it is to achieve electoral success, it must be forced to perform. The only safeguard that we can have is to have that enshrined in the Constitution.

I will use an analogy that is close to the hearts of all Queenslanders. Mr Veivers will enjoy this. I refer to the State of Origin series in Rugby League.

Mr Clauson: That is an old one.

Mr GOSS: Well, you are going to get it again, Tonto.

Under the old rules of interstate clashes, the football competition was rigged. Mr Veivers would be well aware that the competition was rigged so that the Blues could have the best of their players and the best of Queensland's players.

Mr VEIVERS: I rise to a point of order. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw that remark. I have never played in any football matches that were rigged, and I played for New South Wales.

Mr GOSS: I accept that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! The honourable Leader of the Opposition accepts the explanation given by the honourable member.

Mr GOSS: As is not unusual, the honourable member failed to understand the argument. I was not talking about the game. I would not suggest that the game was rigged. What I am saying is that the selection process was rigged, in the same way as it is rigged in favour of the National Party right now. The process was rigged so that the Blues got the best of their players and the best of our players. The losers were not so much the Queensland team as the paying public—the Queenslanders who, like me, trudged out to Lang Park on the State of Origin Tuesday night to see our team get thrashed and went away knowing that they had not got value for money.

Now, if honourable members go out to Lang Park to see a State of Origin game, they will see the result of a process in which two teams that are picked on the basis of fair selection are standing toe to toe. That ensures the best Rugby League football in the world. It ensures the best standard because those players and those teams are forced to perform if they are to win, and the winners every time—irrespective of whether Queensland or New South Wales triumphs—are the paying public.

When it comes to the electoral contest, the spectators are the tax-payers—the citizens of Queensland. Members of the Labor Party say, “Let us give them State of Origin rules. Let us give them fair rules so that there is a fair contest which results in members of Parliament and Governments”——

Mr Ahern: Why don't you go out to the country areas?

Mr GOSS: The Premier should keep quiet. He has never been out to Lang Park in his life. He would not know where it is.

What Queenslanders want, and what Queenslanders should have, is a fair system so that the tax-payers get performance, so that they get value for their tax dollar, so that they come away feeling satisfied no matter which party wins. It is not important which party wins, in the final analysis. What is important is that the tax-payers get the best possible performance, and out of that they get the best possible results.

The National Party is like the Blues. I suppose it could be said the Labor Party is like the Maroons. When it comes to the Liberal Party, I am not really sure. I understand that the Liberal Party has a “yes and no” ticket. I understand that it has an asterisk. The Liberals could not really make a decision, so they are sort of “yes and no”. I suppose if the National Party is blue and the Labor Party is maroon, the Liberal corner is a dubious shade of pink.

I will cite some specific examples. I believe that they should be recorded in *Hansard*. The two most far-flung electorates in Queensland, Cook and Mount Isa, have almost 5 000 more voters than the National Party seats of Carnarvon and Roma. The Labor Party holds the three seats with the most voters—Logan, Thuringowa and Manly—with a combined total of more than 76 000 voters. The National Party holds three seats with the fewest voters—Roma, Gregory and Balonne—which I understand have a little more than 25 000 voters. Three seats are based in Townsville, which is 1 500 kilometres from Brisbane and has 69 000 electors. How does the member for Townsville justify that? I notice that he is not in the Chamber. I would like to see him standing up for the people of Townsville and saying, “I support a system that gives my constituents in north Queensland—in Townsville—one-third of the vote of people in Roma and some other National Party electorates.” Mount Isa, in the remote north west, has more than 13 000 voters—50 per cent more than Peak Downs, west of Rockhampton.

All honourable members are aware of the disgraceful electoral story of the Aboriginal settlement of Wujal Wujal. What the National Party did was so rig the Act that that community was taken out of a seat—even out of a zone—and put completely in another seat and another zone, which happened to be a Labor seat. That is the extent of how blatant the National Party is prepared to be when it comes to electoral corruption.

A person's vote in Winton or Longreach, in the Gregory electorate, which has just over 8 000 voters, is worth 1½ times the vote of someone in Mount Isa—and Mount Isa is so much more remote. The voter in the central Queensland mining town of

Moranbah is a constituent of Bowen, a Country Zone seat with more than 12 500 electors; yet a voter in another central Queensland mining town, Blair Athol, is a constituent of Peak Downs, a Western and Far Northern Zone seat with just over 9 000 electors. I could go on. Nanango could be compared with Kingaroy. They are in adjacent seats with a substantial imbalance.

All these examples—and there are many more—demonstrate that the weighting, the rigging, the zoning and the boundaries are there to benefit one party, and one party alone—the National Party. They are there to benefit not country Queenslanders or northern Queenslanders but the National party alone. The most important question in the referendum and what it is all about is the opportunity for Queenslanders to put themselves first and the National Party last. That is why we advocate a “Yes” vote to that most important question. However, as all honourable members know, there are other questions as well. My colleagues will address those other questions in more specific terms, but I will make some brief reference to them.

As to local government—local government is closest to the people, and the Opposition believes that that level of government is entitled to be recognised in our Constitution. The Premier made some offer of recognising local government in the State Constitution. How with any consistency and any honesty he can do that and object to the other, I do not know. The Premier now stands up and opposes a four-year term. In December last year he went on record as saying that he supported a four-year term in the States, but he will not give the people of this State a referendum—

Mr Ahern: I do. I still do. Can't you understand? It is the Senate.

Mr GOSS: The Premier is all over the place. What honourable members see in this Chamber is the Premier's usual performance: flip, flop, flip, flop. That is what we get from the members of the Queensland Government, and that is why they are going the way they are going.

The Premier talks about Canberra riding roughshod over Queensland, about centralisation and about how the people of Queensland should vote “No” to the referendums. Why has he never supported the people of Queensland and why does he not support Queenslanders' having a referendum in this State to see how they feel about one vote, one value.

Mr Burns: They are scared.

Mr GOSS: The reason the Queensland Government will not allow the people of this State to have a State-based referendum that they could hold if they wanted to is that, as my deputy said, they are scared. The members of the Queensland Government are frightened of the Parliament. They are frightened of fair rules because they are frightened of failure, because failure will tear down and take away from them all that they have built up and all that they have gained from this electoral corruption. They do not realise that the trust of the electors of this State in the Government is a precious thing, and that it is much more important than the benefits that they can deliver to their cronies—the benefits of simply basking in power. These people no longer have any serious agenda; they have lost their entitlement to be in Government. They are simply there to manage power. That happens to parties like the National Party. When they have been in power too long, they lose sight of their original principles. The strong men of principle—whether honourable members agree with their principle or not—who were once in power, who provided clear leadership, who provided the goals and who knew where they were going, are no longer in power. Once the party loses its way and its strong men, it just flips and flops about doing the best that it can to manage and to hold on to power. That is no good for the people of this State. That is no good for the Queensland families who are crying out for better services, better hospitals, better schools and more police stations. That is no good when people are crying out for some specific action on unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, and youth training. Although the people are crying out for action, what do they get? Nothing at all!

A few weeks ago, in a cynical attempt to try to hold on to the seat of South Coast in the by-election, certain measures were proposed. Those measures have been needed for a long time. A token effort—a cynical bribe—was made a few weeks before the by-election. What sort of Government or administration is that? What sort of credibility can the Queensland Government be given when it ignores those problems for so long and is only panicked into action by the prospect of imminent electoral defeat? That behaviour deserves to be rejected.

The other questions in terms of basic rights—the right to trial by jury, the right to freedom of religion and the right to fair compensation if one's property is taken away—are fundamental and should be recognised. They should be entrenched in the Constitution. So many people in this State take those rights for granted. There is no guarantee that the common law or the Criminal Code cannot be overridden by this Parliament. Many times the National Party, often in co-operation with the Liberal Party when they were in coalition, came into this Parliament and rode roughshod over basic rights that were taken for granted by the citizens of this State. They were snatched away in an instant by a party that was prepared to ram through legislation in a matter of a week, and sometimes in a matter of hours during the one night. If we had those basic rights entrenched in the Constitution, the Government would never be able to do that. That common law protection does not exist. That is why the protection is needed in the Constitution.

The Opposition urges the people of Queensland and everyone in this Parliament who believes in Queensland and Australia as being a more just, a more fair and a more tolerant society to say "No" to electoral corruption and to say "No" to all the things that have come with it. I refer particularly to the corruption that has been exposed daily in the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry, the failure of economic policy, the failure to plan for the future of this State, the failure to provide a basic level of services that are provided in every other State and a failure on all the fundamentals.

Say "No" to electoral corruption; say "No" to the grafters who have brought this State to those depths; say "No" to each and every one of them and, instead, say "Yes" because, as Australians and Queenslanders, we believe that each and every person in this country is equal.

Mr Katter: You said "Australians" first, didn't you?

Mr GOSS: Yes, I said "Australians" first, and I say it proudly. I believe without equivocation that all decent and fair-minded Queenslanders see themselves as Australians.

We in the Labor Party and the Queensland parliamentary Labor Party consider ourselves lucky to be in Queensland. We like this State. It has an exciting future and we are going to be part of it. We are Australians and we are proud to be Australians. We do not intend to back away from that. We will not accept those people who, for propaganda purposes, try to propagate the myth that Queenslanders are not Australians. We say that Queenslanders proudly see themselves as Australians.

Mr Ahern: On the subject of corruption, what about Gayler?

Mr GOSS: Queenslanders will say "Yes" and Australians will say "Yes" because they believe in the notion of justice, fairness and tolerance. They believe in the protection of basic rights. The Labor Party also wants people to say "Yes" because in this State in particular people want their families and children protected from the corruption that has run rampant in this State. Say "Yes" for that reason; say "Yes" because you want an end to that corruption; say "Yes" because you want an end to that cronyism; say "Yes" because you want a bright economic future for this State and you want political parties that are forced to perform. Only when political parties are forced to perform will they be forced also to perform in relation to policies and the needs and aspirations of the average Queenslanders. Last but not least, I ask every Queenslanders to say "Yes" because he believes in himself. Saying "Yes" to those questions says more than just answering them; it says something about oneself.

Mr Ahern: Answer about Gayler and corruption.

Mr GOSS: I do not know what the Premier is talking about. If he wishes to bring individuals into this debate he should speak about some of the Government members. Do you want to talk about Mr Lane?

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Palaszczuk: Let's have a debate.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Archerfield is not in his correct seat. The Leader of the Opposition will direct his remarks through the Chair.

Mr GOSS: I was deliberately provoked.

As I was saying before I was rudely interrupted, the way in which Queenslanders vote says something about them and the way that they see themselves. It says something about the kind of society in which they would like to live.

I say to Queenslanders, as Australians: "Vote 'Yes' because you believe in this country, you believe in this State, you believe in your families and you believe in yourselves."

Mr BRADDY (Rockhampton) (4.15 p.m.): I rise to second the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition and to oppose the matters raised by the Premier and by the Attorney-General.

In any democracy there is a basic principle, a principle of equal and universal franchise. Since 1957, when the Queensland National Party Government began its continual rule, this principle has been trodden underfoot. The principle is a basic one and a most important one. Therefore it is one which is of most importance for Queenslanders and Australians in the referendum on 3 September. I say that for the sake of the honourable member for Flinders.

The one vote, one value principle, as it is sometimes referred to, is of course the most important. For many years, in this House and throughout the State, the National Party has been deliberately misleading the people about the attitude to that principle in other countries. At times in this House the member for Flinders has indicated that other countries do not support one vote, one value. Often in this place the United States is cited as a country that supposedly does not enforce the one vote, one value principle. That of course is a complete misconception and in fact an untruth, because in the Parliamentary Library I have seen some of the research papers that have been given to National Party members. Because they have been given those papers, it would be impossible for them to misconstrue the reality.

I will cite the United States as an example. Recently I applied the one vote, one value principle that is being sought to be applied throughout Australia by the coming referendum to the 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives. The principle, applied in the Australian House of Representatives, has a 10 per cent tolerance above or below the quota. Of those 435 American seats, only 17 did not comply with that principle. Some of those occur because each State is required to have at least one seat in the House, and State boundaries cannot be crossed—nor can that be done in Australia. As a result of that, 96 per cent of the seats in the American House of Representatives fit within the principle that the Labor Party is seeking to establish by referendum in this country. Yet time after time in this House members of the National Party have stated that the United States is an example of a country that does not support the one vote, one value principle. I will take my argument even further. The United States courts have enforced a rule that, if the number of electors for each seat within a particular State varies by more than 1 per cent, that State is likely to be struck down as being gerrymandered.

The Labor Party rejects totally the conception that has been put forward time and time again by the National Party. The National Party is attempting to mislead the people of this State. It has misruled them for 30 years.

Mr Clauson: Does that make it right?

Mr BRADDY: If the Attorney-General wishes to argue, he should at least tell the truth in the House. For many years many members of his party have told untruths in this place. The National Party should get the truth right and at least argue on the facts rather than trying to mislead the people.

Mr Clauson: Are you calling me a liar?

Mr BRADDY: I am suggesting that time and time again in this House members of the National Party have attempted to show that no other Western democratic countries support this principle.

I refer to New Zealand, our neighbouring democracy. The rule there is that each seat must have an equal number of electors, give or take 5 per cent. The rule throughout our sister democracies that we look most closely to is similar to ours.

Mr FitzGerald: Canada?

Mr BRADDY: The Canadian charter of rights now enforces a system in which the number of electors can vary by 25 per cent. If the referendum is passed, electorates in Australia will be able to have a 20 per cent tolerance.

Mr Stoneman: Canada?

Mr BRADDY: I have just referred to Canada. There it is 25 per cent. The proposal contained in the referendum is a variance of 20 per cent at the most.

Mr FitzGerald: England?

Mr BRADDY: In England the system is that the number must be as close as possible to that contained in a basic rule. Like Tasmania, it too has constitutional problems. Tasmanians are guaranteed five seats. In the United States, each State must have at least one seat.

Mr FitzGerald: In Great Britain, the same.

Mr BRADDY: The United Kingdom has different areas for England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

Mr FitzGerald: That's a zonal system.

Mr BRADDY: It is not a zonal system. It is not a zonal system at all because, within those areas, there must be compliance. The boundaries are not fixed artificially by a party. They are not zones. There is a Constitution under which those countries united, just as the mainland States did with Tasmania. Certain guarantees were given. I point out that there is not one particular party that sets up a zone.

Mrs Nelson: It was a deal they struck.

Mr BRADDY: I can inform the honourable member that there was no deal done in Queensland. The only deal that was done in Queensland was in the back rooms of the National Party when Sir Robert Sparkes did his deals with the Electoral Commissioners. They are the deals that are done in Queensland!

Let us look at the reasons usually advanced by the National Party in relation to Queensland. The first reason that is often advanced is equality of access.

Mr KATTER: Mr Speaker——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I presume the honourable member is rising to a point of order?

Mr KATTER: Yes, Mr Speaker.

Mr McElligott interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Thuringowa!

Mr KATTER: My point of order, Mr Speaker, is that the member speaking has constantly intimated that Government members have given wrong information to the House concerning the figures from the United States.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! That is not a point of order.

Mr BRADDY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The reason frequently advanced by the National Party is the principle of equality of access. The National Party states that it wants to continue to perpetrate this zonal system in Queensland because it is the only way that equal access can be given to the people of Queensland. Let us consider that contention in some detail and compare it with the position I spoke about in the United States.

Based on the numbers determined in the last redistribution in Queensland, 26 seats out of 89 would fall below the quota; in other words, those 26 seats are more than 10 per cent under the quota which would be established under the referendum proposal.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Lockyer!

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Port Curtis!

Mr BRADDY: There are 40 seats that exceed the quota by more than 10 per cent. On the figures provided in April 1988, 66 out of 89 seats in the Queensland Parliament would not comply with the legality that will be imposed if this referendum is passed; would not comply with the legality which is currently imposed in the Federal Parliament and accepted by the National Party, the Liberal Party and the Labor Party. How the National Party members have gone quiet now, because they accept the very same principle in the Federal Parliament that they oppose here. Seventy-four per cent of the seats in this Parliament would be outside the principle.

Mr Stephan: Do the electors have equal opportunity to talk to their members?

Mr BRADDY: The interjection is, "Do the members have equal opportunity?" Yes, each member in those gerrymandered electorates has equal opportunity, the same as in the rotten boroughs in England in the nineteenth century when approximately 10 people could elect members of Parliament.

Mr Stephan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The persistent interjections by the member for Gympie are becoming tedious.

Mr BRADDY: The stage has long since passed when the squattocracy of Queensland was looked to for leading the people of this State, just as the stage has long since passed when the 10 of the aristocracy of England could elect one member of Parliament. The member for Gympie could be informed that they too had equal opportunity, because each of those 10 people had the same right to elect a member to the House of Commons. The few thousand people who elect National Party members in Queensland also have equal opportunity, but the rest of the people in Queensland do not have equality of opportunity with National Party voters. That is a problem that even the honourable member for Gympie should be able to understand.

Let us have a look at some of the figures. The honourable member for Warwick was in the Chamber earlier, but I see he is not any longer. The seat of Warwick is a couple of hours' drive from Brisbane and just down the road from the seats of Lockyer and Toowoomba. There are 12 919 electors only in the seat of Warwick, which is fewer than 13 000.

Mr FitzGerald: What is the State average?

Mr BRADDY: The State average is more than 19 160. Warwick has fewer than 13 000 electors, is a comparatively small geographic area and is only a few hours' drive from Brisbane. What possible reason is there for Warwick to have fewer electors than Toowoomba? The Warwick electorate has 3 610 square kilometres and almost 13 000 voters. The electorate of Lockyer is almost identical in size to Warwick. The honourable member for Lockyer is in the House and interjected previously. His electorate has 3 435 square kilometres and yet has 20 514 electors. Why does Warwick have 7 000 fewer electors?

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr BRADDY: No. Again the honourable member for Lockyer fails to understand. He does not have a gerrymandered seat. His is one of the few seats in Queensland which fits within the average. By comparison, the honourable member for Warwick has a very small electorate—7 000 or 8 000 fewer voters than the honourable member for Toowoomba. There is absolutely no justification in that. These electorates are not far from Brisbane.

Another example is the electorate of Peak Downs. This seat is held by the Minister for Employment, who is also present in the House. This is a most interesting situation. In 1984 the seat of Peak Downs—

Mr Lester interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will control himself.

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BRADDY: In 1984, when the redistribution took place, Peak Downs had 15 012 voters. This is an interesting number and is still below the State average. In 1986 the honourable member for Peak Downs managed to convince the powers that be that the number of voters should be reduced to 9 196. In April 1988 the honourable member had 9 196 electors and, as the honourable member for Wolston previously intimated, the honourable member for Peak Downs found that it was so unfavourable to live with these 9 000 electors that he shifted his residence to Emu Park, which is in a lovely part of the world in the electorate of Broadsound. When he no longer had 15 000 electors to look after, but only 9 000, he decided to live some 400 kilometres outside his electorate.

That is how the National Party uses the principle of equality of access. Everyone in the electorate of Peak Downs has to make an STD call to reach the honourable member. The principle of equality of access is espoused by the National Party, yet it supports the honourable member. None of the members of the National Party have said "Shame" to the honourable member for Peak Downs; the Premier has not castigated him; and the members in the National Party room have not said to him, "Excuse me, Vince, what are you doing living 400 kilometres outside your electorate?" That is what the principle of equality of access means to the National Party.

I will give this House some more wonderful examples of the inconsistency of this so-called equality of access principle. In the Cairns district there are the electorates of Mulgrave and Barron River. The Barron River electorate extends into the northern suburbs of Cairns, has 2 595 square kilometres and over 20 000 voters. The electorate of Mulgrave extends into the southern suburbs of Cairns, has 2 490 square kilometres, which is slightly smaller than Barron River, and has only 15 000 voters.

There is no consistency. All it amounts to is the fact that the members of the National Party have inordinate interests to protect. They have access to an Electoral Commission which does not meet in public and does not publish its submissions. In this way members of the National Party are able to get the boundaries which suit them.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr BRADDY: I say to the member for Lockyer and all other National Party members: we will take them on fairly and squarely out there in the electorate every time on one vote, one value. I remind honourable members that in the last Federal election that was held on one vote, one value—give or take 10 per cent—of the 24 seats contested in this State the Australian Labor Party won 13.

The Australian Electoral Commission receives support from all the political parties in this country. No-one seriously attacks its independence or integrity. However, the same cannot be said for the electoral commission that meets in the smoke-filled rooms of the National Party to arrange the boundaries for the motley crew opposite, who have now been deserted by the former member for South Coast, who has openly admitted that the boundaries are rigged. Of course, we did not have to be told that. We see the member for Peak Downs sitting here every time the House sits; we know his boundaries are rigged. We see the members for Warwick, Condamine and Carnarvon sitting here. Why are their seats not the same size as the seats in Toowoomba? They represent long-settled areas with good facilities. Why are the seats of the Darling Downs rigged so that more and more National Party members can be elected?

Why will National Party members not face us under one vote, one value? It is because, as the Leader of the Opposition says, they are frightened; they are terrified. As they are terrified, they will have to pay the piper. As we move around the State, more and more we hear people in the National Party saying that they believe that they cannot win under one vote, one value. They know that they are in their last days under this rotten, rigged system.

I will now deal with the claim that this proposal means the centralisation of more power in Canberra. If the referendum proposal is passed, Canberra can do exactly nothing about the continuation of the present system. An elector of the State of Queensland can go to the High Court. Canberra cannot fix the boundaries for the seats in Queensland; that remains with this Parliament and with this Government. The members of the National Party know that, and they know that they are telling untruths when they say anything else.

All the Federal Government can do is order an election at large with new boundaries, and that is only if this Government so abandons the rule of law that it does not set up a system of one vote, one value, give or take 10 per cent. Other than for that, the Queensland boundaries must be set in Queensland by the Queensland Government and, if we had the right, by the Queensland Parliament.

The Premier, who is no longer in the House, recently gave an undertaking that, if this referendum question is passed, there will be a fair redistribution in this State before the next election. He said that the wishes of the people would be respected. I challenge the Premier and the Government to give one more undertaking. I challenge them to give an undertaking that they will set up an independent electoral commission that will meet in public, take all its evidence in public and publish all submissions received from all persons and political parties. Will any Government member interject now and agree that that is a fair proposal? I hear not a word. I hear no undertaking that Queensland will have an independent electoral commission so that no longer will the member for Peak Downs be able to reduce his number of voters from 15 000 to 9 000 and then go to live in a fishing village 400 kilometres away from his electors. That is what we get at present. I challenge the National Party to give an undertaking to establish an independent electoral commission. That proposal is greeted with silence, of course.

Another untruth is continually perpetrated by the National Party and, on occasions, by the Liberal Party. Of course, we are never sure which side the Liberal Party will take in debates on this issue. We have Angus Innes supporting one vote, one value; the Lord Mayor, Sallyanne Atkinson, supporting that plus local government; and the rest of them opposing everything. The Liberal Party is in its usual position of not knowing what it is doing from day to day. However, the National Party and the Liberal Party say that this proposal will centralise power in Canberra and they also say that it was all cooked up by the “wicked socialists” in Canberra.

The reality is that a Constitutional Commission was set up and it went round Australia. Three of the five people on the commission were lawyers who had no political affiliation. The other people were a former Labor Prime Minister and a former Liberal Premier of Victoria. The chairman of the commission, Sir Maurice Byers, was a highly respected former Solicitor-General of Australia who served both Labor and coalition Governments in Canberra. That commission—not the Australian Labor Party—has recommended that these matters be put to the Australian people. To suggest that the Labor Party has concocted these proposals out of the blue to give it more power is as untrue as the suggestion that the present system in Queensland of electing people to this House is set up only to give power to the people. The present system, as we know, is set up to give power to the National Party and to keep power out of the hands of the people. Only if this referendum is passed will the people of Queensland have for the first time an opportunity to take power back and to elect a Government which is a Government of the people.

Mr Burreket: Who introduced the system?

Mr BRADY: “Who introduced the system?” is the cry that honourable members have heard from time to time. For the benefit of the member, who believes it to be a momentous interjection, I point out that the system was introduced by the Hanlon Government in 1947. I ask the honourable member: how many people in Queensland had telephones in 1947? How many people had motor vehicles in 1947? How many people had the opportunity to get near their members? How many bitumen roads were there in Queensland in 1947?

The system has changed. I propose to read into *Hansard* a judgment of the United States Supreme Court dealing with the very position when circumstances change in a country. For the benefit of those who think that times do not change, I point out that the judgment in the case of *Reynolds v. Sims*, 377 U.S. 533, states—

“Legislators represent people, not trees or acres. Legislators are elected by voters, not farms or cities or economic interestes. As long as ours is a representative form of government, and our legislatures are those instruments of government elected directly by and directly representative of the people, the right to elect legislators in a free and unimpaired fashion is a bedrock of our political system.

. . .

Citizens, not history or economic interests, cast votes. Considerations of area alone provide an insufficient justification for deviations from the equal-population principle. Again, people, not land or trees or pastures, vote. Modern developments and improvements in transportation and communications make rather hollow, in the mid-1960's, most claims that deviations from population-based representation can validly be based solely on geographic considerations.”

The words of the Supreme Court ring as clearly in Australia and in Queensland in 1988 as they did in the United States in the 1960s. There is only one justification for the National Party to continue this system and oppose the referendum and that is that it consolidates it in power, in power that is invalidly gained and which it is desperately hanging onto at a time when it is losing 19, 20 and 22 per cent of the vote every time a by-election is held. Every political commentator in this State is saying that the National Party will be finished as a Government in its own right at the next election. The National Party is on the skids and it knows it, so it is attempting to hang on more desperately than ever to an unfair, disadvantageous system that elects people to this place with votes that are stolen from the rest of the people of Queensland.

Some members of the National Party try to suggest, as the Leader of the Liberal Party has outlined from time to time in debates conducted around this State, that people who live on farms in this State have a more valid right to vote than anybody else does; that the economic interests that they serve require that they be given a more valuable vote than other Queenslanders. The Labor Party rejected that sort of aristocratic squattocracy notion many years ago. I throw it back in the faces of members of the

National Party and I challenge them to rise in this place and again put forward a proposition that they put forward from time to time, that they actually believe that they are entitled to more valuable votes than anybody else in the State of Queensland.

The powers that are being sought by this referendum relate to the people of Queensland and the people of Australia. My colleagues will deal fully with the local government issue and also with the issues relating to freedom of religion, compensation for property and the allied matters relating thereto. However, all of these powers will only come to the Australian people if the Australian people vote for them. The powers will not be given to Canberra at all.

I will deal briefly with the religious question. One of the propositions that is advanced in relation to the religious question is that if it is passed, it will enable the matter of the funding of independent schools to be reopened. That matter can be reopened at any time because there is already a section in the Constitution which talks about freedom of religion, but the High Court has made it very clear that funding of schools is a matter that deals with education and therefore comes under the education power, not the religion power. There is no logical, rational reason to say that that will be reopened because religious freedom is extended to the States as distinct from the Commonwealth.

If anyone wishes to raise the matter with the High Court again, they can already do so because there is already a relevant section in the Constitution. So, amending the Constitution to extend to the States the same position as applies to the Commonwealth does not affect one iota the High Court's powers. I repeat that it was stated in the DOGS case that funding of independent schools relates to education matters, not matters of religion. Matters of religion are ancillary——

Time expired.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the member for Sherwood.

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Leader of the Liberal Party) (4.45 p.m.): Mr Speaker——

Mr Booth: Who's going to win South Coast?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have called the member for Sherwood. If members keep quiet, we may hear what he has to say.

Mr INNES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I did not really mind taking the interjection. I would just ask the member for Warwick to contain his enthusiasm and to wait and see. I hear that the news improves by every minute. I will deal further with the comments made by the honourable member for Warwick a little later in my speech.

There is a problem with Standing Orders. The Liberal Party wishes to move an amendment to the motion to call for a "No" to questions 1, 3 and 4 and a resounding "Yes" to question 2, but owing to the provisions of Standing Order 94 it appears that because the Leader of the Opposition was the first to receive the call, and because his motion proposes a deletion of words, if that amendment is rejected and the House resolves that the original words stand part of the question, nobody can propose another deletion or amendment based upon a deletion. That seems to me to be an unfortunate consequence of the Standing Orders. Whatever deficiency it was designed to correct, it stops a situation in which people might well vote against an amendment that they find totally offensive but might vote for an amendment that is less offensive. The Liberal Party might well be prevented from moving the amendment which it wished to propose and which is specifically in line with its views.

I turn now to the issues. I shall deal very briefly with the first question. Obviously, fair elections is the issue that takes up a deal of time and enthusiasm of members of the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party is absolutely opposed to the first question. The Queensland members of the Liberal Party are consistent with their Federal colleagues

on that issue. We are against it not merely because the majority of us are against parliamentary terms being increased from three to four years. It is the hidden agenda in that proposal to which the Liberal Party objects. The hidden consequence is very clear. The whole Senate will be taken to the people at the same time as the House of Representatives. The proposal is designed by a party that believes in centralising power to give the Prime Minister increased power and to reduce the power of the States' House. There is no question about that. That is done by putting the Senate in fear of the Prime Minister and of the short-term consequences of an immediate election.

I point out to the members of this House and to people who read *Hansard* that in all Upper Houses in Australia, in every House of review, the voting system in the Upper House is different from that in the Lower House. It secures or reinforces their sense of independence. It is designed deliberately.

In New South Wales, that period is still 12 years. New South Wales does not find the principle of two times four to be totally unacceptable.

The other consequence, which is the more deliberate consequence intended by the Prime Minister and Mr Bowen in their careful sifting, accepting and rejecting of the possible amendments for the referendum questions—and it was done before the recommendations of the commission were available—is that by taking 12 senators to the people at the same time the quota for the election of a senator is reduced from 16 per cent to 8 per cent. Thereby, it ensures that those who are voted for partly in protest or deliberately in protest against the lot—the ratbag minorities, the confused minorities or the ultimate political harlots, the Democrats—can always get a quota. They can get 8 per cent. They cannot get above 10 per cent; and they certainly cannot get 16 per cent. The Nuclear Disarmament Party is another example.

The history of the Upper House is that the Labor Party has not enjoyed a majority. The Liberal and National Parties have usually together enjoyed a majority, except with the entrenchment of the consequence of double dissolutions—the election of minor parties that can be bought and sold for personal staff and other favours, just like they were by the Queensland Government in South Coast.

The Government can manipulate those minor parties. Although it can never obtain a majority—or it fears that it cannot obtain a majority—the Government has found that those minor parties are such political cheapskates that it can always throw in some sort of an inducement—financial, personal or topical—in order to obtain their votes. That is the hidden agenda, and that is why the Queensland Liberal Party opposes the first question as strongly as its Federal colleagues do.

The Liberal Party strongly opposes the fourth question. There is absolutely no problem with freedom of religion in this country. There is no problem with trial by jury, and there is no significant problem with fair compensation for the acquisition of property.

I turn firstly to freedom of religion. At the moment there is absolutely no trammel on people's freedom to pursue whatever religion they choose. Australia is one of the most religiously tolerant countries on the face of this earth. When that issue is included in the Constitution, by design the possibility of American-style consequences is set in train.

America's freedom was born out of repression. People had to right the wrongs by force of arms. Australia has experienced no such problem. The lesson has been learned in the United States of America. The insertion of freedom of religion into the Constitution has been used by militant atheists—the sorts of people who make up the DOGS organisations of this world—as a lever to impose their views on the rest of society. Also, obsessive, narrow-minded sects have attempted to impose their views on the rest of the world; whether it be the abolition of Christmas or the observance of prayers in our schools or in Parliament. That sort of thing could be the subject of litigation. It certainly instigated litigation in the United States.

Sir William Knox: It abolished the prayer in the House of Representatives. Did you know that?

Mr INNES: That is right. The prayer has been abolished in the House of Representatives.

That is on the agenda for those people who wish to be intolerant as opposed to tolerant. That is why the Liberal Party believes that there is no need for the inclusion of the freedom of religion question. When there is no need, the Liberal Party suspects the motives. Such provisions have been enforced overseas and the Liberal Party is opposed to that provision.

The local government question involves a Trojan Horse theory. Since the seventies the Labor Government has committed itself to regionalism and the emasculation of the States and has attempted, by strings-attached funding or proposed regions as opposed to the States, to destroy the State structure. The Liberal Party believes that the States have served the nation well.

I do not believe that Sir Harry Gibbs' opinion was available when some of our local government colleagues made up their minds on this issue. Sir Harry Gibbs has said that, no matter how neutral the terms of that proposal appear and how much tokenism is involved, his experience on the High Court of Australia and his observation of the changing trends over the years suggests that it will be used by the central Government in an attempt to obtain greater powers over local government and to emasculate the States.

Recently I was told that Commonwealth public servants who work in Aboriginal communities in Cape York have said in open company including both State Government and other officials that, after the passing of this constitutional amendment referendum, by way of direct funding from Canberra more will be able to be done about the funding problems that have resulted from the granting of deeds of grant in trust.

Leaving aside the merits of that proposal, the belief is being expressed by Commonwealth public servants that there is a consequence of the passing of that legislation which is relevant to an extension of Commonwealth powers.

I now return to the matter of fair elections.

Mr Randell: What are you espousing? "Yes" or "No"?

Mr INNES: We in the Liberal Party are espousing "No".

On polling day no member of this parliamentary party will be found handing out—

Mr Hayward interjected.

Mr INNES: No. I am the chairman of the Liberal Party "Yes" campaign. On election day the members of my parliamentary team will hand out a straightforward ticket—"No", "Yes", "No", "No". There will be no asterisks. I heard the Leader of the Opposition talk about asterisks, those little typographical stars. Let me say that the Labor star is definitely on the wane. I heard him talking about television advertising. I find it abhorrent that this minority Government is spending the tax-payers' money of the majority to sell its politically motivated campaign on television, in the air, on the ground and in letter-boxes. Let me say that I take some comfort from the fact that Mr Goss had half a million dollars spent on himself and he lost 8 per cent of the vote.

Matters of accuracy and honesty are heard with regular chorus from the Leader of the Opposition. Yesterday he said that the Labor Party spent a fifth of the amount that the Liberal Party spent on the South Coast by-election. I cannot recall any television advertising being used by the Liberal Party during that by-election run-up, but I can certainly recall the Opposition's advertising. I can recall passing the trucks—those which now carry the "No", "No", "No", "No" State Government advertising—displaying the Grecian profile of Mr Wayne Goss, the new force in Labor politics.

While I am speaking about the moral purity account sheet, I recall that the only Minister presently serving time in gaol in Australia for corruption is a Labor Minister, namely, Mr Jackson, the former Minister for Corrective Services in New South Wales. While I am on that subject, I understand that there has been a \$50,000 touch-up for the ALP in donations to date. I suppose that probably is in question and terrible hearsay evidence.

I can recall another former Labor leader, who, when the wood was dropped on him and when royal commission evidence became available, had to confess to receiving \$15,000 from the New South Wales poker machine lobby, which was supposed to be associated with corruption. I understand that somebody else was also mentioned today at the Fitzgerald inquiry.

If moral purity is to be considered, let us have a look at the Labor Party's regular brushes with the dark side of politics. In relation to the dark side of politics, I mention the advertising which showed the white knight of Queensland politics emerging from the darkness, the tunnels and the sewers, away from those forces of darkness. That is the analogy that the Opposition drew. But leave me out of it. That is the way in which Labor portrayed whatever was going on in this State. What does the Leader of the Opposition do? The first chance he gets, he gives the Labor Party's preferences to the forces of darkness. In fact, it was disguised as an each-way bet, except that the preference to the forces of darkness was put on the left-hand side of the page.

Mr Scott: There wasn't a hidden agenda in that one.

Mr INNES: The hidden agenda was the typical flip-flop of the Labor Party, not knowing whether it should give its preferences to the National Party or the Liberal Party. It was the typical flip-flop that has come with Mr Goss' ascent to the leadership of the party in this State.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr INNES: We caused some problems for our colleagues.

Mr Scott: Where is your new brick?

Mr INNES: The place is waiting for him on my right.

The fair elections issue is a serious issue. The arguments against the referendum are numerous, but let us deal with some of the more prominent arguments involved. The honourable member for Rockhampton, Mr Braddy, innocently, I hope, misrepresented an argument I had been addressing around this State. There is an argument that the ALP conceived, or misbegot, the gerrymander in Queensland and the National Party refined it. People sometimes do not support that argument in public but they certainly do so in private, because I get letters expressing that view.

Mr Scott: You backed it in coalition. The Liberals backed it.

Mr INNES: There was a period when the Liberal Party was involved in the exercise as well.

Mr Scott: You were in there with the strength.

Mr INNES: Mr Cook—I am sorry, I meant Mr Scott. That is a terrible name, so I will call him the honourable member for Cook. My instincts recoil from calling the honourable member Mr "Scot".

The argument goes that the people in the country are worth more than the people in the towns. It can be expressed as bluntly as that, and people will put that argument to us. The argument goes that country people are worth more, do more, are more productive and are more important than people in the towns. That is an argument that I reject. I do not say that country people are any less worthy and I do not say that they are inferior; I do say that we are all dependent upon each other. The person who

consumes the excess grain or beef is as important as the person who produces a little more than subsistence levels. Without consumers, he is nothing. The person who produces superphosphate, the person who carries it out to the properties and the person who carries the grain are all interrelated; all their lives are interrelated. All people are important, and if society is chopped into compartments and if it is said that one group is better than another, the result will be a lopsided society and a lopsided Government. That is where things have gone wrong in Queensland.

I wish to quote the words of a previous member, an eminent Queenslander, at the time of the introduction of the Electoral Act. Let us recall his words, because it is worth while doing that in a debate of this type. He said—

“In this legislation the people are given the right of voting, admittedly, but the odds are so greatly against them that to achieve the results they desire is impossible because the predetermined zones and the numbers set out will mean nothing but that the majority will be ruled by the minority.”

Those words were spoken by Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, who was formerly Mr Bjelke-Petersen, the member for Barambah. Those words were accurate and true. They are still true, and the consequences of that legislation, albeit imposed by a different minority, are still being dealt with.

The argument goes that the zonal system compensates for remoteness, distance and for the terror that there might be domination by the south-east corner of the State. However, if we look to that zone that should have most particularly addressed that problem, shall we say—the Western and Far Northern Zone—we find something extremely curious. The seats that are farthest from the dreaded south-east corner are those that are the largest.

The electorate that I accept and concede publicly is the most difficult to service in terms of a party's having its own person on the ground in this State is the electorate of Cook. It starts 2 kilometres from the Papua New Guinea border and contains the whole of the Torres Strait islands. It goes to the Northern Territory border and skirts around the region to the north of Mount Isa. It stretches to a point south of Townsville and skirts the populous Atherton Tableland, but deliberately misses out the more populous communities that could be attached to it. It hits the coast near the Daintree a little to the north of the notorious Wujal Wujal, and it must be one of the most notorious pieces of gerrymandering in the history of the world.

Instead of taking in some more of the population, the boundaries of this electorate deliberately wander round the unpopulated parts of the north in order to create a large and difficult electorate and one that can be served only if one travels by land, sea and air and possibly three different types of boat, aeroplane and vehicle. According to the latest figures, the honourable member for Cook has 12 164 voters.

The second-farthest electorate from Brisbane in that zone is the electorate of Mount Isa, which has 13 500 voters over 44 000 square kilometres of territory. The electorate of Cook has 360 000 square kilometres of land, leaving aside the sea zone. The six other seats in the zone are all closer to Brisbane, and among the smallest are Balonne and Roma with just over 8 000 voters each. Ballone is three hours drive from Brisbane by bitumen road, and Roma is little more than three hours from Brisbane. Attempts were made to change the zone of the electorate of Mount Isa on two or three occasions, and on one occasion it was placed in the Provincial City Zone. The only justification for the establishment of those boundaries is the fact that those two seats of Cook and Mount Isa are not National Party seats. Each seat has belonged to the National Party for a period of only three years. That is the reason why they are so much larger, despite the obvious difficulties and their remoteness from the dreaded south-east corner of the State.

There is an extraordinary situation in regard to the electorate of Warwick. This electorate contains 3 000 square kilometres but has fewer voters than the electorate of Mount Isa, which contains 44 000 square kilometres and is situated approximately 1 100 kilometres from Brisbane. Mount Isa has only 1 000 more electors than Warwick. There

is absolutely no explanation for this. The Country Zone is the real heart of the gerrymander, which carefully divorces every provincial centre of population from its immediate surrounds. It salamanders; it moves down from the far north to the south of the State, carefully skirting all populated areas in order to arrange that the people working in the cane-fields will live in a different zone and have a different population base to their electorate from the people who work in the cane-mills. This system is designed to divide Queensland.

The electorate of Cairns is as far over quota as my own seat of Sherwood, and so are the seats of the cities in between. Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Mackay, Bundaberg and Maryborough all have upwards of 20 000 voters.

One of the practical consequences of this gerrymander is in terms of power and influence on power. I am talking about the rights of people who pay their taxes to have an equal say in the spending of those taxes and the rights of people—not trees, cows or sheep—who are affected by laws to have an input into the passing of laws which affect them. That is why there should be equality. However, the great populations of Cairns, Townsville, Mount Isa, Mackay, Ayr, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Maryborough, Gympie, Ipswich and Toowoomba are all unrepresented in the Cabinet of this Government. Three-quarters of this State is not represented in the Cabinet of Queensland.

If one travels up to the favoured area to the west of the Darling Downs, one finds back-to-back and wall-to-wall Ministers. The Ministers are neighbour-by-neighbour and grazier after grazier—Balonne, Carnarvon, Roma, Condamine, Peak Downs, Auburn, Gregory, Flinders and Mirani. I am not saying for one moment that there should not be graziers in the Queensland Cabinet, because there should. However, the Ministers should not all be graziers; nor should they be lawyers. They should be a reflection of the diversity of people in this State. Because they are people with very special interests who are stacked up in such numbers, one cannot get policemen appointed to police stations in suburbia. If a person's homestead is never broken into because it is 10 kilometres from the front gate, he is not concerned about a lack of policemen, but that is a great problem in the suburbs of the towns and cities of this State. The distorted decision-making is caused by the distorted composition and reflection of power in this State. In Queensland, 10 Ministers represent a total of 100 000 electors.

I hope what I am about to say is not the kiss of death. Firstly, I must proclaim that I have had no conversation with the member for Warwick since the House last sat. One of the consequences of redrawing the boundaries could perhaps be that the seat of Warwick would extend south to include Stanthorpe. Provided the right bloke got up, there would be a distinct improvement in the Cabinet of Queensland. It could be very beneficial to have the right member of Parliament in a country electorate twice as big as it presently is.

At least in the days of the coalition the party room reflected the views of a majority of Queenslanders. Sure, on many occasions there were fights. Honourable members will recall the use of terms such as the disruptive Liberals, the rebellious Liberals and the troublesome Liberals and the fights over the sorts of things now under debate. But at least there was some reflection of the views of other parts of the State and of people with different backgrounds.

Mr Braddy: They always won.

Mr INNES: They did not always win.

Mr Gygar: You saw what they did. You should have seen what we stopped.

Mr INNES: That is nearer to the truth.

The gerrymander now gives power to people who represent a little more than one-third of the first preference of the people in this State. I have heard the argument that this is the result on a two-party preferred basis. Today Queensland does not have a two-party preferred system and the National and Liberal Parties cannot be added together. They are different parties. In the electorate of South Coast, a two-party preferred system

refers to the Labor Party and the National Party. The Liberal Party is happy to take on the Labor Party and the National Party. We are happy that the socialists get together—agrarian and pure. A return to accountable, private enterprise government reflecting the standards and values of all the people of this State depends upon the abolition of the gerrymander.

The other argument advanced by Government members is that members of the Labor Party are dreadful people. I happen to agree with that. The argument is: if the gerrymander is abolished, the Labor Party will come to power. That is advanced to try to frighten non-Labor voters, but a correct analysis of all the voting figures in this State since 1957 shows that, quite rightly and quite justifiably, the Labor Party would never have won in open company. People should dismiss that proposition from their minds.

My argument is unusual in that it has both principle and pragmatism absolutely on the side of a fair redistribution, and the people of this State should know it. It is right in principle and it is right in practice.

If the proposal was that the Federal Parliament and the Australian Electoral Commission drew the boundaries, we would not have supported it. This proposed constitutional change will provide the bench-mark to be observed by all States and the Commonwealth. It will be a bench-mark for the conduct of all elections.

Time expired.

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (5.15 p.m.): As the Premier indicated earlier, it is my job to outline what the loss of seats under the fair elections proposal means. Firstly, the people of this State are shortly to be confronted with a series of gently worded questions in a referendum that has the capacity to turn not only the State, but the nation, back through generations of blood, sweat and tears and create a centralist monster that would make the most ardent supporter of socialism cry with joy as though the perfect baby were born. These devious and subtly worded referendum questions are not really about anything other than power in the ultimate sense. As the Premier and the Attorney-General have stated, there should be no more power to Canberra.

When speaking on parliamentary terms, Professor Geoffrey Blainey said—

“This proposal to change the Constitution is based on the opposite idea that the people cannot be trusted to assess what is in their Nation’s best interest—they can’t be expected to look beyond the end of their noses.

It is a barely disguised insult to the Australian people. I doubt they will accept it.”

With the referendum comes a whole pack of scavengers, like buzzards circling what they perceive to be a dying horse. They are circling and gleefully anticipating that they will shortly be able to feed on a carcass that otherwise could not be delivered by fair and reasonable means.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bowen and the member for Salisbury will cease their constant interjecting.

Mr STONEMAN: The due processes of democracy and statutes have stood the test of time since the States fathered the Commonwealth 88 years ago. These scavengers are not thinking about the future of this great State. They are not thinking about the thousands of less fortunate, more isolated Queenslanders who have played and are playing a continuing and important role in the maintenance and development of this State. They are not thinking about the fettlers in the lonely railway camps; the station hands in the stock camps; the wives of men in isolated circumstances supporting their mates and teaching their children; the public servants who serve this State so well right across its horizons and often in difficult circumstances; the primary producers who produce so much of our wealth for, sadly, an often meagre and negative return; the mining settlements; or the Aboriginal and Islander people of the gulf, peninsula and

Torres Strait. They are merely thinking of their own selfish and narrowly perceived political ends.

As a person who is proud to have lived in and worked over a wide area of the State of Queensland and who can claim to have a better than average working knowledge of the place, its people and its problems, I am appalled at the enormity of what could happen in the event of the referendum being affirmative on any question, let alone the most basic: the right of a State to determine its own electoral processes.

I cite a recent visitor to this State who, as far as I am aware, has no axe to grind one way or the other in terms of Australian political allegiance. Professor David Elkin, the chairman of the Department of Political Science at the University of Columbia in Canada, said on ABC radio—

“The thing I find most intriguing about this whole one vote one value issue is the very fact that its happening. Because the idea in Canada that the Federal Government would tell the State Government how to run their election, would be just unthinkable. There would be such a human cry and they would take the Government to court and the court would say, no you can't do that.

We worry about gerrymandering, but not quite so much (as Australia) about one vote-one value.”

In the light of such an eloquent and spontaneous comment on the forthcoming referendum, it is worth while identifying this pack of jackals; this mangy group of baying hounds; this group of parasites sneaking in under the skirts of democracy; these vultures circling the staggering body of democracy in the name of fair and democratic processes and, more particularly, fair elections. It is worth identifying them so that history, and people such as Professor David Elkin, may better understand the narrow vision that exists here in this very State and within the political system that this country has bred and which countries such as Canada would not tolerate in any shape or form.

Naturally, there are the clearly identifiable centralists—the Federal members of the Australian Labor Party—who are closeted in the cotton wool cocoon called Canberra. They and their State-based lackeys are unashamedly seeking to remove the word “State” from the Constitution by making it a toothless tiger, by in fact turning on the parent of the Commonwealth as we know it for purposes that are so thinly veiled as to be arrogant and contemptuous of the people whom they purport to protect from the evil States—those are the words of members of the Labor Party—which, I might note, have evolved specific processes to accommodate the social needs and development requirements that have served this country so well and for which so many have laid down their lives in times of conflict.

Those evil States include Western Australia, which has a six-zone, two-quota electoral system that just this year has been re-endorsed by the Labor Party Government of that State, and Tasmania, a small and isolated State that has developed the Hare-Clarke electoral system, which has been supported down through the years by a succession of Governments of differing political views, but nevertheless Governments that first and foremost have the interests of the State uppermost in mind.

Of course, there is also Queensland, which has a zonal system of electoral redistribution that has nurtured the growth of the most vibrant and productive State in the nation. The system was introduced by a former Labor Premier, Ned Hanlon, back in 1949, and it has generally been supported by decent-thinking and progressive people down through the years until the advent of the scavenger mentality that now pervades the forces of opposition in the forms of Labor, Liberal and the Australian Democrats. What a crew!

Ned Hanlon, Ben Chifley, John Curtin and others who once stood proudly for the nation in the first instance, Labor in the second instance and democracy in the true sense above all must be turning in their graves. Not only is this group demonstrably anti-Queensland and anti-decentralisation but also it comprises the worst type of scavenger. The members of the group are political opportunists seeking to use academic arguments

to bamboozle the community with motherhood statements, on the one hand, and deception, on the other hand.

I will examine briefly some of the players in this murky, shadowy group as they circle the prey called "States' rights" and expose them for what they truly are. In the history of this nation there has never been a deceitful party within the sphere of politics to match the Australian Democrats. This illegitimate child of a bent Liberal father in the form of Don Chipp has schemed, connived and sold itself to the highest bidder on the back streets of politics so often that it must surely lay claim to being the ultimate prostitute of politics.

Now the person who sits in Canberra as this State's representative—Senator Macklin—is seeking to tear down the right of his home State to determine a basic right. Here is a man wandering the halls of power, seeking to destroy the word that forms part of his party's name—"democracy". Here is a man who is elected under a system that is exactly the same in intent as the Queensland four-zonal system, with a primary vote of only approximately 4 per cent and the scavenged leftovers of the preferential system making up the balance of his quota, blatantly seeking to destroy the rights of his own State for motives that are selfish in the extreme.

This man has been a party to a deal of deceit that assures him of almost perpetual election because of the proposal contained deviously within question No. 1, that every Federal election in effect becomes a double dissolution and thereby halves the vote quota required to enable him to continue to prostitute the electoral system.

Is Michael Macklin telling the people of this State that he is elected under a system that recognises the need to have a balance within the Senate that is the opposite of the much touted one vote, one value myth?

In Queensland, almost 140 000 votes currently elect a senator, while in New South Wales a senator has to gain 297 000 votes. In Tasmania only 25 000 votes are required. Yet this paragon of virtue has the gall to suggest that the four-zonal system is somehow unique and without parallel in the world of democratic government.

The other sad but equally devastating reflection on the processes of political deceit is the direction being taken by the Liberal Party in Queensland. Not only is it on a different course from its Federal counterpart but also it has about four different directions within its factions. There are only two streams of consistency within this attitude—

- (1) their increasing alliance with the trendy Left Wing politics; and
- (2) their frenzied desire to destroy the National Party.

This latter facet of their lust makes even the Labor Party seem amateur. I congratulate those gentlemen.

The members of the Liberal Party in this State are at direct odds with their Federal counterparts. They are ignoring the overriding constitutional implications relating to their support of question No. 2 because of that unseemly and opportunistic desire to overcome policy and performance deficiencies via constitutional hijacking.

One Liberal member—he is not in the Chamber—who will be a oncer if this question is affirmative is the member for Mount Isa, Mr Beard. Here we have a man representing an area in the extreme north-west of Queensland, standing up and saying, in effect, "The people of Mount Isa are overrepresented." Mr Beard says that they should have less access to their member.

Mr Austin: He is going to hand out our how-to-vote cards.

Mr STONEMAN: Mr Austin is right. I understand that that is why the member for Mount Isa was absent from the Chamber during the whole of his leader's speech and the entire debate on this matter.

The member for Mount Isa said—

"They should have their electorate increased in size by almost 1 000 per cent. They do not deserve to have recognition of their isolation."

Let me put those words in context. In an interview with Quentin Dempster on ABC radio immediately after his election as Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr Beard said—

“I am quite happy to buy the 19 000 standard vote with the 10 per cent tolerancy . . .”

The fact of the matter is that under the requirements of the Bill that the Liberal Party is supporting, the people of Mount Isa will have many more than 19 000 in their electorate because of the relatively low growth rate in western Queensland and the need to load low growth areas in favour of high growth areas on the coastal fringe. This is exactly the opposite of the public statements made by people, such as the member for Mount Isa, when they visit northern and western Queensland. It is the basis of the Labor gerrymander that they so fervently support.

I quote another independent source, Professor Richard Engstrom. Honourable members would think that the honourable member for Rockhampton would know something about the United States system. Speaking about gerrymanders, Professor Richard Engstrom said—

“One-person, one-vote protects only the weight of an individual’s vote. It has nothing to do with the weight of a group’s strength.

With the aid of a computer, vastly different boundaries which all satisfy the one-person, one-vote principle could be drawn, and they would all have different political consequences.”

Regardless of how supporters of this cleverly worded question on so-called fair elections put it, the fact of the matter is that its proponents are simply hoodwinking the people of Australia and selling out the many thousands in rural and remote areas to whom this nation owes a huge debt. The removal of a small measure of political balance that compensates for less access to normal and expected service, is in fact a further coffin-nail for decentralisation.

So we have the Federal Liberal Party opposing all four questions in solidarity with the Federal coalition and all the other conservative parties across the nation, with the sole exception of the Queensland Liberal Party. The Queensland Liberal Party parliamentary wing is saying, “No”, “Yes”, “No”, “No”. The Queensland Liberal Party wing is saying, “No”, “Yes” or “No”, “No”, “No.”. The Brisbane City Council is saying, “No”, “Yes”, “Yes”, “No”. The Liberal Party members of the Townsville City Council, who fortunately know what a bit of distance is, are saying, “All of you vote ‘No’, ‘No’, ‘No’, ‘No’.”

Mr Austin: What is the member for Mount Isa saying?

Mr STONEMAN: The member for Mount Isa is trying to be invisible. He is not in the Chamber. But unofficially he is trying to shout in a terrified whisper, “No”, “No”, “No”, “No”.

An honourable member: Here he is.

Mr STONEMAN: The invisible man!

One wonders what the northern Liberal Party members in the party sense really think of the direction that the Liberal Party is taking. There can be no doubt about the thoughts of the Federal Liberal Party. It was clearly enunciated by Senator David MacGibbon in Townsville on 18 August, when, referring to the Queensland Liberals, he said—

“I think they have made an error of judgment.”

Whacko! He continued—

“It certainly would have been preferable if they had gone into the question in a little bit more detail and not gone off on that.”

Mr Henderson: Which error of judgment? Making Angus leader, or not?

Mr STONEMAN: That was just one of a multitude of errors.

What an unbelievable indictment that is on the Liberal Party in Queensland. No-one should need further proof of the Liberal Party's lurch to the Left when even its own Federal colleagues are condemning it in the public forums of this country.

I wonder how many people are aware that since the Liberal Party chose Mr Innes as its leader, it has supported this Government in only 37 per cent of the formal votes in this House and has opposed it in an astounding 63 per cent of them.

Mr SHERLOCK: I rise to a point of order. That statement is absolutely incorrect. I take exception to it and ask that it be withdrawn.

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

Mr STONEMAN: Old hands such as the members for Nundah, Yeronga and Moggill must wonder what has happened to that once responsible party. At least the unequivocal supporters of more power to Canberra, namely, the Labor Party across Australia, are able to be clearly identified for what they really are.

It is worth examining in a little more detail the effect of the second question on those people who reside outside the populous south-eastern corner of the State. It is also worth recording that, whereas the politicians of the south-east will undoubtedly gain even more power, people will become the political pawns in the centralist two-step and will not notice any worthwhile increase in parliamentary representation. They will not see a dramatic change in the size of their electorates and will see no increase in opportunities for their children. In fact, the reverse will be the case, because the engine that is driving this State and, in particular, the more isolated and distant regions, will gradually starve because of grossly inadequate parliamentary representation that will be forced on them by this insidious and blatant misuse of the Constitution.

A more dramatic change will be experienced by areas to the north and west of the State. As a perfect example, I refer once again to Mount Isa. Under the fair elections criteria that seat will increase in voter numbers by over 50 per cent.

Mr Beard: It will not. It will go to 17 000 from 13 000.

Mr STONEMAN: I ask the honourable member for Mount Isa to remain in the House long enough to learn why his statement is wrong.

The Mount Isa electorate will increase in size by a minimum of 900 per cent. I challenge Mr Beard to offer graphic proof that I am wrong. On my calculations, the Mount Isa electorate will increase from just over 40 000 square kilometres to a massive 413 500 square kilometres.

The trigger factors within the Bill, which is supported by the Liberal Party and Mr Beard, lay down quite clearly that low-growth divisions must be over quota. Therefore, I believe that my figures are most conservative. The tragedy is that the referendum proposals are designed to quite deliberately depress enterprise, exploration and reward and lessen the basic freedoms that this country has hitherto fought to preserve.

Some care must be exercised when considering our coastal electorates. Contrary to popular belief, which is given credence by the misinformation that is being circulated by the Labor Party, the Liberal Party and the Democrats, the coastal areas of Queensland will lose parliamentary representation.

Claims have been made that the areas surrounding Townsville and Cairns will gain seats. That is absolutely impossible and cannot be sustained by any reasonable study of the facts. The western seats will balloon enormously, which will have the effect of tipping into the ocean a number of seats that identify with the coastal belt.

Both the Labor and Liberal Parties claim that an additional seat will be created in the Townsville region. A grouping of the local authority areas of Townsville, Thuringowa, Burdekin and Hinchinbrook that now encompass the hearts of five State electorates reveals a total enrolment of 82 248 voters, which represents 4.8 quotas based on current

enrolments where a quota is 19 168. For the benefit of those who are unaware, I point out that a fair electoral quota is obtained by simply dividing the number of electorates—89—into the number of voters, currently 1 705 925. This results in a total of 19 168 emerging, with a 10 per cent tolerance either way giving a low figure of 17 251 and a high figure of 21 084.

Mr Beard interjected.

Mr STONEMAN: I will now refer to Mr Beard's little problem.

Mr Beard: I will go to 17 000.

Mr STONEMAN: Mr Beard said that he will go to 17 000. Let me say that if the requirement is that all seats shall be as near to the average number as possible, after three years and six months from any redistribution, it follows that low-growth seats such as Mount Isa will have nearer to 21 000 voters while high-growth areas such as Thuringowa will contain closer to 17 250. Otherwise, there would have to be a continuing series of redistributions, simply because the Act that the honourable member is supporting specifies that if more than one-third of the seats or divisions are either above or below the 10 per cent factor for two consecutive months, there shall be a redistribution forthwith.

I totally rebut what Mr Beard is saying. If total and positive proof is required by any doubters, they should look at the enrolment attached to the Federal seat of Kennedy in 1984 when it was given 5 per cent over quota numbers in a redistribution. That it was not higher can easily be explained by the fact that Kennedy also contains high-growth areas on the coast and Atherton Tableland.

In conclusion I return to the matter of the Townsville area.

Mr Gygar: Hurrah!

Mr STONEMAN: It will be noted that honourable members opposite have not liked one little bit of this.

The lower-growth areas of Hinchinbrook and Burdekin would compensate for Thuringowa and Townsville and the area would have exactly the same number of seats, with one vital difference: community of interest would be a thing of the past. Under those terms, it is impossible for a member to relate to the socio-economic needs of his or her electorate. How can oil and water be mixed? To say that one is representing people per se and not their vocations is ridiculous. Representation is about people, things, places, the economy, job creation, social issues, education and factors that are as variable as humanity itself.

If any further proof is needed of the Federal Government's duplicity in this instance, one should turn to the man who is responsible for it—Lionel Bowen, the Deputy Prime Minister of this nation. Throughout Queensland in the media he had the unmitigated gall to say that each of the three seats of northern and western Queensland, that is, Leichhardt, Kennedy and Maranoa, contains approximately 72 000 voters. If the quota were 18 000, north Queensland would have 12 seats. That is not bad. Apparently, Lionel Bowen does not know that Maranoa follows the New South Wales border, comes into Toowoomba, up to Kennedy and, in some instances, right out to the coast. If we took Mr Bowen's word for it and looked at the size and area of those Federal seats, it would be discovered that those Federal seats now contain almost 20 State seats. The Deputy Prime Minister of Australia is using false figures to try to hoodwink people but in fact admitting that northern and western Queensland would lose eight seats.

Mr Braddy: What about Herbert? You talk about untruths. Why did you leave Herbert out?

Mr STONEMAN: I take the interjection. The Deputy Prime Minister was specific. He said the three Federal divisions of Leichhardt, Kennedy and Maranoa. That is on record. I have the transcript in my case.

Finally, Mr Speaker, for the benefit of honourable members, I would like to table various data on electoral representation in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and Western Australia. Earlier today, the honourable member for Rockhampton indicated that the variations reported in the research undertaken by this Government in relation to the United States were incorrect. I therefore table these documents with your permission, Mr Speaker. I urge the people in this State and in this nation to make sure on 3 September they say, "No", "No", "No", "No".

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

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Leader of the House) (5.42 p.m.): I move—

"That the question be now put."

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 45

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

NOES, 37

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

PAIR:

Chapman

Hamill

Resolved in the affirmative. .

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 45		NOES, 37	
Ahern	Lingard	Ardill	Scott
Alison	Littleproud	Beanland	Sherlock
Austin	McCauley	Beard	Smith
Berghofer	McKechnie	Braddy	Smyth
Booth	McPhie	Burns	Underwood
Borbidge	Menzel	Campbell	Vaughan
Burreket	Muntz	Casey	Warburton
Clauson	Neal	Comben	Warner
Cooper	Nelson	De Lacy	Wells
Elliott	Newton	Eaton	White
Fraser	Perrett	Gibbs, R. J.	Yewdale
Gately	Randell	Goss	
Gibbs, I. J.	Row	Gygar	
Gilmore	Sherrin	Hayward	
Glasson	Simpson	Innes	
Gunn	Slack	Knox	
Harper	Stoneman	Lee	
Harvey	Tenni	Lickiss	
Henderson	Veivers	McElligott	
Hinton		Mackenroth	
Hobbs		McLean	
Hynd	<i>Tellers:</i>	Milliner	<i>Tellers:</i>
Katter	FitzGerald	Palaszczuk	Davis
Lester	Stephan	Schuntner	Prest
	PAIR:		
	Chapman		Hamill

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

AYES, 45		NOES, 37	
Ahern	Lingard	Ardill	Scott
Alison	Littleproud	Beanland	Sherlock
Austin	McCauley	Beard	Smith
Berghofer	McKechnie	Braddy	Smyth
Booth	McPhie	Burns	Underwood
Borbidge	Menzel	Campbell	Vaughan
Burreket	Muntz	Casey	Warburton
Clauson	Neal	Comben	Warner
Cooper	Nelson	De Lacy	Wells
Elliott	Newton	Eaton	White
Fraser	Perrett	Gibbs, R. J.	Yewdale
Gately	Randell	Goss	
Gibbs, I. J.	Row	Gygar	
Gilmore	Sherrin	Hayward	
Glasson	Simpson	Innes	
Gunn	Slack	Knox	
Harper	Stoneman	Lee	
Harvey	Tenni	Lickiss	
Henderson	Veivers	McElligott	
Hinton		Mackenroth	
Hobbs		McLean	
Hynd	<i>Tellers:</i>	Milliner	<i>Tellers:</i>
Katter	FitzGerald	Palaszczuk	Davis
Lester	Stephan	Schuntner	Prest
	PAIR:		
	Chapman		Hamill

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr SPEAKER: At 7.30 p.m., we will be joined in the Chamber by the Right Honourable Bernard Weatherill, Speaker of the House of Commons. It would be appropriate if all members were present.

Sitting suspended from 5.57 to 7.30 p.m.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

Right Honourable B. Weatherill, PC

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, it is my privilege and honour to introduce to you and ask you to join in welcoming to the Queensland Parliament the Speaker of the British House of Commons, the Right Honourable Bernard Weatherill, PC.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Whereupon Mr Weatherill was seated on the dais.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

1988 Federal Budget

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Minister for Finance and Minister Assisting the Premier and Treasurer) (7.31 p.m.), by leave: Honourable members should be alerted to the real Federal Budget brought down last night——

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr AUSTIN: I urge all honourable members and, through them, the tax-paying public—and I think that includes the honourable member for Wolston—to look beyond the Budget's false appeal to see how they are in fact paying a heavy price for vague promises which may prove meaningless.

At a superficial level, a Budget surplus of \$5.5 billion sounds impressive; however, this surplus is being achieved by a higher than ever tax burden and funding cuts to the States. This is no triumph of good management. This is not a triumph for "bringing home the bacon", as Mr Keating says. This is more mere luck and a combination of booming commodity prices and tax-bracket creep, or fiscal drag.

The main source of the Budget surplus last year and again this year is the tax bonanza. While total expenditure in 1988-89 will increase only by about 4 per cent in money terms, revenue collections from pay-as-you-earn tax-payers will rise by about 14 per cent.

Since the Hawke/Keating Government came to power in 1982-83, tax revenue has virtually doubled. This is despite the hollow cuts offered two years ago. A tax-payer on average weekly earnings and with a dependent spouse will pay an average tax rate of almost 25c in the dollar this year. That is more than one-third higher than the average tax rate of about 18c in the dollar paid in February 1983. This means that the average tax-payer is losing an extra \$36 every week in tax.

I note that nothing is heard from our colleagues on the opposite side of the House, who are supposed to be supporting the workers of the community. Members of the Opposition sit idly by while their Federal colleagues rip \$36 off the ordinary workers——

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr AUSTIN: I have heard the honourable member for Wolston say in this House, "I stand for the ordinary worker." In fact, I thought I heard him say when he was going to run for endorsement for the seat of Ipswich——

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Oxley.

Mr AUSTIN: Oxley, yes. He said, "I will stand for the ordinary worker. We do not want any academics." His colleagues down in Canberra have ripped \$36 a week off the ordinary worker, and what have honourable members heard from the member for Wolston? Not a thing! Dead silence!

It is estimated that tax-bracket creep will yield the Commonwealth Government a windfall increase in revenue of more than \$2 billion in 1988-89 alone. Mr Keating wants to keep this money in his own hands rather than leaving it in the hands of the taxpayer so that he can offer electorally attractive tax cuts next financial year. That is a whole year away. Mr Keating will only be handing back to tax-payers the money that he has acquired——

Mr De Lacy: Do you drink light beer?

Mr AUSTIN: I will come to that in a moment.

As I was saying, Mr Keating will only be handing back to tax-payers the money that he has acquired under false pretences—money that rightfully belongs to the tax-payers.

The Federal Government is by far the biggest-taxing Government in the history of this nation. Not only does income tax have an inbuilt and undeclared growth factor in bracket creep but also there are now more taxes than ever before. There is a fringe benefits tax; a capital gains tax; a prescribed payments tax; a tax on lump-sum superannuation payments; a tax on superannuation funds; and now a graduate tax.

The Commonwealth has continued to apply double standards in regard to expenditure restraint. As in previous years, the Commonwealth imposed severe expenditure restraints on the States at the May Premiers Conference, but has again failed to exercise the same restraint in spending on its own functions. In 1988-89, payments to the States will decline by a total of 4 per cent in real terms. That will cost the States \$1.5 billion when the amount that would have been necessary to compensate for inflation and population growth is considered. Commonwealth spending on its own functions will decline by less than 1 per cent in real terms.

The Commonwealth has again taken the soft option. It is talking big, but dodging the hard but necessary decisions on cutting its own bloated spending. For example, we have heard nothing about the 200 programs which Senator Walsh last year claimed could not be justified on the grounds of social justice, equity or economic efficiency. Those cuts in payments to the States affect the average man in the street, because it means either fewer teachers, nurses and police officers or increased taxes.

Again the Commonwealth has contrived to make the States bear most of the odium of expenditure restraint. We are paying more, but getting less.

The honourable member for Cairns referred to cheaper beer. He would obviously like to provide cheaper beer to his constituents than provide better roads or cheaper petrol. I dare say that he will not be game to go into his electorate and tell his constituents that for every litre of petrol sold the Federal Government is ripping off 35c and giving back only 5c. The honourable member for Cairns said that the people have cheaper beer. That is a disgrace. Fancy offering the people of this country cheaper beer when we cannot afford good roads! For every litre of petrol sold, the Federal Government is ripping off 35c in Federal taxation. The Treasurer, Mr Keating, thinks that he will regain for the Labor Party the so-called ground that he has lost. The trade union movement has said that the Hawke/Keating Government has lost touch with the working man. The Treasurer thinks that he will regain his touch with the working man by giving him cheaper beer. What a joke! The working man needs real assistance in the home and in reducing the cost of operating his motor vehicle. He does not need cheaper beer.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr AUSTIN: We are getting the PR gloss over an unprecedented tax squeeze——

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! One wonders whether some of that liquid has not been too freely consumed. I call the Leader of the House.

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Port Curtis!

Mr AUSTIN: The reduction in price applies only to low-alcohol beer, and I doubt whether during that time my colleagues would have had long enough on low-alcohol beer to——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister to continue with his statement.

Mr AUSTIN: The big cut was on low-alcohol beer.

Underpinning all of Mr Keating's predictions, including the much-promised tax cuts, is a continuance of higher prices for our commodities.

Mr Speaker, I seek leave to table graphs showing the rise in Commonwealth revenue, the modest dip in the Commonwealth's own spending and the enforced downturn in Commonwealth payments to the States.

Mr SPEAKER: And to incorporate them?

Mr AUSTIN: No, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: The Minister can table the graphs. Leave is not required.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents on the table.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Referendum to Alter Constitution

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to report that I have received the following brief written statement from the Leader of the Opposition pursuant to the provision of Standing Order 137—

“Dear Mr. Speaker,

In accordance with Standing Order 137 I propose that the Legislative Assembly discuss the matter of the four referendum questions to be voted on by the people of Queensland on September 3rd.”

Mr Burns: He has never had an original thought in his life.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Lytton! The letter continues—

“I submit that discussion of these four questions constitutes a definite matter of public importance and that this view is supported by all Parties represented in this House. Further, the resumption of sittings today of the Legislative Assembly presents the first available opportunity for discussions to be held by Members on this matter of public importance.

To give a clear focal point to this discussion I propose to specifically move:

‘That this House expresses its support for a “Yes” vote on all four referendum questions.’

Yours faithfully,

Wayne Goss, M.L.A.,
Leader of the Opposition.”

That letter was received in my office at 12.16 p.m. In view of the discussion that took place earlier today, I presume that the matter is now dead.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Public Sector Debt

Mr GOSS: In directing a question to the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to the average annual interest rate of 11.4 per cent on the New South Wales outstanding public sector debt. I ask: what is the average annual interest rate on Queensland's outstanding public sector debt?

Mr AHERN: I do not have the accurate figure in my head and available to me at this time without notice. I will obtain the necessary figure, the comparison, and provide it to the Leader of the Opposition. It is absolutely ridiculous to suggest that I would have here today detailed knowledge of the interest rates on the outstanding debt of the Queensland Government and its statutory authorities. As the Leader of the Opposition should know, in a number of cases the interest rate is floating.

Mr Goss: The annual average.

Mr AHERN: The average annual figure is obviously not something that every Treasurer in this State carries around in his head for announcement. What a nonsense to suggest that I should have it!

All that I can tell honourable members is that the public debt of this State is well managed.

Mr Goss: How do you know it is well managed if you do not know what the interest rate is?

Mr AHERN: Because the reports that are coming to me of comparisons against other States indicate a better management here than interstate. That is the relevant figure.

How do we compare? The answer is that we compare more than favourably. Is there a loss in respect of currency movements here? The answer is that the losses that have been sustained here are less than those that have been sustained in the other States of Australia.

Mr Goss: How do you know? What are the figures?

Mr AHERN: Those figures are contained in the necessary documentation that is tabled in this place from time to time. It is clearly a nonsense to suggest that those figures should be carried around in one's head.

The Queensland Treasury Corporation is bringing a management focus onto the management of this State's debt, which will ensure that investment and borrowings on behalf of this State and its statutory authorities are gained at the best commercial rates possible. The reports of the QTC that I have at the moment indicate that the statutory authorities, which are the clients of the corporation, are well placed because of the way that the program is stacking up. The Government expects to gain half a per cent in savings on future borrowings through the Queensland Treasury Corporation because of the sheer horsepower of the corporation in being able to pull so much borrowing power behind the one organisation here in Queensland. Those are the issues that we, as a State, need to address. The actual figures on the comparisons will be tabled in this House tomorrow.

Public Sector Debt Repayment

Mr GOSS: In directing my second question to the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to last night's positive Federal Budget, in which the Federal Treasurer announced the Government's intention to pay \$6 billion off the public sector component of the national debt, and I ask: as Treasurer, will he be taking any action in the coming State Budget to pay off any part of Queensland's public sector debt? If so, how much?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before the Premier starts—there is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber. The Premier will be heard in silence.

Mr AHERN: This week there will be a debate on the Appropriation Bill in this House, which is the normal place for debates of such a nature to take place. I will be presenting a Financial Statement to the House on 8 September, at which time I will detail those matters and enable a full opportunity to be given to members to debate the issues. There will be a public accounts committee operating in this State and those matters can be fully canvassed.

Mr Goss: You don't know whether you are paying off any debt, either?

Mr AHERN: I intend to answer the honourable member's question at the appropriate time. He has no need to continually interject in this place in order to get his questions answered.

Mr Goss: I made the assumption that you would know what the figures were.

Mr AHERN: There will be absolutely every opportunity during this session of Parliament to fully debate the accounts of this State. I indicate, however, that the borrowing in this State has been entirely responsible.

Mr Goss: You don't even know the interest rate.

Mr AHERN: The book-keeping of this State has been of a highly responsible nature down through the years. In this State, we have not had the sorts of problems that have clearly existed in the other States of Australia, where there has been massive expenditure out of the capital account into the recurrent account.

Mr Burns: How do you know?

Mr AHERN: Because of the independent audit that took place in New South Wales recently. All of the information tabled in this House can be debated here.

Mr Goss: The annual interest rates?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition!

Mr AHERN: The interest rates and all of the issues which will be determined will be fully disclosed in this place. All of the information that is required——

Mr Goss: Will you table the interest rates?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition under Standing Order 123A.

Mr AHERN: The Leader of the Opposition is clearly economically illiterate. He does not read the reports that come to him. The Queensland Government Development Authority reports, which are tabled in this place, contain the necessary interest rate figures that he is asking for tonight.

Mr Goss: Will you table the interest rates?

Mr AHERN: It is true; it has been done, and it is only a question of reading the reports.

The debt of this State has been very well managed and will continue to be well managed. The Financial Statement that will be presented to this House will be the best State Budget of all State Budgets in Australia, without any question at all.

Additional Places for Tertiary Students

Mr FITZGERALD: I direct my first question to the Minister for Education, Youth and Sport, and ask: has the Minister received advice on what Queensland's share will be of the additional 40 000 higher-education places announced last night in the Federal Budget?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: First of all, I refer to the comment made by the Leader of the Opposition regarding the "positive" Budget that was handed down last night. In reality it is in a catch-up situation. Some years ago the percentage of Gross Domestic Product given to education was 1.36 per cent, but under Mr Hawke and Mr Dawkins this figure has shrunk to less than 1 per cent. Owing to the great hue and cry regarding the neglect of tertiary education throughout Australia, the Federal Government has now started to redress the problem and announced last night that an additional 40 000 places at tertiary institutions will be made available over three years. I welcome that.

In addition, I point out that Queensland has played its part in applying pressure to the Federal Government because, as I have repeatedly stated in this House and in the press during the last few months, the percentage allocated to Queensland is well below the 16.6 per cent that Queensland's population represents of the Australian population. Recently my statements have been vindicated by the decision handed down by the steering committee which gave statistics to back up the case put forward by Queensland. Mr Dawkins, the Federal Minister responsible for education, has now acknowledged that Queensland is a special case. I appeal to Mr Dawkins: if he wishes to be fair to Queensland—and he talks equity of opportunity—Queensland should be allocated the 4 000 places that it is currently being denied before the Federal Government begins to allocate these extra 40 000 places around Australia.

I inform the honourable member for Lockyer that at the present time I have no indication as to what exactly Queensland's share of these 40 000 places over three years will be, and I am hoping that something of the order of 25 per cent of those places will be made available this year and that in the years to come Queensland will maintain that figure. If that is the case and if the Federal Government acknowledges the rate of population growth in Queensland, especially its tertiary student population, which is well above the national average, in three years' time Queensland might catch up and the young people in Queensland who have qualified to enter tertiary education but who at present are denied that opportunity may have the same chances as people in other parts of Australia.

Liquor Licence Taxes

Mr BURNS: In directing a question to the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to last night's Federal Budget, which contained cuts in the excise on beer to reduce the price of beer significantly, with the largest price cuts for low-alcohol "lite" beers, and I ask: can he as Treasurer guarantee that this welcome reduction in low-alcohol beer prices, with its resultant value of reducing drink-driving and death on our roads, will not be snatched back in any way by increased liquor licence taxes in the coming State Budget or over the course of the current financial year?

In the interests of road safety, I ask: will the Premier match the Federal Government's reduction by a reduction in State liquor licence taxes in his Budget?

Mr AHERN: I have no intention of prematurely disclosing by way of answer to a question in the House what is contained in the Financial Statement. I say very definitely that, in my opinion, the beer tax concession that the Federal Treasurer gave last night as a gesture to the traditional Labor voters in order to get them back on side, vote Labor and be comfortable again is wrong. That extra money should have been given by way of concessions in petrol taxes or spent on more road construction in this country. There is no doubt that that would have spread right through the system and would have gone towards decreasing inflation generally in this country and not gone only to the country's beer-drinkers. This Government's priorities are better roads and cheaper petrol rather than cheaper beer.

Employment of Mr G. P. Hallahan by Suncorp

Mr BURNS: My second question relates to a well-known crook who is being protected by this Government. I refer to an article in the *Courier-Mail* on Tuesday, 9 August, entitled "Milligan's Mountain". The central allegations of that article were that

Glen Patrick Hallahan was Mr Big of a Queensland drug syndicate and that Sir Terence Lewis improperly used his position as Police Commissioner to pressure the Federal Narcotics Bureau to cease investigations which tended to implicate his Rat Pack colleague, Hallahan.

In view of the Premier's answer to me in this House on 14 April that confirmed that Suncorp was continuing to employ Hallahan in the sensitive position of chief insurance fraud investigator—I understand that he has considerable experience in fraud—I now ask: will he apply to Hallahan the same rule as he applied to the Police Commissioner, the former Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing, Mr Hinze, and the former Minister for Transport, Mr Lane, and move to have Hallahan stood aside? Or does he sack only those people who are a political embarrassment to him?

Mr AHERN: The Fitzgerald inquiry is proceeding with a great deal of commitment from the Government. The Government is fully backing the commission. Every request that is made is being met. A good, thorough, careful job is being undertaken with every support. A former Federal judge, who is obviously the most qualified person in the nation for the job, is carrying out the task. He is being supported by lawyers who are doing the job thoroughly and fairly.

We are not running pre-selection for the Labor Party in the seat of Lytton or something like that; this is a thoroughly professional organisation.

Mr Burns: Answer the question. Are you protecting this crook?

Mr AHERN: I am telling the member for Lytton that the Government will not have any part of a kangaroo court or a hanging jury. These matters are being dealt with professionally.

Mr Burns: It is a kangaroo court in relation to your own blokes who are politically embarrassing to you.

Mr AHERN: The member for Lytton has asked me a range of questions.

Matters in respect of Glen Patrick Hallahan are being dealt with before the commission. When issues require executive action, that advice is given to the Government, which acts without delay. It will do that in the future and has demonstrated that today. However, the Government of this State has a respect for the rules of law, too, and so it should.

Mr Burns: How did Russ Hinze get law out of you?

Mr AHERN: The issue of my ministerial colleague is entirely different. My actions were consistent with long-standing Westminster principles. It has been carried through in a highly proper way and in a way that is not dissimilar to that in New South Wales when the former Premier of that State, Neville Wran, was similarly placed. I have no regrets and make no apology.

It is not a matter of selection at all; it is proceeding with high standards, with good advice and with due respect for the rules of law and with underpinning and supporting the Fitzgerald inquiry in a comprehensive way. The Government will do that without provocation, without encouragement and without advice from the honourable member for Lytton. The Government is proceeding properly in all the circumstances because, in the interests of the next generation, it is absolutely determined to get on top of the problem of corruption in this State.

Increased Taxation on Flavoured Milk

Mr STEPHAN: In asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries, I too refer to the Federal Budget and also to the comments made by the Minister for Finance about some of the hidden charges and costs that are not necessarily highlighted in that document. One of those charges is the extra taxation on flavoured milk, which was the

subject of the wrath of the Federal Treasurer. The last increase in tax on flavoured milk resulted in a reduction in the sale and consumption of this product and was another tax on children and mothers. The additional taxation announced last night will add to the difficulties being experienced by dairy-farmers by continuing the increases in production costs. I now ask: is this yet another burden placed on primary industry, which finds it very difficult to meet costs while continuing to meet the demand for healthy and affordable fresh food products?

Mr HARPER: I took note of the comments made by my colleague the Minister for Finance. I describe last night's Budget as a thick-shake Budget. That is exactly what it was. It was another example of the Labor Government in Canberra not keeping the promises it made to the people of Australia to reduce taxation.

It was interesting that the member for Mackay gave notice of a motion relating to dairying. His Labor colleagues in Canberra have clearly indicated that they despise the dairy-farmers of Australia and the people of Australia. What nonsense to reduce excise duty on low-alcohol beer and normal strength beer and at the same time impose taxes on health foods, milk drinks, ice cream and containers that are made to carry the ice cream for our children! It is a hypocritical attitude indicating that the Labor Party indeed despises the dairy-farmers and the rural community of Australia, not to mention the health aspect of our nation and our children.

Last night, the Commonwealth introduced a 10 per cent tax on thick-shake mixes, ice-cream mixes, muesli bars and the containers used to carry those products. It introduced a tax of 20 per cent on pre-packed coffee, chocolate and malt-flavoured milk drinks, provided they have less than 95 per cent milk content. The Commonwealth Government has done that previously, and restated it last night. A 10 per cent tax has been introduced on milk drinks consisting of 95 per cent or more milk. Surely no member of the Opposition can claim that is consistent with a reduction of excise duty on beer.

Further, to show its attitude to the dairy-farmers as opposed to the total rural community, what did the Commonwealth Government do in regard to artificial milk and soy milk? It exempted soy milk and taxed flavoured milk at 10 per cent. Previously they had both been taxed at 20 per cent. It has introduced or maintained taxes on the real product, yet it reduced or eliminated taxes on synthetic products.

The honourable member for Gympie is correct when he says that indicates that the Federal Government is more interested in pandering to that section of the voters to attempt to regain some of the ground that it has lost—and it was demonstrated at the South Coast that it will continue to lose ground. When we have a by-election for Wolston the result will indicate that they are still losing ground. The Federal Government is trying to regain some of that lost ground at the expense of our children's health and our health.

Shortage of Speech Therapists in Country Areas

Mr STEPHAN: I direct my second question to the Minister for Education, Youth and Sport. In recent years there has been a shortage of speech therapists, particularly in country areas.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Brisbane Central.

Mr Comben interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Windsor will remain silent.

Mr STEPHAN: He cannot help himself, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gympie will resume his seat.

Cost of Return Train Charter from Gladstone to Rockhampton

Mr PREST: I direct a question to the Minister for Transport. On 29 January 1988 I wrote to the Minister requesting that, as a Bicentennial gesture of goodwill to schoolchildren in Gladstone, he give further consideration to reducing the cost of the hire of a train from Gladstone to Rockhampton return.

The Minister's reply on 4 March 1988 stated that a hire charge of \$3,419 was the charge for 600 children. He also stated that if further reduction to the hire charge was given, it would be necessary to render further consideration to numerous other requests for services that had already been arranged.

I noticed that in the *Longreach Leader* of 29 April 1988 Mr Glasson stated that he had approached the Minister for consideration of a further reduction in the cost of a charter train from Alpha to Longreach for 400 children of \$5,000 and that he was successful in having the charge reduced to \$2,500.

As Gladstone to Rockhampton return is 220 kilometres and the return trip from Alpha to Longreach is 498 kilometres, and the cost of the train for the Gladstone children was eventually \$3,789, I ask: why was the train for the Gladstone children more costly? If it was an honest mistake, will the Minister refund some of the moneys to the Gladstone Central School which chartered that train? If not, why was further consideration given to Mr Glasson's request for the western children and not to my request for the Gladstone children?

Mr Vaughan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Nudgee! The Minister will be heard in silence. I call the Minister for Transport.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I remember both cases. I do not have the fine details in my computer at this moment. I will research the matter. However, I am quite sure that the price that was charged for the train referred to by the honourable member, based on the distance involved, was very reasonable. I am quite sure of that. We do not often make mistakes—in fact, we do not make any.

Establishment of Publicly Owned Natural Gas Grid System

Mr INNES: In directing a question to the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to the existing privately owned gas pipelines from the Moonie fields to Brisbane. I refer also to the Premier's welcome of Mrs Margaret Thatcher as a great conservative Prime Minister and figure and the warm reference that he made to her record of turning around the United Kingdom with policies such as her privatisation policy, and I ask: how can a Government which claims to be private enterprise, and welcomes a figure such as Margaret Thatcher and her record, support the setting up of a long-term proposal to establish a publicly owned natural gas grid system throughout this State and do it with funds taken from the public sector at a time of intense competition by Governments for money?

Mr AHERN: The construction of that pipeline is an important part of the industrialisation program of Queensland. It is a vital issue, particularly for Gladstone. I understand that the ICI company, for instance, has fully committed itself to proceeding with an \$80m investment in Gladstone. It is proceeding. I have met with company representatives and they are already talking about further stages.

Other investors in the area are very keen to commit themselves to quite substantial projects, which will be of very substantial overall economic significance to the State.

These issues are not just issues for Gladstone. The heavy engineering industry in Queensland generally benefits from this type of undertaking.

So, there was a resource at Denison and there was obviously an issue in relation to connection with the pipeline and the reserves at Wallumbilla. Some time ago this

Government proceeded to invite expressions of interest to ensure that this massive industrialisation program ensued. In fact, nobody else wanted to do it.

When that was the decision, the Government decided that it had to do it. It will be run by private enterprise and operated by private enterprise. These decisions are taken in the overall economic interests of the State. The smaller users, of which there are a substantial number throughout that affected area, are not unhappy with the original proposal to construct it by public funding. They consider that they will receive a fairer go at utilising the facility if it is publicly owned. Initially, the users are more comfortable with public ownership. In all the circumstances, it was a reasonable thing to do at this time in order to encourage industrialisation in Queensland. That industrialisation will benefit every man, woman and child in Queensland.

For every manufacturing job created in a State, 2½ jobs are created alongside it in service industries. This is the key issue in the generation of economic development, particularly in the heavy industrial sector. It is an important part of the Government's strategy. It will transform Gladstone and is probably the most significant economic decision of the decade in terms of an infrastructure commitment.

Allocation of Preferences by Australian Democrats in South Coast By-election; Multiple Member Constituencies

Mr INNES: In directing a further question to the Premier, I refer to comments that were made last week by representatives of or workers for the Australian Democrats in the South Coast by-election that their how-to-vote cards were arranged with effective preferences going to the National Party because a firm commitment had been made by representatives of the National Party that the State would introduce multiple member constituencies. I ask the Premier whether he——

Honourable members interjected.

Mr INNES: No, we have not lost. I just want those who were misled to understand clearly, as would anybody in the National Party who had been in any position to make such a commitment. Is that the policy of the Government or of the National Party?

Mr AHERN: The honourable member has had his leg pulled all over the South Coast electorate. It was not only last Saturday night that someone tried to pull his leg; it happened earlier. For Heaven's sake!

To my knowledge, no discussion has taken place with the Australian Democrats. No undertakings have been given with my knowledge or authority, nor would they be given. The proposition is outrageous. It is amusing. There was a lot of amusement in the South Coast electorate. Chaps were riding horses. I must confess that I did not see the honourable member on a horse, but other persons were riding horses. Allegations of bribes were made. Allegations of rigging in one way or another were made. It is satisfying that it appears that in the final analysis the right decision has been made, and that is all we need to worry about.

World Heritage Listing of North Queensland Rainforest Areas

Mr MENZEL: I ask the Minister for Northern Development: is he aware of statements made by northern ALP members of Parliament—and, in particular, a close friend of Bob Hawke, Mr John Gayler——

Mr McPhie: Where would you find him?

Mr MENZEL: I do not know.

Is the Minister aware of Mr Gayler's statement that the World Heritage listing of north Queensland reserves will increase tourism? Is the Minister aware of the record tourist development in the Cairns area in recent years before the heritage listing, for which the Federal Government, I might add, is trying to take credit?

If logging of rainforests is detrimental to tourism, as claimed by Senator Richardson, how can the ALP explain the record tourist development and growth in far-north Queensland while logging was proceeding? Could the ALP be trying to mislead the people of Australia and north Queensland on the issue to appease the greens?

Mr KATTER: There is no doubt that the honourable member's question contains a fairly perceptive observation. It is quite astounding that claims have been made that the tourism industry in Cairns has suffered because of logging. During the past year when logging took place, \$1.7 thousand million worth of development work was taking place in Cairns. Cairns reported the highest building approval rates in Australia.

If Mr Gayler claims that things will be better next year, everybody in Queensland should be investing everything he owns in the city of Cairns, because the charges and the facts are quite incredible.

In contrast to that figure that I have mentioned, the sister city of Townsville, under the brilliant leadership of the HMAS Titanic—the Townsville City Council—recorded building approvals of \$276,000.

It must be said with some degree of aggression that north Queensland has suffered a loss of approximately 90 jobs in the kangaroo industry. Approximately 30 jobs have been lost in the Nelly Bay development, which is on hold. A total of 120 jobs have been lost at Shelburne Bay, and 800 jobs are about to be lost in logging. Approximately 1 200 jobs have been lost in north Queensland as a result of the activities of Senator Richardson, who has been left prominently with his particular portfolio. Regrettably, honourable members opposite have not raised one word in condemnation of that man. Let that be upon their own heads.

Burke Shire Council

Mr McELLIGOTT: In directing a question to the Minister for Local Government, I refer to several newspaper headlines the first of which dates back to 21 June 1981 and states, "Burke can't get head above water". The second headline is dated 19 September 1981 and states, "Budget cuts may 'kill' Burketown". The third one is dated 8 November 1981 and states, "Burke Shire is broke". The fourth one, which is dated 24 July 1988, states, "Cheques bounced on shire in red. Burke Shire Council in far north-west Queensland has gone broke, owing about \$250,000".

I ask: what did the Government do in those seven years to assist the Burke Shire Council with its financial difficulties? What is the present financial position of that council and how many other Queensland councils are in a position similar to that of the Burke Shire Council as a result of the Government's lack of real concern for local government in this State, bearing in mind that during those seven years this Government withdrew its assistance grant and reduced subsidies to the Burke Shire Council?

Mr RANDELL: If this issue was not serious the honourable member's question would be very amusing. Not once have honourable members opposite battled for shire councils in Queensland.

As a result of the recent Federal Budget, defence contracts have been awarded to other States and not one has gone to the north of this State. Not one word has been said about that by members of the Opposition.

The honourable member has asked a question about issues going back seven years. It is impossible for me to give an immediate answer to his question. Never at any stage were cheques from the Burke Shire Council knocked back by a bank. I have had discussions with the Burke Shire Council. A lot of trouble stems from the distribution of funds from the Commonwealth Grants Commission. Why is there not an amount of money coming from the Commonwealth to help these people?

Members of the Opposition want to centralise power in Canberra and worsen the situation. Tonight I did not hear one member on the opposite side of the House come

out in defence of shire councils in Queensland. The Federal Government is knocking them deeper and deeper into the ground.

Mr McElligott interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! The member for Thuringowa!

Mr RANDELL: From certain discussions that I have had with members in Canberra, I know that if Canberra has its way certain shires in the western area will have to amalgamate to survive. That is what Canberra wants. The Federal Government wants amalgamation. It wants to knock the shires out. It wants to go past Queensland, the shires' only protector in Australia, and take power to itself in Canberra. Honourable members opposite know that as well as I do.

I have had discussions with the Chairman and the Shire Clerk of the Burke Shire Council. They have put up a case to me. That case will be considered. A submission has been made to the Government. In good time that will be considered.

Mr McElligott: Like you did seven years ago.

Mr RANDELL: The Labor Party has lost interest in the north, and it will know about it at the next election.

The Government will consider sympathetically the submission made by the council. It will do all it can. However, it is possible that the council may have to increase its rates and the Government may be able to help it. I can make no promises. The Government is considering the submission. It will do the best it can.

If honourable members opposite have any backbone at all they will urge their Federal colleagues in Canberra to give some assistance to local authorities in Queensland.

Police Raid on Illegal Greyhound Meeting at Ridgeland

Mr HINTON: In directing a question to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works, Main Roads and Expo and Minister for Police, I refer to a report in today's Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin* which stated that 200 people have been summonsed for attending a greyhound fun day at Ridgeland where an illegal book-maker was operating. I ask: is it true that it was necessary to use 34 police and the dog squad for this operation? Could the police, who had prior knowledge, have prevented the incident? What is the extent of the liability of those people who attended this well-advertised meeting as a fun day?

Mr GUNN: I have a copy of the Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin*. The honourable member contacted me about this matter. I have asked for a full report on the police raid. Later this evening I intend to speak to the Justice Minister in order that the briefs of evidence are handed over to the Director of Prosecutions for assessment.

It was an illegal meeting. Illegal book-makers were present. Liquor was sold without a licence. The honourable member quickly brought this matter to my attention, and I will have it attended to.

Coal-miners' Support for ALP

Mr HINTON: I direct a question to the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Affairs. As he is aware that the miners' federation is disaffiliated from the ALP, could he comment as to why the federation should break its long-standing tradition of support for the Labor Party? It is because the present taxation levels in Australia are obnoxious, or perhaps is it because the Labor Party no longer reflects the aspirations of working people?

Mr LESTER: Quite honestly, coal-miners currently are paying tax in the order of 49c in the \$1. In many instances they work in isolated country areas and because of that they receive more wages than most other people do. Not only are they paying a very high rate of taxation that discourages them from working overtime and doing other

things to increase their income, but they have been hit to leg by various taxes applying to the investments that they have made. Quite frankly, I believe that they would have had enough of the high taxation policy of the Labor Government.

In addition, one might be forgiven for thinking about Canberra's present Budget surplus. The coal-miners are obviously very clearly of the view that some of that money should be given for tax relief immediately rather than next year when an election will be around the corner. Again, this is a very deceitful effort by the Commonwealth Government, which is trying to ensure that an election is close before it takes action. What members of the Commonwealth Government have tried to do is appease the workers by dropping the price of beer.

Quite frankly, what it is really all about, when we start to think about it, is Mr Hawke trying to "Foster" the "Bond" of friendship. He wants to play up to his big mates—the Packers and the Bonds—and that is what he is on about. He could not care less about the workers. He has got to keep in good with his mates and increase the profits of the breweries and the profits of the other people who support him. That is what he is on about, and he could not care less about the miners. That is the reason that they are running away from the Labor Party.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! The Chamber and the Minister will come to order.

Mr LESTER: Of course, the discontent of the miners with the Labor Party is running very high. I am led to believe that if Mr Hamill is selected as a candidate in the coming Federal election, the miners are going to run their own candidate—that's what they think of Mr Hamill! I am led to believe, however, that should Mr R. J. Gibbs be selected, the miners may not contest the seat of Oxley but that remains to be seen.

Quite honestly, the Federal Government has reduced the tax on beer to make the profits for the beer barons bigger and it will pay for that by taxing the kids of the miners; by taxing their milk shakes, their ice creams and everything else. What a deceitful effort! The Federal Government, by taking away taxes on beer, is making the beer barons bigger and it is taxing the kids to pay for it. It is a deceitful and shameful effort. Members of the Federal Government ought to give up. Is it any wonder that miners want to do their own thing and get right away from the ALP altogether?

Yeppoon Racing Club Funds

Mr R. J. GIBBS: In directing a question to the Minister for Racing, I refer to the missing funds which are attributed to the Yeppoon Racing Club, and I ask: What amount of money is missing from the Yeppoon Racing Club? What investigations by the department are currently under way? Are charges pending against officials of the Yeppoon Racing Club? Why did not his department properly supervise the spending, or the supposed spending, of the funds that were allocated to the Yeppoon Racing Club?

Mr RANDELL: I would like to wish the honourable member all the best in his battle for Oxley. It is a shame to see a man with such great racing expertise leaving this Parliament.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: It was not until I expressed an interest that I realised I was so loved and needed in this place.

Mr RANDELL: From recent comments I have heard from members on the Opposition side of the House, I think they might assist the honourable member in going!

There have been problems with the Yeppoon Racing Club that have been made known to me. Immediately they were made known to me, I sent officers of my department up there to investigate the whole situation. I am awaiting their report. I believe it hit my desk some time today, but I have not had a chance to look at it. Until I do, I do not think, to be fair to everyone concerned, that I should comment further. However, the honourable member can rest assured that I will look at the matter very impartially

and make my decision. I will let the honourable member know when the decision has been made.

Transfer of Dairy Quotas

Mr CASEY: I direct a question without notice to the Premier and refer to the commitment made by him on approximately 2 June to the people of Warwick that the interests of the people of Warwick would be preserved so far as the dairy industry in that area is concerned. Since that time this Government, through its Minister for Primary Industries, has taken action to lift the freeze on transferability of dairy quotas between factory areas. As a consequence the viability of the Warwick factory is threatened and the whole town of Warwick will meet next Monday night to protest against this Government. I ask: will the Premier immediately take personal control of this issue and replace the freeze on transfer of quotas and of milk across the border to Norco in New South Wales and return equity to the Queensland dairy industry through a fair allocation of growth in this State? The Premier has already promised that this would happen but this Government changed its mind because of pressure applied to the Minister by the South Coast Co-operative Dairy.

Mr AHERN: On behalf of the dairy-farmers in this State I thank the Labor Party for finally taking some interest in rural affairs. This is a very pleasant turn of events. This House is suddenly hearing a question on a rural matter coming from the Australian Labor Party.

Mr Casey interjected.

Mr AHERN: Not really. I cannot say that I have heard a question like that from the honourable member in a decade. However, it is great that the honourable member is interested in this matter.

The honourable member for Warwick has taken a close personal interest in this matter. He has been to see me and the Minister for Primary Industries and has raised the matter in various venues. He has assisted enormously in an endeavour to resolve what is a very difficult situation in respect of a division that has occurred between the dairy-farmers in his district in regard to what policy should exist in respect of their factory.

The Government looks to the dairying industry itself for advice. I understood that that was the ALP's policy, but now the member for Mackay is asking me to intervene, to override the wishes of the elected officials in the dairying industry and make a Government decision to turn over an industry policy. He wants the Government to go in with a political decision. That is an interesting suggestion from the honourable member for Mackay. The framework of legislation is designed to assist the industry to regulate its own affairs. However, the honourable member for Warwick is having certain discussions with the Minister for Primary Industries and me and we are to meet further in respect to the matter.

Queensland TAFE Training

Mr GATELY: I ask the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Affairs: how will the Federal Government's Budget affect TAFE training in Queensland?

Mr LESTER: The Federal Government's commitment to the training of people in trade skills and other measures announced in the Budget are in many ways welcome. I am pleased to be able to say that the announcement is in line with what the Queensland Government has done with Project Pay Packet. There is no need to be political about that. Both Governments are doing the same thing and obviously, as has been the case in the past, will co-operate in that way.

The Federal Government also announced that the graduate tax will not apply to TAFE college students. That is in line with the Wran report. I have taken the trouble to read that report further and have found that it says quite clearly that the graduate

tax for TAFE students will not apply for one year only. That is the sting in the tail. I am now publicly asking the Commonwealth to say unequivocally that it will not adopt that recommendation of the Wran report and to say forthwith that there will be no graduate tax for TAFE students either now or in the future. I seek that commitment.

The allocation of tertiary places affects TAFE colleges to some extent. I have to agree with what was said by the Minister for Education, Brian Littleproud. Clearly, if the Commonwealth is to be fair dinkum, it will have to give Queensland one-quarter of those promised 40 000 places—that is 10 000 places—to bring Queensland up to the national average. That is the State's right and the Government will pursue it.

Secondary Mortgage Market Board; Sir Edward Lyons

Mr WARBURTON: In asking a question of the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to the operation of the Secondary Mortgage Market Board and in particular to a member of that board, Sir Edward Lyons.

An Opposition member: He was here yesterday.

Mr WARBURTON: I know he was here yesterday.

I ask: are we to assume that he intends to allow Sir Edward Lyons to stay on as a member of the Secondary Mortgage Market Board—I understood some time ago that the Premier indicated that he was going to look at that situation—despite Sir Edward Lyons' well-known past activities, particularly events such as the TAB scandal, which saw him improperly using TAB funds for his own purpose? Does the Premier intend to allow Sir Edward Lyons to continue as a member of the Secondary Mortgage Market Board?

Mr AHERN: Legal advice has been obtained in respect of this matter. The advice is that there are no grounds which would sustain the action as proposed by the honourable member.

Effect of Proposed Gold Tax on North Queensland Gold-producers

Mr ELLIOTT: I ask the Minister for Northern Development, Community Services and Ethnic Affairs: will he inform the House of the contribution that gold-producers have made to the north Queensland economy? In view of the Hawke socialist Government's propensity for high taxes, as evidenced by the 8.3 per cent rise in Federal revenue, could he tell the House what the effects of the proposed introduction of the Federal gold tax in 1991 will have on the north Queensland gold-producers?

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr LANE (Merthyr) (8.47 p.m.), by leave: Earlier this evening the Premier, in answer to a question by the Leader of the Opposition, drew a parallel between the position in which the former Premier of New South Wales, Mr Neville Wran, found himself when he voluntarily stood down from the Premiership of that State and the circumstances under which I was not offered a portfolio in the Ahern Government in December last. Proper research would have shown the Premier that there is little similarity between the two cases. In the New South Wales instance, the Honourable Neville Wran was afforded the opportunity by his long-standing colleagues and friends to stand aside on a voluntary basis, thereby receiving the credit and recognition publicly for that gesture in the public interest. In my case, and I believe in the case of my colleague Mr Hinze, neither of us was afforded that opportunity to do so voluntarily, nor were we afforded the opportunity to receive the credit or the recognition that we would have both earned had we been able to take that course. There are other dissimilarities, including the fact that Mr Wran continued to enjoy certain privileges and so on after he was stood down. Proper research would show a number of other dissimilarities in the two cases.

I caution the Premier—perhaps that is too strong a word; I advise the Premier to carry out some proper research in that case lest he make the same error again and be obliged to engage in deeper debate on the subject, which may not be to the Government's benefit.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH

Mr SPEAKER: I have to report that His Excellency the Governor, on 23 August 1988, delivered to Parliament an Opening Speech of which, for greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy.

Honourable members, I wish to inform the House that an error occurred during the final production of copies of His Excellency's Speech as circulated to members. On page 3 of the Speech, paragraph 7, the reference to spending on roads by the Department of Main Roads should read "\$620.6 million", not "\$20.6 million".

I presume honourable members will take the Speech as read?

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Mr ALISON (Maryborough) (8.50 p.m.), who was received with Government "Hear, hears!" said: I move—

"That the following Address be presented to the Governor in reply to the Speech delivered by His Excellency in opening this, the second session of the Forty-fifth Parliament of Queensland—

'May it please Your Excellency:—

We, Her majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the members of the Legislature of Queensland, in Parliament assembled, desire to assure Your Excellency of our continued loyalty and affection towards the Throne and Person of our Most Gracious Sovereign and to tender our thanks to Your Excellency for the Speech with which you have been pleased to open the present Session.

The various measures to which Your Excellency has referred, and all other matters that may be brought before us, will receive our most careful consideration, and it shall be our earnest endeavour so to deal with them that our labours may tend to the advancement and prosperity of the State.'

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. Would those members desiring to leave please do so expeditiously and quietly?

Mr ALISON: I wish to acknowledge with pleasure the honour granted to me by the House to move the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, Sir Walter Campbell, on the occasion of the opening of the second session of the Forty-fifth Parliament of Queensland.

I reaffirm my personal allegiance and loyalty and that of my constituents to our sovereign Her Majesty the Queen and to her representative His Excellency the Governor of Queensland.

His Excellency plays a very important role as representative of the Queen in the democratic government of the State of Queensland, which, in turn, is of course part of the Federation of Australia. This Federation, made up of three tiers of government, has, I believe, worked well until recent times with its checks and balances for the general good government of the Commonwealth. Unfortunately, in more recent times, particularly over the last 16 years, honourable members have seen Labor socialist Governments do their utmost to take the balance away between the Federal and State Governments' respective powers and tilt this balance in the favour of the Federal Government. One can understand the Labor socialist Governments doing everything in their power to centralise power in Canberra, because the Labor Party, like any socialist party by

whatever name, aims to centralise and control all significant activities, both at Government level and in the private sector, from Canberra.

What honourable members have witnessed over the last 16 years, of course, has been in particular the activities of two socialist Governments—the Whitlam Government from 1972 to 1975 and the Hawke socialist Government from 1983 to the present time. Unfortunately, over those two periods honourable members have seen a gradual breakdown of our Federation, a gradual whittling-away of State powers, a gradual increase in Federal powers. In fact, there has been a gradual but not too subtle centralising of power in Canberra combined with a subjugation of State Governments by the Federal Government. This has been brought about by socialist Governments in Canberra using every trick in the book to centralise and extend their powers. This aim of centralisation by socialist Governments in Canberra has, unfortunately, been assisted by High Court decisions which could reasonably be said not to be within the spirit of what was intended by the founding fathers of the Constitution.

Mr Davis: What are you attacking? The High Court?

Mr ALISON: I will have something to say about the High Court very shortly.

The legislative, executive and judicial powers of the Commonwealth are governed by the terms of the Commonwealth Constitution. The bulk of the Commonwealth Parliament's legislative powers are to be found in section 51, which provides that the Parliament may make laws for "the peace, order and good government of the Commonwealth" in respect of 40 enumerated matters. The scope of the Commonwealth's powers is a matter of constitutional interpretation, and the final arbiter on any question concerning the validity of Commonwealth legislation at present is the High Court.

Over the years since Federation, decisions of the High Court concerning the extent of the Commonwealth's fiscal powers and the ambit of certain of the heads of legislative power in section 51 have enabled the Commonwealth validly to pass laws or to take executive action which affect matters formerly believed to be within the exclusive power of the States.

The recent decisions of the High Court regarding the use of the Commonwealth's external affairs power contained in section 51(xxix) to make laws which can overrule the laws of a State is seen by many as the greatest erosion of the system of federalism since the Commonwealth was created.

This concept is not new, because of a High Court decision in the Burgess case in 1936. The decision flowing from that case produced the result that was always felt, that, if put to the test, the Commonwealth, as a signatory to an international treaty, could use its external affairs power to ensure that ideals contained within the treaty were recognised and abided by throughout the whole of Australia.

In relation to the external affairs power contained in section 51(xxix) of the Constitution, two recent decisions of the High Court have underlined the breadth of this power. The *Koowarta v. Bjelke-Petersen* case in 1982 and the *Commonwealth v. Tasmania* case, perhaps more commonly known as the Tasmanian dam case, in 1983 confirmed that the external affairs power confers plenary power upon the Commonwealth Parliament to pass laws affecting matters of State legislative responsibility which would otherwise be beyond Commonwealth power, in cases where Australia, being party to an international convention, has sought to fulfil its international obligations under the convention. As long as a particular convention has been entered into bona fide, and not under the colours of attracting legislative power which the Parliament would otherwise not possess, there are virtually no limits to the topics on which the Parliament can legislate to implement its terms.

Examples given by the judges in these cases included conventions on national heritage, discrimination in employment and equal pay, forest conservation and civil rights. The Tasmanian dam case itself upheld the Commonwealth's power to prevent development and use of State land which threatened the nation's natural heritage.

In relation to the corporations power contained in section 51(xx), the Tasmanian dam case has confirmed that the corporations power is also sufficiently wide to enable the Commonwealth to regulate not only the trading activities of Australian companies but also non-trading activities which are related to their trading activities. Under this power the Commonwealth could conceivably control the activities of companies in respect of pollution controls and other environmental concerns. Indeed, all aspects of mining, manufacturing or construction activity would be potentially subject to Commonwealth regulation by virtue of the decisions reached in the Australian High Court.

The decisions on the external affairs powers are very significant. It means that the Commonwealth can now implement any obligation incurred under any treaty, including the wide range of United Nations sponsored civil liberties treaties, such as those protecting the rights of children, women and the handicapped, as well as the covenants on civil and political rights. The only limitation which was emphasised by some of the majority judges in the Franklin Dam case is that the legislation must in truth be implementing the treaty. This does present problems because the vague and general language often embodying a compromise of international treaties is sometimes difficult to express in narrow, legally precise statutory language. However, the High Court, unfortunately, has been rather liberal in that aspect of its interpretation as well.

It is significant to note that at least two of the majority judges, namely Justices Deane and Murphy, have taken up a point made 47 years ago by Justices Evatt and McTiernan in the Burgess case in the High Court in 1936, which would allow the Commonwealth to implement not only treaty obligations but also recommendations of international bodies like the United Nations General Assembly.

All of this means that with a centralist socialist Government in power in Canberra, and with High Court judges giving very liberal and wide interpretations in favour of the Commonwealth in cases brought before them dealing with the external affairs power and the corporations power in particular, our federation is under an extremely serious threat, not simply for the economy and well-being of State Governments but rather for the good government and the better government of this Commonwealth.

A nation the geographical size of Australia needs three tiers of government each operating clearly and autonomously under definite guide-lines of authority with no one tier of government encroaching on another. In this regard the people of Australia get no joy from certain decisions from the High Court, which really has only centralised more and more power in Canberra. It would seem to me that, as the High Court is bound by its previous decisions, the only certain way to roll back the powers of the Commonwealth to what was originally intended quite clearly by our founding fathers and in fact what is best for the Commonwealth of Australia and the people of Australia would be to amend the Constitution by a referendum. We certainly cannot expect such a referendum to be put to the people of Australia by a socialist Government, and our only hope is for a conservative Government in Canberra to recognise what is best for Australia and to put such a referendum question amending the Constitution to give back to the States and the people the powers that are really intended under the Constitution and to ensure that there is no further encroachment by the Commonwealth Government into the States' areas of responsibility. The State Government should take the lead in that regard and start working towards a referendum question that is properly worded and to reach agreement with the present Opposition in Canberra that such a question would be put to the people of Australia as a matter of urgency upon the Liberal/National Parties again achieving the Treasury benches in Canberra.

The State Government should prepare an appropriately worded referendum question or series of questions to roll back the powers of the Federal Government and bring back the proper balance of power to our Federation. The referendum question or questions should also remove from the High Court the power to change the effect of the Constitution and give it back to the people of Australia. No longer should the High Court be able to be used by a socialist Government that is hell-bent on centralising power. The Constitution

should be appropriately altered so that any question of transfer or take-over of power by whatever devious or other means by any Federal Government would have to be referred to the people of Australia by referendum. That would be true democracy at work. This is democracy. As I understand it, the only way in which to achieve that desirable end would be to put appropriate referendum questions to the people to build safeguards into the Constitution.

I turn now to veteran, vintage and historical car third-party insurance premiums. A couple of weeks ago I received a deputation from the Maryborough Antique and Classic Motor Club, which was protesting at the proposal in the rationalisation of third-party insurance premiums to include veteran, vintage and historical cars in the private-car classification. That will mean that the third-party insurance premiums for those cars will rise from a maximum of \$8 to \$150, which is the same as private cars.

From my discussions with members of the Maryborough Antique and Classic Motor Club I understand that members would use their vehicles on the road for a maximum of approximately 12 days per year. That amounts to approximately 100 hours on the road, including a certain amount of road-testing. I was told also that the annual distance that is travelled by veteran, vintage or historical cars would be no more than about 10 per cent of the average distance that is travelled by private motor vehicles.

From those figures it appears that it would be most unfair to charge those people \$150 per year for third-party insurance premiums. As a result, approximately two weeks ago I made representations to the Honourable Brian Austin, Minister for Finance, requesting that this matter be reviewed. I understand that the proposal, which is to take effect from 22 September, is being reviewed.

An alternative for owners of veteran, vintage or historical cars would be to deregister their vehicles and then obtain permits for each occasion on which they wish to travel to a rally, a car fair or whatever. However, because permits cost \$20 each, that is not a practical alternative.

It is also relevant to note that under their particular motor vehicle registration, owners of those cars are severely restricted in the amount of driving that they may do in their cars. For example, owners of historical, vintage or veteran cars must sign an undertaking to use their vehicles solely for the purpose of participating in a rally that has been organised by a veteran car club, or a procession, exhibition or whatever. In effect, if the proposal to charge those people \$150 for third-party insurance premiums goes ahead, they will be paying an unrestricted third-party insurance rate for a very restricted amount of driving. Even if the restrictions on the driving that they may do are lifted, I do not believe that that would greatly affect the number of kilometres that they would drive.

The increases in third-party insurance premiums are not proposed to commence until 22 September. I believe that this Government has ample time to reconsider its proposal. I will be suggesting to Mr Austin that the third-party insurance premium rates for veteran, vintage and historical cars be reviewed and brought down to a reasonable figure.

I turn now to a subject that is bandied around quite a lot in this State by members of the Opposition, the Liberal Party and the media. I refer in particular to the word "gerrymander".

One would think that journalists and members of this House would have some idea of the English language and understand the meaning of words before they used them. I refer the House to the Oxford dictionary, which gives the meaning of gerrymander as "to manipulate boundaries of electoral districts in order to gain unfair advantage."

I understand that the word comes from a reference to Governor Gerry, who lived from 1744 to 1815 and was Governor of Massachusetts in 1812. The "mander" part of the word comes from the word "salamander", which refers to the shape that was suggested by electoral districts in maps that were constructed by him. As I mentioned, the word

was used by Opposition members in relation to the zonal system, or system of weightage of numbers in electorates in less densely populated areas of Queensland to ensure that those less densely populated areas receive proper recognition in this House for their problems. "Gerrymander" has no relationship whatever to the zonal system in Queensland.

I suggest that if an example of gerrymander is being sought, one should go no further than the Australian Government. I refer in particular to the 1987 Federal election and the results thereof. A summary of the votes recorded throughout Australia in 1987 reveals that on a two-party preferred system the ALP obtained 50.83 per cent of the vote. The non-ALP parties—almost exclusively the Liberal and National Parties—obtained 49.17 per cent of the popular vote. The difference between the actual vote obtained by the ALP, which achieved Government, and the Liberal and National Parties now in Opposition was only 1.66 per cent. So far so good.

However, when the number of seats gained by those parties is considered, some very interesting figures emerge. These are not my figures, they come from the Commonwealth Electoral Office. The seats won by the ALP represent 58.1 per cent of the total seats in the Federal House of Representatives.

Mr McPhie: That is disgusting.

Mr ALISON: It is disgusting. The ALP won 58.1 per cent of the seats compared with 50.83 per cent of the votes. That is really getting to what a gerrymander is all about.

I will now indicate how the non-ALP parties fared. As I mentioned before, in the 1987 election they achieved 49.17 per cent of the vote but they won only 41.9 per cent of the seats in the House of Representatives.

Mr McPhie: And that is meant to be one vote, one value.

Mr ALISON: Yes. Apparently, according to the ALP, that is what one vote, one value is all about. If that is one vote, one value, I would hate to see what a gerrymander is all about.

A little bit of rudimentary arithmetic reveals that on a two-party preferred system there is a difference of only 1.6 per cent between the number of votes obtained by the ALP and the Liberal and National Parties. However, the difference between the number of seats won by the ALP and the non-ALP parties is 16.2 per cent. That is a classic gerrymander.

I will now compare the number of primary votes won by the ALP with the number won by the Liberal and National Parties. The ALP won 46.06 per cent and, surprisingly enough, the Liberal/National parties received the same percentage. The rest, of course, was made up by votes for the Democrats and others. That means that although the ALP achieved 46.06 per cent of primary votes it still won 58.1 per cent of the seats. If the number of primary votes received is compared with the percentage of seats won, the situation is even worse. However, the Liberal and National Parties received 46.06 per cent, the same vote as the ALP, and they won only 41.9 per cent of the seats in the House of Representatives. It does not matter which way one goes. One can try twisting the figures or using the two-party preferred system, which I suggest is the more accurate gauge of the support the relevant parties achieved in the 1987 election, or one can take notice of the percentage of primary votes. Whichever way one goes, that is a classic example of a gerrymander.

What did the guardians of the truth, that is, the media, say about that? I do not recall reading in any paper comments on that by any political analyst or journalist. If I am wrong and there has been comment by a so-called analyst or a journalist, then I will certainly retract that statement. But I do not recall any journalist referring to that shocking gerrymander that exists under this so-called lily-white Federal ALP Government. However, they are very quick to run off at the mouth about a gerrymander when they are referring to the zonal system in Queensland. A gerrymander has nothing to do with weightage of votes. A gerrymander is all about a discrepancy between seats and the votes

won by a particular party, and not the use of a weighting system or a zonal system. It is a great pity that the journalists who overlook that fact and get onto the gerrymander aspect do not read the Oxford dictionary and learn what a gerrymander really is.

Mr Beard: Is Wujal Wujal a gerrymander?

Mr ALISON: What is the gerrymander all about?

Mr Beard: Wujal Wujal is a gerrymander because it has been cut out of one electorate and put into the one next door.

Mr ALISON: All right.

In the time that remains, I wish to refer to Labor Federal Government hand-outs to trade unions which do not seem to rate any interest from the watchdogs of democracy, the media. It is a quite remarkable situation. I refer to the *IPA Review* of May/July 1988—a quite respectable journal which is of high integrity—to quote what has been referred to by that journal particularly. Official Labor Party returns to the Australian Electoral Commission show that the ALP disclosed receipts of \$1,141,673 from trade unions, which are donations towards the ALP's election campaign funds for the 1984 and 1987 election campaigns. I ask you, Mr Deputy Speaker, to bear that figure in mind: put shortly, it is \$1.1m. Since that time, the Hawke Government has given trade unions a minimum of \$5.8m of tax-payers' funds in the form of grants for a huge range of activities. It is quite scandalous. It is certainly a wonderful return, and I am quite sure that any businessman who could invest \$1.1m and, over a period of four years, obtain a return of \$5.8m would consider that he is not doing too badly at all—and it is all tax free, too. It is scandalous. It is a shocking waste and a misuse of public funds, which I will refer to in a moment. I do not know what the Public Accounts Committee is doing because it has not latched onto these quite disgraceful and arrogant "payments", shall I call them, as a pay-off. All they boil down to is a pay-off, or a return on investment from the Federal Government to the unions.

Let me turn now to examine some of these payments. The figure of \$5.8m is in fact quite conservative and ignores a whole range of other Commonwealth Government assistance to the trade union movement.

It does not include, for example, the Trade Union Training Authority, which costs approximately \$8m per annum; it does not include industrial elections, which cost approximately \$3m per annum; it does not include the Australian Bicentennial Authority grant of \$1m; it does not include the cost of implementing ACTU policy within the Government sector, including the so-called industrial democracy; and it does not include the cost of union appointments to key policy-making and advisory bodies such as EPAC.

Mr Davis: Why do you hate unions?

Mr ALISON: That is another quite ridiculous statement. I get along very well with my union friends in Maryborough. I receive frequent deputations from unions in Maryborough and I get along very well with them. What I am against are the rorts and rackets that go very largely unobserved by the media.

Let me mention specific hand-outs such as those given to the Amalgamated Metals Foundry and Shipwrights Union and the AMWU. This is a good one: "Artist's fees for a union banner, \$4,500."

Mr Davis: Why don't you report the hand-outs from the manufacturers?

Mr ALISON: I wonder if the honourable member for Brisbane Central could explain what use the Amalgamated Metals Foundry and Shipwrights Union would have for an artist's fees for a union banner at a cost of \$4,500? It would be very interesting to hear the honourable member for Brisbane Central explain how that can be regarded as authentic Government expenditure.

Mr Davis: Why don't you tell the truth? It was from the Australian Arts Council.

Mr ALISON: It was not. It was in respect of artist's fees for a union banner. I will give the honourable member for Brisbane Central another one in respect of the same union. The sum of \$15,000 was paid to the same union for a regional music co-ordinator. The mind boggles as to what a regional music co-ordinator would do for the AMFSU. I will give one or two other examples: images of industrial work sites, design and painting fees. This is quite extraordinary. The figure for that was \$6,584. In the next example the banner gets into the act again. Apparently, after the artist has finished with the banner, there is a banner-making project which costs \$4,542. I do not know that I have ever seen the banner of the Amalgamated Metals Foundry and Shipwrights Union.

Mr Sherrin: It is a work of art.

Mr ALISON: At a cost of over \$9,000 it would need to be.

The same union received \$4,280 for a video artist in residence. This is disgusting. It is a racket and a rort. It amazes me that the media does not do its job properly. It should highlight these rackets. One could well imagine what the media would do if, for example, this Government made a grant to the United Graziers Association for a composer in residence. The media would squeal and hound this Government into the ground. What would happen if this Government made a grant to one of the many small-business organisations that the Government helps in other legitimate ways in order to pay an artist's fee for a banner? One can imagine the headlines in the press and on the TV screens that would result following any such payment by this Government. I have not seen a word, apart from the IPA journal and one or two other journals, about this racketing and rorting of the system. Tax-payers' funds are being racketed by the Federal Labor Government as a pay-off to the unions and that is what it is all about.

I turn now to look at a couple of other examples. The Australian Telecom Employees Association received \$3,750 for a composer in residence. I do not know what the composer did, but he or she received \$3,750.

Mr Campbell: Are you going to stand there and put your value on art?

Mr ALISON: Perhaps the honourable member for Bundaberg could tell me what the Australian Telecom Employees Association is doing towards promoting cultural activities in Australia. I would love to hear him explain that some time. The sum of \$4,500 was paid for graphic artists in residence. What good does that do for the members of that union? It is a racket, a rort and a pay-off. I will not discriminate and turn now to the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union. That union had a mural artist in residence.

Mr Sherrin: This is good stuff.

Mr ALISON: Yes, it is classic stuff. It is a classic rort and pay-off. The mural artist in residence received \$7,500.

Mr Sherrin: Is this out of union fees or tax-payers' money?

Mr ALISON: It is tax-payers' money. It is absolutely disgraceful.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr ALISON: I suggest to the honourable member for Brisbane Central that this is fair dinkum.

One can imagine what the media would say if this Government gave \$5,000 to the UGA for a mural artist in residence. There would be screams and the Government would be hounded. I will get on to the heavy stuff. The ACTU—a fine body of gentlemen who really look after the workers—received \$13,650 for an arts officer. I do not really know what an arts officer is.

Mr Sherrin: A card-carrying member of the ALP.

Mr ALISON: It is quite possible that one has to carry an ALP card to get the job. I do not really know.

Mr Davis: You hate the workers.

Mr ALISON: No, I do not hate the workers. I hate this racketing and the rip-offs by union-leaders. I do not hate union members at all. I believe that I have made my point.

In conclusion, I wish to congratulate His Excellency Sir Walter Campbell on the outline he gave of this Government's legislation and policy implementation program. I look forward to playing a very constructive and active role in this program of legislation and Government activities in the following year.

Mr McPHIE (Toowoomba North) (9.20 p.m.): As one of the members representing Toowoomba, Queensland's largest inland city, I am honoured to have been invited to second the motion moved for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech made by His Excellency the Governor in opening the second session of Queensland's Forty-fifth Parliament.

As member for Toowoomba North, I pledge my allegiance and that of my constituents to our most gracious sovereign Queen Elizabeth II of Australia and to her most worthy representative in Queensland, His Excellency the Governor. I was one of the many Toowoomba people who were delighted to be present earlier this year when Her Majesty opened Expo. With them I shared a great sense of pride in again seeing that most lovely and charming lady here amongst her Australian subjects.

I extend my congratulations and thanks to His Excellency the Governor for the enlightened program of government that he detailed in his Speech and am proud to be a member of the continuing stable conservative Government in this State. His Excellency outlined a number of areas in which development and progress have taken place in Queensland. These cover a wide range of activities and involvements of many types and are projected well into the future. They all add up to being a significant plus for our Premier and his Government. I congratulate the Premier on his many and varied achievements since taking office. They augur well for the future.

In so ably moving the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, my colleague the honourable member for Maryborough dealt with a number of items of considerable concern to many Australians. I intend to develop several of these further. However, firstly, I wish to reiterate some of the achievements of the Ahern administration, for they make impressive reading. They are the runs on the board. They totally refute the grossly misleading claims by our lack-lustre political opponents whose own ability to perform is matched only by their continued one-eyed attempts to denigrate the Queensland Government. I might record also that at the moment only five members of the Opposition and only one member of the Liberal party are in the House. That is hardly fair during this important speech.

The record of achievement about which I am speaking covers many facets. One of note is the railway electrification scheme. When the program is completed, more than \$1 billion will have been spent on it. It will take in suburban and coal-field lines and the Brisbane-Rockhampton line, which will provide for an express electric passenger train service of world standard. The program will provide a great deal of new rolling-stock. During the South Coast by-election campaign the Premier announced that the Government would proceed with the much talked of development of the railway line to Robina. In that regard I support the National Party candidate for that by-election, Mrs Judy Gamin, who suggested that that railway line should go right down to Coolangatta, on the border with New South Wales.

As member for Toowoomba North, I expect to see during my time in this House the electrification of the railway line to Toowoomba and the development of the range tunnel. By overseas standards a tunnel through the range is a small undertaking but in

this country, because of its flat geographical nature, it is looked on as a daunting task because we seldom have to resort to the construction of tunnels of such size.

Coupled with the electrification program is the great record of achievement in the coal industry. Coal is the major commodity carried by Queensland Railways. Along with grain, fast freight and people-moving facilities, for years on end it has given Queensland Railways a record of being Australia's most efficient, with operating profits. Coal exports have increased by more than 8 million tonnes. This year all mining exports are expected to top \$4 billion, which will be more than 46 per cent of the total earnings of the State. That is all part of a dynamic and continuing development in Queensland, which continues throughout the private sector. One case in point is the recent announcement by Mount Isa Mines of a profit for last financial year of \$134m. That was achieved despite the downturn in world coal prices. Mount Isa Mines is now expanding its operations and has Japanese markets in its sights. The Government has been providing an environment in which to facilitate that development. Because of those Government initiatives, the private-enterprise people in this State have been able to prosper, and that has been of benefit to Queensland and all Queenslanders.

A number of other areas of achievement were mentioned in the Governor's Speech. I refer to the upgrading of the ports along the Queensland coast on a rolling program. At present it mainly concerns coal ports but it will extend beyond them.

As mentioned previously, a pipe-line will be constructed to deliver gas to Gladstone for industrial purposes. Some large developments that have been promised in Gladstone for so long will eventuate during the time of the Ahern Government.

The aluminium industry will be expanded. ICI is setting itself up in the area, and there will be a shale-oil development.

Prices in the electricity industry have been frozen for 1989 and that freeze will perhaps be extended into 1990, an achievement that has not been matched by any other State.

The pensioner rebate, which provides \$72 a year for the pensioners of the State, is being maintained. Together with the freezing of the price of electricity, that will be of tremendous benefit to pensioners.

The price of electricity in Queensland has risen only 10.9 per cent in four years, yet in the same period the cost of living in Australia has risen 34.4 per cent, which is a massive difference.

The efficiency of the electricity industry in Queensland has been recognised by Peat Marwick Hungerfords, which was specially commissioned by the New South Wales Government to compare its electricity industry with those of Queensland and Victoria. Peat Marwick Hungerfords found that Queensland rated an 85 per cent efficiency factor; Victoria rated a 65 per cent efficiency factor; and New South Wales rated a poor 59 per cent efficiency factor.

Further developments will take place under the Ahern administration. The Tully/Millstream hydroelectric scheme will provide a further 600 megawatts for Queensland's electricity grid and will be a welcome development in north Queensland.

As all honourable members know, tourism is Queensland's No. 1 growth industry. High earnings are coming to this State from tourism. Massive development is taking place. In the post-Expo period I am certain that, because of this State's record as a host to its Expo visitors, overseas visitors will continue to come to Queensland in ever-increasing numbers. This will enable development to continue.

Electorates along the coast will benefit from balanced development in the tourism area, just as Gladstone will benefit from balanced development in the industrial area. Opposition members should not be knocking the Government. They should be congratulating it. The Government has set up the dynamic and on-going system of government which is benefiting Opposition members and the people in their electorates.

I am pleased to see that the Premier has taken a firm hand with the Iwasaki development near Yeppoon. Firm action is long overdue. The Government must bring that development under the control of the Integrated Resort Development Act. Since the Iwasaki development commenced, many other large developments have been completed successfully. Honourable members need only consider the development at Sanctuary Cove, the Mirage development at Port Douglas and the development on Hamilton Island. They all commenced after the Iwasaki development was commenced. They are massive developments and are running successfully, yet the Iwasaki development is still floundering. It is no wonder that this Premier, who takes firm action, has taken the Iwasaki project by the scruff of the neck and will see that it either measures up or is brought under the control of the Integrated Resort Development Act.

Honourable members can look forward to other areas of development such as the space port at Cape York. Queensland has entered into a wool deal with China in which both Queensland and China will benefit. The wool industry and wool-growers will also benefit.

I have mentioned the massive industrial development that will take place in Gladstone. The member for Port Curtis should be puffing his chest out with pride. That development will occur in his electorate, courtesy of this conservative Government that is working for Queensland. It all adds up to continued progress by a well-led, dynamic Government.

Queensland's population has increased and it is expected that it will increase further. In the near future, instead of being No. 3, Queensland will be one of the biggest and most prosperous States in Australia. One has only to consider the development that is taking place in Brisbane, down on the Gold Coast and even up in Cairns. Development is continuing throughout the State. It has not abated, as the knockers of the Ahern administration would like to see happen.

My own city of Toowoomba is not only Queensland's biggest inland city; it is also Australia's biggest inland city after Canberra. The economy in Toowoomba has been languishing in recent years because of the drought. Toowoomba is mainly a rural service centre supporting one of the richest agricultural areas in the world. The machinery firms based in Toowoomba, the businesses, the industry, have all noticed the effect of the downturn in the rural industry because of the drought years that have been experienced and the irregular rainfall. Fortunately, since last year, although there has not been regular rainfall, there have been regular storm rains. Many of the farmers will get their first crop within a couple of years. The outlook is excellent.

The outlook is excellent in the business area, too. A massive development is being carried out by Girvan Brothers in the centre of the city, which, along with the other initiatives taken by the city council, the ring road and so on, will revitalise it and make the central business district of this major inland centre more dynamic.

The Queensland Government has been involved in Toowoomba, as it has been in so many country areas. It is another area in which the Queensland Government should be congratulated and not knocked, as it has been continually by people who would like to bring this Government down.

The Main Roads Department recently opened the \$2m East Creek deviation road, which is a very integral part of the ring road system in the centre of the city and will significantly enhance the traffic flow through the centre of the city to the major highways, the New England Highway and the Warrego Highway. It is the fifth major Main Roads development that has been carried out in the centre of that city or within the city boundaries in the last five years.

Toowoomba is to get a single integrated transport centre, which is long overdue. That was announced in His Excellency's Opening Speech. The Housing Commission and the welfare services in Toowoomba have a fine record in looking after the many people who were not doing very well in the outlying areas and who have moved into this magnificent city to look for housing and sustenance until they can find a job.

Toowoomba has a fine record when it comes to schools and school teaching. The Government has not only helped with the construction of the many State schools in the area but also provided heavy subsidies mainly by way of interest payments for capital works for the independent schools. It is a fine example of the continued support for the independent schools by the private-enterprise Government of Queensland.

The Queensland Government provides subsidies in the area for sport, for coaching of the juniors and the provision of facilities. Subsidies for these purposes are paid by the Queensland Government.

I have been very pleased to be able to play a role in having the show society moved from a small area in the centre of the city out to a magnificent area on the outskirts of the city. It was a massive job. A maximum subsidy was obtained for the work on the new site, which is now three years down the track and is developing into one of the best—if not the best—agricultural society grounds in Australia. Very shortly tenders will be called for extensions to the TAFE college in Toowoomba. They are long overdue and will be a welcome addition. The cost of that work will run into many millions of dollars.

The Southern Cross Corporation, which has its headquarters and its major foundry in Toowoomba, has dynamic new management and has become more competitive. It is expanding and updating. It is even acquiring businesses in competitive areas across Australia. It is introducing a massive re-equipment program, involving millions of dollars worth of new equipment, some of it top state of the art in Australia.

There are many other excellent examples of private enterprise that are going ahead in Toowoomba. I will cite some examples. Stahmann farms, the processor of pecans in Australia, has recently moved into macadamia-processing. Wildman's Timber, the big timber industry firm in Toowoomba and on the Darling Downs, is expanding. All honourable members are aware of Defiance Mills and Regal Bakeries. They have continued their fine record of private enterprise. I mention also some of the smaller firms such as Madco Rifles, which makes the top sniper rifle barrels in the world, with orders from the British SAS, the Scottish Olympic and Commonwealth Games rifle teams and special target-shooters in America.

Following the downturn in the rural industry, Mason Planters, the makers of specialised row crop planting machinery, did not languish, as did some rural machinery firms. That company was able to turn its expertise to producing Rugby scrum machines, which it is selling throughout the world. It is the best scrummage training machine for Rugby Union. The venture has been highly successful. In conjunction with the Queensland Rugby Union, Mason Planters deserves credit.

Only recently in Toowoomba an announcement was made that a light-aircraft firm will very shortly commence manufacturing three types of light aircraft in Toowoomba.

At the moment in Toowoomba, we are very interested in the achievement of university status for the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education. Definitely one of the front-runners of colleges of advanced education in Queensland, the DDIAE is second in Australia in the number of external courses handled. It is second only to Armidale University in northern New South Wales. It is the leader in marketing of courses into south-east Asia. In south-east Asia it is experiencing difficulty with competition from smaller universities from North America that market under a university name that is understood in south-east Asia, but the DDIAE has to market under the name of a college of advanced education. Unfortunately, it does not have the same status or bearing in the south-east Asian region as a university, irrespective of how competent that university might be.

I hope that the transition will come quickly. It has developed to the stage at which it is definitely ready. It is warranted and it will be a fine achievement for that university when it comes into existence on the downs.

There are many other areas in which the Government can be congratulated. In the employment field, the Government has introduced the innovative idea of Project Pay Packet. The Government introduced that scheme. It is in line with what was outlined

last night in the Federal Budget. The Queensland Government has its program up and running. It provides all-round help for young people to find employment and to establish themselves. The Government has a scheme that will work. It has already commenced. I wonder when the Federal Government's scheme will kick off.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics figures provided for days lost in disputes during the last year are very interesting. Except Tasmania, Queensland's record is well ahead of that of every other State in Australia. It is an area in which Queensland can stand tall.

The Ahern Government is shouldering its responsibility for main roads. Tonight we heard reference made to the correction of a figure in the copy of His Excellency's Opening Speech. Queensland will continue to support the development of main roads in this State, and \$620m will be provided for that purpose. The Federal funds provided have remained unchanged since 1984-85. In real terms, in the current year there has been a decrease of \$21m in the funds that have been provided by the Federal Government. In real terms, the decrease has been 25 per cent since the Federal Government froze its contribution in 1984-85. That is not the way to create employment; it is not the way to attract development; and it is not the way to provide a decent main roads system throughout this State or nation.

A total of 30c from every litre of petrol sold is creamed off in fuel tax. Last year a total of \$6.5 billion was taken by the Federal Government in the form of fuel tax. However, only \$1.25 billion was returned for expenditure on roads. The rest was creamed off into other areas, mainly into revenue. That is disgraceful.

Mr Campbell: Where is your Road Safety Council?

Mr McPHIE: If the honourable member does not believe my figures, I will show him where I obtained them.

In the road construction area, Queensland has a top record under increasingly difficult circumstances. I am pleased to note that the national highway in Queensland has been sealed completely. It includes roads in north-west Queensland.

I am pleased that Queensland has at last moved into the area of motorways. For years, tollways have been used successfully in the southern States. The tollways surrounding Sydney have prospered to the advantage of the motoring public. I am glad that Queensland has at last adopted a similar approach. The Minister and the Government should be complimented for that.

The maintenance cost of roads causes some concern. Money must be made available for the maintenance of all the roads that are being developed so that their condition is kept up to scratch. New roads cannot continue to be built unless existing ones are improved and maintained. In that regard I question the changes in the Commonwealth program. Figures were mentioned in last night's Federal Budget, but the method of allocation and classification of funding has been changed. I doubt whether this State or any other State of Australia will benefit from that. It is not a sign of responsible government but an abrogation of responsibility, particularly by Treasurer Keating.

Mr Keating boasts about the huge surplus but refuses to spend money in areas where it is most needed. He has not given any relief to tax-payers, who will have to wait until next year for income tax reductions. For the past three years the Federal Government has been promising income tax relief, but it has not been forthcoming. Tax-payers must continue to pay high taxes. As was mentioned earlier, even the tax on milk shakes and muesli bars is being increased.

Australia's national debt is still at the highest level ever. The Budget surplus should be used to reduce personal income tax. The Federal Government has not got that program on the road. This Government has a program on the road. It has the runs on the board. The State Government should be complimented, not the Federal Government.

Mr Prest: Mr McPhie——

Mr McPHIE: Mr Prest might be able to enlighten me as to how sure we can be that we will receive personal income tax relief in 1989.

Every year the Federal Government defers income tax cuts. It increases wages so that people are pushed up into higher tax brackets and thereby pay more income tax. The Federal Government is not interested in reducing income tax. I cannot see any tax cuts eventuating until just before the next Federal election, when they will be used as a bait to catch votes. That is not the way in which a responsible Government operates.

The Ahern Government has already passed 57 Bills this year. Many more Bills will be passed during this session. In his Opening Speech, His Excellency the Governor mentioned quite a few of the Bills that will be debated in this House. The Bill to amend the Queensland Constitution is very interesting because it will be the correct way to formalise the recognition of local government.

In common with many other honourable members, I question the need for the formal recognition of local government as proposed by the Federal Government in its constitutional referendum. The proposed amendments to the Queensland Constitution represent the correct way in which to formally recognise local government. It represents a delegation of authority by the States to local authorities. The Federal Government should not be interfering with local government. The three tiers of government were set up by the States of Australia in 1900.

The proposed Federal Constitution amendments will not benefit local government. The Local Government Association has been duped. If it believes that it is going to gain anything from the third question in the constitutional referendum, it is being naive and misled. Formal recognition of local authorities will come from the proposed changes to the State legislation. The Local Government Association is not going to get anything from the Federal referendum. It has not been told why the amendments are necessary. In fact, not only will there be no gains for local authorities but also much is at risk.

The voters of Australia have been misled by the Federal Government. If those four simply worded questions are passed, they will bring forth more changes than the combined amendments in 87 years of Federation. They will repeal nine of the existing clauses of the Constitution, amend four of the remaining clauses and insert 20 new clauses. In other words, they will change 33 clauses. Approximately 600 words will be taken out of the Constitution as it exists today and 1 732 words will be inserted into it. I do not think that anyone in this Chamber would be able to tell me exactly what is being done and I do not think that more than a handful of people in Australia would know what is going to be done; yet the Federal Government is asking the voters to vote on it. The voters are being deliberately misled.

A Government member: Conned.

Mr McPHIE: "Conned" is the word.

I know of no reason why any of these four questions should be brought forward. I know how they were brought forward. There has to be a reason to amend the Constitution. There has to be a need to amend the Constitution. When it is amended, the people have to gain some advantage. I would say that there is no reason, no need, and that not one of those four questions will give an advantage.

If honourable members opposite were students of the Constitution they would know that, as it stands today, the Constitution contains no provision for it to be updated regularly or for a review to take place at any time. They would also know that no request has been made by the people of Australia for the Constitution to be reviewed, nor has there been any request by the States of Australia for it to be reviewed. They would also know that this is not a Bicentenary gesture, because it is not the 200th anniversary of Australia this year, it is the 200th anniversary of permanent white settlement in Australia. Australia came into being 87 years ago. It is not the 200th anniversary or Bicentenary of Australia. That is not a reason for the Constitution to be

reviewed. The review of the Federal Constitution was brought forward as a deliberate political ploy by the people in power in Canberra. They could not accept the past record of suspicion of and rejection by the people of amendments to the Constitution. The people in Canberra wanted to push the changes through the back door. More than ever the people of Australia need to be suspicious of the referendum and without hesitation vote "No" to all of the questions. If the Constitutional Commission, and its five committees—all of which were dominated by the friends of the Government in Canberra—had the interests of this country at heart, they would have formulated a question that would have given Australians the right to vote on whether they want an amendment inserted in the Constitution so that the people of Australia could then vote on any of the foreign accords that the Federal Government might enter into and foist on them to override the Constitution. I believe that if such a question was inserted in the referendum it would be carried. I believe that if any of those provisions in the foreign accords that override our Constitution were put to the people of Australia, they would be rejected without hesitation. That is what that commission should have done. It did not. It does not have a very happy record.

I could refer to many points. However, in relation to the Constitution I want to cite one example of how fair dinkum the Federal Government is about one vote, one value. I want to refer to Mr Hawke's new Cabinet, which contains 29 appointments. Queensland is the third biggest State in Australia yet it has only two members in that Cabinet and they occupy the last and the second-last positions. That is fair treatment! That is what the Federal Government thinks of one vote, one value.

Opposition members talk about electoral weightage and that sort of thing. Do they know that 88 per cent of the land area of Australia is represented by 10 members of Federal Parliament? Opposition members come into this place and tell us to carry this fair election proposal in order to achieve a democratic result. Such a position applies in Queensland right now. Not only does Queensland have a fair election program, but it also has a Government that is performing. It has the runs on the board. It is the most dynamic of any of the State Governments. It has produced results. Since the appointment of the Ahern administration, no changes have occurred in the Government's policy except to more strongly affirm its belief in carrying on with what is correct and what is honest and to reaffirm the strength of moral values and the fine position and standing of Christian and family values in this community, and it will uphold them for evermore.

Debate, on motion of Mr Goss, adjourned.

COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY ACT AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

All Stages

Hon P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.50 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would otherwise prevent the immediate presentation to the House of a Bill to amend the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950-1988 in certain particulars and the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986-1988 and the Invasion of Privacy Act 1971-1981 each in a certain particular, and the passing of such Bill through all its stages in one day."

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) (9.51 p.m.): I move—

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

The commitment of the Queensland Government to eradicate corruption at all levels has been evidenced during the last 18 months in many ways. The appointment of Mr G. E. Fitzgerald, QC, to conduct a commission of inquiry into possible illegal activities and associated police misconduct took place in mid-1987. Following the appointment of Mr Fitzgerald under the original terms of reference, amendments were made to the terms of reference. On two previous occasions, I have found it necessary to introduce amendments to the Commissions of Inquiry Act to ensure that the commission was granted adequate powers to complete the task assigned to it and to ensure that technical difficulties did not stand in the way of the successful completion of the inquiry.

Amendments to Commonwealth legislation have also been enacted to allow the commission to have access to the taxation records of the Commonwealth and for other associated purposes. Moreover, we have ensured that all requests by the commission for additional resources were met. This House has also approved an amendment to the legislation which provided for the appointment of a deputy to the commission, and since that amendment Mrs Patsy Wolfe has acted in that capacity.

Although this appointment has ensured that the work of the commission in public sittings continues, and has had the effect of allowing the chairman and commissioner to devote more time to assist in ensuring that an earlier report will be made available to the Queensland Government, the enormity of the task which has been assigned to Commissioner Fitzgerald must be appreciated. Indeed, on 4 July 1988, the commissioner indicated that procedures had been devised in an effort to bring this temporary inquiry to an end.

The proposed timetable for the completion of the inquiry is as follows. Any person wishing to give evidence is required to submit to the commission a comprehensive statement of evidence which he would give, verified by statutory declaration. The date 26 August 1988 was set as a deadline for submission from any interested person or organisation on recommendations the commission ought to make to the Government.

Mr Fitzgerald has announced that the last sitting date for 1988 and the last day for taking of evidence would be December 1988. The date December 1988 was set as a deadline for applications for copies of submissions, and 23 January 1989 was set as a deadline for submissions on factual issues or supplementary submissions on recommendations the commission ought to make to the Government.

It is proposed that on 7 February 1989 the commission will resume for a sitting of approximately three weeks for the purpose of addresses, and Mr Fitzgerald has expressed his desire that the final report to the Queensland Government be available prior to the second anniversary of the establishment of the commission, that is, 27 May, 1989. Mr Fitzgerald has now made further representations to the Queensland Government concerning a number of inadequacies in the Commissions of Inquiry Act and in other statutes which will inhibit the inquiry being concluded in an appropriate manner unless they are corrected by this House. Accordingly, in consultation with Mr Fitzgerald, draft legislation has now been prepared which it is my privilege to introduce into this House.

A number of the amendments are of a formal nature and do not involve matters of great principle. For example, the principal Act is to be amended to ensure that various formal matters such as proof of the signature and authorisation of the Attorney-General which are required under section 4A of the Act is facilitated by requiring the courts to take judicial notice of such matters.

It has also been suggested that in appropriate cases a commission of inquiry ought to be permitted to hear evidence of matters which would otherwise be confidential under the specific provisions of certain statutes of Queensland. For example, the Stamp Duty Act, the Liquor Act and the Racing and Betting Act, among others, contain provisions which require public officials to maintain confidentiality. These secrecy provisions would preclude witnesses who are called before a commission of inquiry from giving evidence about matters which may be of particular relevance during the course of an inquiry.

Accordingly, the Bill provides for an amendment to the principal Act which establishes a procedure whereby a summons or writing of a chairman of an inquiry will take precedence over any oath taken, affirmation made or provision of an Act relating to secrecy where, by Order in Council, the Governor in Council declares that the secrecy provisions in a particular statute will not apply. The procedure which has been developed will ensure that decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and will also ensure that the views of the Minister of the Crown responsible for the administration of each relevant statute are sought and obtained prior to its being recommended to the Governor in Council that an Order in Council be made. The provision has been drafted so as to apply to all commissions of inquiry which are held under the Act and, as such, has a general application.

The Bill also provides for an amendment to section 10 of the principal Act to ensure that uncertainties which have arisen with respect to procedure in relation to matters of contempt which are referred by a commission to the Supreme Court are clarified. This clarification is consistent with the existing provisions of the legislation.

As honourable members would be aware, the Commissions of Inquiry Act empowers a commission to compel persons to answer questions, notwithstanding that the answer may incriminate such witnesses as to criminal offences. The Act also provides a protective mechanism which precludes such admissions being used in evidence against the witness unless they are made in respect of offences of perjury, fabricating evidence, corruption of witnesses or other similar offences. It has been recommended by Mr Fitzgerald that persons who conspire to commit such offences should be able to be charged and have evidence which has been given before the commission of inquiry used against them in the course of a trial, and this request has been implemented in the Bill.

Another provision contained in the Bill relates to the facilitation of proof of various formal matters which may take place during the course of a commission of inquiry. By way of example, it may be necessary to prove that the deputy to a commission was appointed by the commissioner. It may also be necessary to prove a number of other formal matters. The Bill provides that such matters may be proved by way of certificate under the hand of the chairman or a deputy to a commission and it will have the effect of ensuring that neither the chairman nor the deputy to the commission is required, under normal circumstances, to be called as a witness in criminal proceedings either by the Crown or by the defence.

This Bill also amends the provisions of the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act to ensure that the protection afforded to persons who are charged with but not convicted of offences is not abused. There are many relevant instances where courts and commissions of inquiry should be permitted to ask a person whether or not he may have been charged with a criminal offence notwithstanding that an acquittal was the result of the trial or that a *nolle prosequi* was entered. Naturally the issue must be one which is of relevance to the commission or trial, and a further protection requires the consent of the court prior to the question's being asked. This provision is not intended to interfere with the existing provisions of sections 15 and 15A of the Evidence Act, which ensure that an accused obtains a fair trial.

The term "legal proceedings" which is used in the Invasion of Privacy Act 1971-1981, is undefined. Whilst there is little doubt that this term would be interpreted broadly to include a commission of inquiry, it has been considered desirable to define the term, and such definition will be consistent with the definition of the term "legal proceedings" which is used in the Recording of Evidence Act.

As honourable members will note, this Bill traverses a number of areas which will be of significance to the successful outcome of the commission of inquiry. The Government proposes to take this legislation through all stages immediately and will seek urgent assent for the Bill. I look forward to support from all members of this House for the commission of inquiry by the speedy passage of this Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr GOSS (Logan—Leader of the Opposition) (10 p.m.): The Opposition supports the legislation and supports its passage through all stages this evening. However, I stress that the Opposition does so on the basis of some degree of trust and on the assurances that have been given by the Government in general, the Minister in particular and by representatives of the commission of inquiry. As has been revealed by the Premier today in a press conference, as I understand it, there was a meeting on Monday of this week between Mr Fitzgerald, Mr Crooke, the Premier, the Leader of the Liberal Party and me at which these matters were discussed.

The Opposition would have preferred to have had more time to analyse the legislation and to research it in conjunction with the various other pieces of legislation that are being amended, but the need for urgency is accepted. We in the Opposition accept that witnesses are waiting to be called and that matters need to be attended to by the commission and that the prompt passage of this legislation will facilitate the work of Mr Fitzgerald. It is on that basis that we offer our support.

These amendments will be ongoing and permanent and of powerful effect particularly in relation to the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950-1988. For that reason I raise for the general consideration of the Minister and of the Government the general query that consideration be given to some form of sunset clause in relation to these provisions and perhaps some of the other extraordinary provisions that have been passed through this House to assist the work of Mr Fitzgerald and his staff.

That is not to question in any way at this stage the powers and the support that have been given. I think everybody on both sides of the House and in the State recognises the enormity of the problem facing Mr Fitzgerald and the enormity of the problem of corruption that faces the Queensland community. It has been on the basis of a genuine attempt on all sides to address that problem and to provide Mr Fitzgerald and his staff with the necessary powers and solutions that all members have been prepared to support these far-reaching powers and the inevitable erosion of the civil liberties of the citizens of this State that goes with that.

There is always a balance. There is always a price that has to be paid when these powers are extended. At this stage I believe that all members of the House, and indeed most members of the community, are prepared to tolerate that loss—that erosion of civil liberties—in the interests of achieving the goals of the Fitzgerald inquiry. However, we should not be blind to the possibility that in the long term we may be going too far.

I think at some stage we will have to review what has been done in the course of establishing and extending the powers of this inquiry, look at perhaps providing some form of sunset clause or review, and reduce or repeal some of the measures that have been enacted to assist the Fitzgerald inquiry specifically. I think there will probably be a case to say that, whilst those powers were necessary for the work of the Fitzgerald inquiry, they should be taken back, the previous position of the citizens of this State should be restored and that those civil liberties should not be taken away again unless the kind of need that has been demonstrated by the Fitzgerald inquiry is again demonstrated by some future occurrence or the need for some future commission of inquiry.

It is clear that, over the course of the last year, we have substantially eroded the civil liberties and the rights of citizens in this State. As I say, because of the enormity and the very wide-ranging nature of corruption in this State, not just in the police force, I am not questioning the need to do that. The Fitzgerald inquiry will come to an end within the year. Prosecutions and the consequences of that inquiry may go on, but there will come a time when we should look back at what has been done over the last year and at what will be done tonight and perhaps decide to restore the law in this State to its previous position.

I wish to make some brief comments on the provisions that are before us. The first provision is in relation to establishing the signature of the Attorney-General. As far as I can assess, that is a formal or machinery provision and the Opposition has no problem with it.

I accept that it is appropriate to break down the secrecy provisions in current legislation, whether in stamp duty or elsewhere. However, once again, that is the type of legislative change that I am referring to that we should perhaps be prepared to review within the year to see whether or not we restore the law to its previous provisions.

Clause 6 relates to the redrafting of one subsection of the contempt provisions of the original legislation. I take it, from reading the original Act, that the sole purpose of the amendment is to simply make the provision more up to date in that we no longer refer to the relevant legislation as being "The Supreme Court Acts 1861-1949", which is the provision in the original legislation, and by adopting a three-part subsection and referring to the law as it is "in force for the time being". I take it that the previous section is simply being updated and that there is no qualitative or substantive change. On that basis, the Opposition supports the proposed amendment.

The Opposition also supports the addition of conspiracy in section 14 (2) of the principal Act. It is quite clear to all members of the public that there could be groups or categories of people brought before the Fitzgerald inquiry who may, for reasons of their own, conspire together to tell the same story to frustrate the work of the commission and to deny their involvement in various forms of corruption. If that is found to be occurring, the commission and the law should have power to deal with it. I presume that is the effect of what is proposed by clause 7.

Another amendment is to the rehabilitation of offenders legislation, which was passed through this House in recent years. It is unfortunate that since that legislation was originally passed there have been two or three occasions on which the provisions of that legislation have been broken down. Although there have been some grounds for doing that, I am concerned that we are going too far down the track to removing the effect of that legislation. The legislation was not far reaching enough in the first place, particularly given the 10-year period that was applied in relation to convictions so that somebody could not expunge the record until 10 years had passed. I believe that it should have been five years. The original legislation, as brought in by the previous Minister for Justice, was too restrictive in that regard. I am disappointed that it is being eroded even further. As to the amendment we are considering—I accept that for the purpose of the inquiry there may be certain criminal charges that were dealt with beyond the 10-year period that it would be relevant for the commission of inquiry to reopen. The Opposition supports that.

The other extension provided in clause 9 relates to criminal or civil proceedings before a court. I question whether it is necessary to go that far on a permanent basis. I ask the Attorney-General to consider whether or not that particular provision should perhaps be restricted to criminal proceedings arising from the Fitzgerald inquiry's report rather than lead to a general reopening of that situation.

The specific point that I would further raise with the Attorney-General and seek to have him address in his reponse is why we need to have civil proceedings included in that measure. It seems to me that, if the proceedings are only civil, the person is entitled to leave that section of his past behind him if he has demonstrated by good behaviour over a period of 10 years or more that he is in fact a law-abiding citizen. I am not sure of the basis on which the reference to civil proceedings is needed. I would rather see the provision relating to criminal proceedings limited to action necessarily arising as a result of recommendations that may be made by the Fitzgerald inquiry.

The last amendment is designed to include a definition of the term "legal proceedings" in the Invasion of Privacy Act in this State. I have no problem with that. It appears once again to be a machinery or definition provision.

In conclusion, I state that the Opposition supports the legislation. As I have said, the Opposition will support it through all stages. However, I would sound a word of caution in relation to the matters that I have raised. I urge the Government within the year to look back over what has been done in the course of the last year to extend the powers of the Fitzgerald inquiry in a quite substantial way. I think that unless a need is demonstrated, the Government should consider going back to the law as it was before.

Mr BEARD (Mount Isa—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.11 p.m.): I speak on behalf of the Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr Innes, who had to be elsewhere tonight. He consulted with me and advised me that he, along with the Leader of the Opposition, was taken into confidence and had forewarning of the legislation that was to be introduced tonight.

The Liberal Party supports the legislation. As the Leader of the Opposition said, a lot has to be taken on trust here, and the Liberal Party is prepared to do that. However, the Liberal Party issues the same sort of caveats as those issued by the Leader of the Opposition. I will not go into the detail that the Leader of the Opposition did. However, I will mention a couple of cases.

It could be said that special cases lead to inadequate legislation, and to give general application to some particulars here which are aimed specifically at the Fitzgerald inquiry would lead the Liberal Party to suggest, as the Leader of the Opposition suggested, that everything passed in this legislation should be subject to later review. In particular, if any defects are found at a later stage, they should immediately be referred back to this House for review.

Another example of what I am talking about is where oaths of secrecy can be superseded by a commission summons taking precedence over any other oath. These are the sorts of invasions into accepted civil liberties in the State which need to be undertaken with the most extreme caution and be ready for review if any inadequacies are discovered. Certainly, I believe that the whole legislation should be reviewed at the completion of the Fitzgerald inquiry. However, with those caveats, the Liberal Party is prepared to support the legislation without any difficulty at all.

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.13 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Logan and the honourable member for Mount Isa for their contributions.

In reply to the point made by both speakers with regard to how far the circumstances and conditions which have been introduced into the Commissions of Inquiry Act during the course of the Fitzgerald inquiry will continue—it is my intention at the end of the inquiry, after the report of Commissioner Fitzgerald is handed down, to have a major review of the Commissions of Inquiry Act. Indeed, as both honourable members would probably be aware, Mr Fitzgerald may have some suggestions himself as to how future commissions of inquiry should be conducted and what powers they should be invested with for those purposes.

In relation to the honourable members' statements with regard to section 10—the purpose of this amendment is to clarify the provisions of section 10 which, upon one interpretation, would have required the Supreme Court to hear witnesses. This provision clarifies that section to ensure that the court may hear evidence where necessary in relation to the alleged contempt.

The Leader of the Opposition made some comment about the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act. I might say that I am also prepared to review that Act in light of developments which take place at the meetings of the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General in Australia. As the Leader of the Opposition would probably be aware, ongoing attempts have been made by other States to introduce legislation of this nature, and at present they are experiencing severe difficulties in arriving at a happy solution.

Mr Goss: They are a bit behind us.

Mr CLAUSON: The honourable member is right. They are a little behind us.

The Queensland Government in fact did some pioneering in that area. As the legislation is ground-breaking legislation, the Government is quite happy to look at any developments that may be of benefit to the general public and to implement them if it sees fit to do so.

Mr Goss: What about civil proceedings?

Mr CLAUSON: I am coming to that.

As to criminal proceedings and civil proceedings—section 5 of the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act does not preclude the institution of civil and criminal trials. However, in those circumstances the type of questioning is restricted. The asking of one question, “Have you been convicted?” cannot presently be asked. This amendment will, of course, affect criminal proceedings.

As to civil proceedings—I think that that matter could also be considered in the future. I do not see any valid reason for not including it, but it should be included at this stage to keep it in line with the concept of the legislation. In fact, there may be some civil areas which may be covered by areas involving the commission of inquiry.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 12, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

The House adjourned at 10.19 p.m.